

GRAPE VINE

Chess club meets at high school Wednesdays

The Halton Hills Community Chess Club meets in the library of Georgetown District High School on Wednesday evenings.

Juniors play from 7:15 to 8 pm, while Seniors face off from 7:15 to 10 pm.

From beginner to expert, all are welcome. For further information please contact Peter Wellington at 877-4154 or Bob Morrow at 877-7249.

An ounce of prevention

Are you interested in finding out how to help prevent osteoporosis, anemia and other ailments? Monica Gray, a registered dietitian and sports nutritionist will be speaking on lifestyles, wellness, nutrition, anemia and osteoporosis at the next University Women's Club meeting.

Ms. Gray is a consultant for the Canadian Gymnastics team, and comes with a wealth of knowledge on these topics.

This free presentation will begin at 7:30 pm, Nov. 5 at the GDHS library, and is open to the public.

Reed invites pre-budget input from community

Halton-Peel Member of Parliament Julian Reed, as part of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance will be in Toronto, Nov. 8, to hear from local witnesses as to what action the local government

must take to achieve its deficit reduction targets. The committee will hold meetings at the Valhalla Inn, Scandia 2&3, Hwy. 427 and Burnhamthorpe Road, from 9 am to 4 pm.

The Committee looks forward to hearing the views of Canadians on what issues the government's next budget should address, including revenue and expenditure measures and ways to promote economic growth and job creation.

"I encourage interested constituents to participate in the pre-budget consultation process and to make a submission to the Committee," Reed said. "As the Minister of Finance gears up to the 1997 budget, I feel it is vital that the concerns and ideas of my constituents be heard by members of the Finance Committee."

Those wishing to make an appearance before the committee or present a written submission should contact:

The Clerk, Standing Committee on Finance, Room 644, Wellington Building, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON., K1A 0A6.

Tel: (613) 992-2426, Fax: (613) 992-7974.

Vegetarian pot luck dinner

"It's five o'clock, what's for dinner?" Come share your tried and true last minute dinner successes with the Halton Vegetarian Association at their monthly pot luck on Nov. 7, at 7 pm. For details call 873-8567.

Crazy for Gershwin

There will be dining, dancing and a cabaret at North Halton Golf and Country Club, Nov. 9.

The evening will include a silent auction of books. Tickets at Georgetown Branch of the library.

Days of Action should target Leafs

I hate to say it, but I guess we've been spoiled here for the last few years, what with the great winning tradition of the Toronto Maple Leafs and all (hack, cough, gag ...).

Seriously though, starting in the 1992-93 season, we were on a bit of a roll, at least for a while, anyway.

Heck, we were only one win away from the Stanley Cup finals for two years in a row! We hadn't been that close to the big dance in 15 years.

As frustrating as it was, sitting on the edge of my seat, watching Wayne Gretzky get away with what should have been a major penalty and a game misconduct, I now long for those days.

The conventional wisdom was that defensive hockey – the much ballyhooed 'neutral zone trap' – was boring and sure to destroy the very concept of hockey, which is the fastest game on two feet. While this may be true, it did win New Jersey the Stanley Cup in 1995.

About this time last year, I went to my first game since the late '70s. This was before the Leaf's mid-season slide, so the game was actually pretty exciting. It drove home a couple of things to me: (a) Almost every sport is better live than on television; (b) it reminded me of my frustration of living less than a block away from Maple Leaf Gardens while I was in university and yet, not being able to afford to go to games; (c) it reminded me of trying to find a place that would televise the playoffs when I was living in

The View From Here

With
Jamie Harrison



Hong Kong (hockey isn't exactly the biggest attraction in Hong Kong), and; (d) it drove home the point that what we are seeing come out of the Gardens these days leaves me wanting.

The sad thing is, as a former Leaf and current San Jose Shark pointed out, this is not a team bereft of talent. Sure, maybe some of the older guys are on the wrong side of the talent peak chart, but hockey smarts are often more important than natural skills. To steal a line from author Bryce Courtenay, "Little beats big when little is smart; first with the head, then with the heart."

Not that I am any great fan of the provincial government, but I really do think this whole Days of Action thing went way too far.

The organizers shut down the city, continually expand the number of days that the protest is supposed to last, target big business for their mean-spirited ploy of wanting to be profitable (shocking!), but worst of all, they all but made it impossible for otherwise law abiding citizens to go about their business! This is nothing short of infantile. Any sympathy which may have been engendered went out with the soiled Pampers, folks.

We don't do anything by half-measures in this province, do we? In 1990 we elected an admittedly left-leaning provincial government. In

return, it seemed like everyone with a cause got the attention they were seeking and a grant to go along with it. That we would end up paying for it in the end was of little concern.

In 1995, we elected a decidedly right-leaning body politic. Their stated goal was to cut back on all of the handouts, and run the government in a much more fiscally responsible way. So here's the shocker – they kept their promise! Here's another: we elected them, goals and all, and now we don't like what they're doing. It's true – people really do get the government they deserve.

Come on! Grow up! The Days of Protest wreck of an, "if you're not going to play my way, then I'm going home"-mentality. It's not particularly pretty when kids do it, and it's downright ugly when adults pull it.

Just a last, quick note: it occurred as I stood waiting in a local coffee shop, Friday, waiting for my morning fix, that maybe the Days of Action were not altogether bad.

It was apparent that some parents were given the day off by their respective employers, rather than having their employees deal with the crowds of protesters in Toronto, thus allowing parents and children the opportunity to spend the day together, a day they might not otherwise have. As a result, the shop was crowded with young families enjoying the first sunny day we've seen in these parts in quite some time.

Jamie Harrison is a reporter for *The Georgetown Gemini*.

Preventable tragedy rocks a small town

As the last leaves flutter to the ground, we are reminded of just how fragile life is. Even mighty maples are at the mercy of Mother Nature and a sudden frost.

Ten days ago the young people of our town were dealt a brutal reminder of how tenuous the grip on the tree of life really is.

First, cancer claimed the life of Kelly Jupp. The death from cancer of a loved one or friend, sadly, is not that unusual these days. In Kelly's case however, there were only a few weeks from the time he was diagnosed until his sudden passing. There was no time to prepare, to even consider this eventuality.

Young people don't expect to be burying one of their peers. When you're in your early 20s you feel invincible. Life stretches ahead of you like an endless river flowing to the future. That's the way it should be.

The youngsters were still reeling and trying to come to grips with Kelly's death, when John Wilson was killed in a traffic accident. I'm sure most of you have read or heard how John was involved in two accidents in the course of an hour, both

The Way I See It

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involving drivers now charged with impaired driving.

One of the joys of small town living is that our kids grow up with the same circle of friends and they continue to chum together into adulthood. Even after they move away, events like the Fall Fair bring them back to renew old friendships and catch up on the important and trivial happenings in their lives. It's a comfortable feeling, coming back home. This same sense of community made the unexplainable and sudden passing of these two friends almost too much to bear.

When tragedies like this happen, nearly everyone in town is affected. Most every household knew someone in the families or in the circle of friends. The whole town is in mourning.

In addition to the expected grief

in the eyes of the young people, there was also confusion. How could this happen to two of our friends?

There is, of course, no answer. For some, faith will help them through. For others time will be the only healer. All can draw on the strengths of their circle of friends and family. Life will, as it always does, carry on.

When someone succumbs to disease as Kelly did, there is a sense of fate attached to the event. Not that this makes his passing easier or in any way diminishes the sense of loss – it doesn't, but you can't get angry at cancer. All you can do is accept the inevitable, keep precious his memory, and perhaps support cancer research in the hope you can spare another family such a devastating loss.

John Wilson's death is another matter entirely. We can all do something about drinking and driving. In the last 15 years we've come a long way to changing society's attitude to drinking and driving. At least I thought we had. The circumstances surrounding John's death lead me to wonder if we're just kidding ourselves.

I was discussing this incident with a Georgetown resident I do business with. She's been hit twice at the mall and both times the driver was under the influence. "I don't like to drive around town on Friday or Saturday nights," she said. Maybe I'm naive but I was really surprised. And then I remembered the incidents involved in John's death.

The government is trying to do its part. In addition to police patrols and spot checks, new legislation is on the way. In future, if a driver blows over .80, the police will be handing out immediate 90-day suspensions. Currently, people can continue driving until convicted of impaired in a court of law.

Ordinarily I would oppose such a law in favour of the principle of "innocent until proven guilty." In this circumstance however, the common good must prevail. Obviously the measures taken so far to combat drinking drivers have not been effective.

I've known John Wilson's wife Julie since she was a little kid. She swam with my daughters. I'm seldom at a loss for words, but when I held Julie in my arms and looked

into Gerry's eyes, I had no words for them. What could anyone say to ease their pain?

Every person reading this knows a couple like Julie and John Wilson. For their sake, make sure you never put yourself in the position where you might take a life. Make sure you aren't responsible for destroying the plans of two young people just starting life's journey. Could you live with yourself knowing that you were responsible for a good and kind young man never being able to hold his child? Could you explain to that child why you killed his father? Please, don't drink and drive. The consequences are just too severe.

To my young friends who mourn so deeply – be strong. Remember the good times, the laughter. These things are immortal. Stay in touch with the families; you are a bridge to the past. Keep a prayer on your lips and a resolve in your spirit to ensure this will not happen again.

I wish I could ease your pain. I can't. You are all in my thoughts and prayers. God bless you.

Mike O'Leary is a columnist for *The Georgetown Gemini*.