

Letters to the Editor

Contest coverage 'missed the point', Herald leads readers to 'Dark Ages'

To the editor of The Herald:
I am most dismayed to find your newspaper actively supporting James Barrett's "Little Miss Halton Hills Pageant"

as was obvious from the front page of your September 10 edition.
It is perhaps excusable that through lack of understanding

of the meaning of the words "exploitation" and "sexist", Mr. Barrett has failed to grasp the whole point of the letters of criticism directed to him. But

for a newspaper of any size to "miss the point" made so clear by so many readers is unpardonable.

Perhaps Mr. Barrett and the parents of those unfortunate children entered in the Miss Elk and Miss Royal Purple contests have never heard of the seminars, programs or literature made available during 1979. The year of the Child or of the United Nation's use of children's beauty pageants as prime examples of exploitation of children.

But as newspaper people, the staff of The Herald most certainly should be aware of these happenings. You should also know that in response to the "Year of the Child" anti-exploitation campaign, children's beauty pageants are being eliminated all around the world.

Instead of making the people of Halton Hills more aware of international developments and helping to enlighten those who err because of ignorance, you and your newspaper are leading readers right back to the Dark Ages!

Whether you are acting through ignorance or a poorly made decision, you have shown irresponsibility, poor taste and incapacity as a newspaper.

Fortunately for our community there are those of us involved, insightful and aware enough to boycott the Fall Fair to attempt to prevent such contests in the future and to write into your newspaper to make it worth reading.

Gail Rutherford, Editor's Note: Our decision to run news about the Junior Miss pageant and its preliminaries on The Herald's front pages represents our recognition of the event as a valid news item, one that is particularly newsworthy in light of the public controversy surrounding it. This continuing coverage cannot be construed as editorial support of the event, although The Herald is happy to cover what we consider a well-intended community project of some entertainment value. For the editor's personal opinion on the matter, see Page A4.

'Feminist' supports Junior Miss pageant

To the editor of The Herald:
I have recently agreed to act as a judge in the Little Miss Halton Hills competition at the Georgetown Fair and as both an active member of the Agricultural Society and a feminist (for over 25 years) I should like to explain something.

In the controversy surrounding this new competition, there has been reference to "women's lib rhetoric" in the various protests. As a committed feminist, I for one have no objection to a competition for little girls, any more than I would have objection to little boys being thrust into the super-tough competition of Little League hockey. There are always arguments to be made for either side of this issue. Naturally, one hopes that the adults in these areas exhibit both good judgement and good

taste throughout.

We all know that some feminists object to 20-year-old women parading down runways in their bathing suits and high heels. Many feel that these women are being exploited by people (mostly men) behind the scenes, making a considerable amount of money. They might also question the judgement and taste involved. But any feminist that I know would passionately defend the right of these women to make their OWN CHOICE about whether or not they wish to parade themselves in public view. And a competition among adults is a far cry from the sweet little girls we have just seen in the Elks Lodge competition last week.

The basic issue of the feminist cause has always been freedom of choice and equal

opportunity. Let us then allow those parents involved in the Little Miss Halton Hills program the opportunity to exercise their choice in the decision to enter their daughters or not. Later on, the Fair Board will be able to assess the results of the new event and decide if the idea should be retained for another year or discarded.

The Georgetown Fair Board is in need of additional help and support if they are going to be able to continue a fine tradition which has been carried on in this community for 134 years. Hopefully, this help and support will be forthcoming from some of those critics who have - until this date, only sat back and criticized the Fair as being "the same old thing".

Yours very truly,
Bettyanne (Rogers) Wellstead

Betty Fisher clarifies term 'time-out booth'

Dear Sir:
During the past week, a great number of people have contacted me regarding the use of a "time-out" booth in the behavioral class at George Kennedy School in Georgetown. As a trustee with the Halton Board of Education,

may I clarify some of the issues surrounding this controversy.

"Behavior modification", which is used in the behavioral class, is a proven successful, medical technique for people with behavioral problems. The time-out area, a part of

behavior modification, is used only in extreme cases, to give an overwrought person the opportunity to relax and regain self-control. It is important to note, however, the use of these should always be under the supervision of a qualified psychologist and/or psychiatrist.

For the past two years, a 25.9-square foot time-out area has been used with great success, in conjunction with other behavior modification techniques in the behavioral class. Unfortunately, when this class was moved from the first to the second floor of the school during the summer, the large time-out area was dismantled and replaced by a 18-square foot booth. It has been in use for approximately one week.

This is the crux of the controversy: the new booth is too small - in my opinion, inhumane. I have asked that it be dismantled and replaced by a rest area of much larger dimensions, without locks.

The Administration of the Halton Board of Education has now discontinued the use of this particular booth, and will create a time-out area of more appropriate size. George Kennedy Public School has a fine reputation throughout Halton, and it deserves our continuing support.

Yours truly,
Betty Fisher,
Trustee, Wards 1 and 2
Halton Hills.

'Joy, happiness' at Elks Lodge preliminary

To the editor of The Herald:
The Sept. 7 pageant at the Elks Lodge was a tremendous success. The facial expression of the audience and of the contestants truly enjoyed themselves.

To see the little girls laughing and clapping for each and every contestant would leave a feeling of joy in your heart, and a tear of happiness to your eyes.

I would like to extend a special thanks to our two sisters of the Royal Purple, Penny Durdle and Thelma Reeve, our

Exalted Ruler Edward Reeve and past Exalted Ruler Joseph Jardin, who gave their time and travelled many miles to participate as judges. To the judges, a job well done.

I would also like to thank the ladies of the Royal Purple and the men of the Elks who gave their time to make this a memorable occasion. For their support given to our Pageant, we would like to thank Jim and Rita Barrett.

William F. Oates,
Elks publicity director

Nukes ban needs attention

To the editor of The Herald:
A comment on your "Letter from the Editor" of last week:
Nuclear proliferation is the most serious threat to our world today.
Somehow disarmament is associated with an unpatriotic attitude, an unwillingness to stand up for one's country, or as sympathy for the "other side". This idea is encouraged by those with a vested interest in selling arms, and for the rest of us, saving the world is just too great a task

to contemplate.
The comforting feeling that a duty of such magnitude should be handled by those in power would seem to relieve us of responsibility.
Governments reflect the wishes of their constituents. However--First we must get their attention!
Sincerely
Joan Douglas
47 Weber Dr.,
Georgetown

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Four foot box appalls reader

Dear Sir:
I was absolutely shocked and appalled to read in the Toronto Star and Sun that "in the George Kennedy School in the town of Georgetown," there was a four foot by four foot box, nine feet high, protected by a steel guard (was so happy to hear it had an air vent) that could be bolted from the outside, in which disturbed children are held so they can "cool out".

Surely there must be some mistake. This can't be happening in Georgetown, Ontario, Canada! It must surely be during the wars in North Viet Nam or Cambodia or Japan (!!!) where we often read about this form of behavior.

The stories mentioned that some of the children cry and whimper and some say nothing. I would think that any adult, any child and particu-

larly a disturbed child would be more disturbed by such treatment. I understand also by the paper that Oakville has two of these boxes, Georgetown one and a fourth one is now being built. What lucky school is to get the fourth one?

I was always under the impression that no child, disturbed or otherwise, should never be shut in a closet or small room because of the damage it could do. Nothing is accomplished by fear.

Surely our trustees will stop this form of abuse immediately. I do not want my school taxes being a part of anything so disgusting.

June Cook
Yours Sincerely
June Cook
5 Normandy Blvd.
Georgetown

How to retire at 35

It's easy. Thousands of people do it every year. It starts out with a tinge of boredom or frustration. Gradually a person's work becomes less and less important. The rat race hardly seems worth while anymore. Tomorrow will just be another yesterday and what was so great about that? It's at this point that many people retire. Oh, they still go to work. They continue to go through the motions. They even draw a paycheck. There are no retirement presents or testimonial dinners. Nobody knows they are retired at least, not right away. People, systems and information start passing them by. The lucky ones get fired in time to make a fresh start. The less fortunate ones hang around for years waiting for a raise or promotion that never comes and wondering why. It doesn't have to be that way. We have to learn to fight back. Each year more than 80,000 people join Dale Carnegie classes, all over the world, for just that reason. They counteract the urge to coast by learning to run as they never ran before. It's worth the effort though. If 30 years seems like a long time to spend in a rocking chair...investigate the

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Canadian People are Nice: CBers help Marathon of Hope

To the editor of The Herald:
With reference to your Sept. 10 article on Dorothy Stone's campaign to make Terry Fox a member of the Order of Canada, the Citizen Band Radio Club referred to in the article is actually a

group of individual C.B.ers. We are not a club. However, our collective motto is "Canadian People Are Nice".

With the combined efforts of Sir George's Restaurant and Tavern and the C.P.N.'s

we were proud to assist Miss Stone in her efforts on behalf of Terry.

Today, we have 250 volunteer C.P.N.'s, and I am just one of the vast number of people assisting this cause.
Yours Sincerely,
Greg Ball.

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