

the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills - Established 1866

A Division of Canadian Newspapers Company Limited

45 Guelph Street, Georgetown L7G 3Z6, Ontario

K. ROBERT MALCOLMSON
Publisher and General Manager

BRIAN MacLEOD
Editor

DAN TAYLOR
Advertising Manager

Phone 877-2201

Second Class Mail - Registered Number 0913

Page 6 - THE HERALD, Wednesday, April 25, 1990

Editorial

Parking poor

Parking in Halton Hills' downtown areas may soon be mighty expensive. If not at the meter, the cost will hit the taxpayer in the pocketbook.

A \$23,400 study by Parker Consultants says the town will have to spend between \$2.6 million and \$3.4 million to improve parking in downtown Georgetown and about \$128,000 to correct parking problems in Acton.

The report says Georgetown needs 110 new parking spaces and Acton needs 58 new spaces.

This parking report has been anxiously awaited by town councillors for months.

Now comes the tough part. What are they going to do with this \$23,400 study?

If the recommendations are simply brushed away and deemed too expensive then everyone's time and money has been wasted on consultants.

If the town decides to act, it's going to cause a lot of political headaches - revamping downtown parking always does in any town - and it's going to cost money.

If the downtown stores are to flourish the way they deserve to, then this report is crucial. Nothing turns shoppers off more than the inability to park their vehicle within a reasonable distance without paying huge fees. Simply ask anyone who's received an \$8 ticket downtown recently. It's no secret the increased fines have annoyed shoppers.

This report will test the political will of our councillors.

Thea thrills

Brian MacLeod
Editor's Notebook



pick their favorites from pictures depicting the spring theme.

The show will be available for viewing from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. - just one week ahead of Mother's Day.

All the pictures in the exhibit will be for sale and admission to the show is free.

And for all you wildlife enthusiasts the Mountsberg Wildlife Centre is operating tours of its newly-developed raptor, or bird of prey facility.

Mountsberg's spring show kicks off this Friday night with - now wait for it - a frogwatchers hike.

Mountsberg wisely urges all those who participate in this endeavor to bring their rubber boots.

It seems Earth Day didn't go unobserved in Halton Hills. Over 200 people showed up at the obscure Acton quarry lookout location to plant trees and sample hot dogs on Sunday. Many schools are also picking up on the environment theme.

There's been a lot of hype surrounding Earth Day but the basic message and intent is still the same: Educate the kids while they're young to respect the environment and re-educate adults to take a look around and see what's happening to their world.

We're interested to find out what you thought and what you did during Earth Day. If you did anything special, or if your school did anything to observe the day, and the week, let us know. Give us a call or write us a letter and we'll publish all the different ways Halton Hills is trying to save the environment.

If you're one of the many people who caught the Globe Theatre's production of Fiddler On The Roof late last year then you can appreciate why the production brought back two "Theas." The Theas are considered among community theatre circles as their version of the Oscars and the Globe is in the highly competitive central division when it comes to awards.

Anne Goetz won a Thea for her set design and John Thomas, who played the lusty butcher Lazar Wolfe, won for the best supporting actor.

The play received eight nominations and the huge cast and technical crew certainly earned a hearty congratulations for taking on an ambitious project like Fiddler On The Roof and pulling it off well enough to receive that kind of recognition.

In keeping with the arts vein the Palette and Pencil Club of Georgetown plans to hold its first show and sale at the restored Cedarvale Cottage on Sunday, May 6.

The club is hanging a show with a theme for the first time. Visitors who view the show will be asked to

Victims' rights law needed

Derek Nelson

Queen's Park
Thomson News Service



TORONTO - That crime victims have rights is one of the political truisms of today.

Yet, strangely enough, Ontario has no law codifying those rights. According to Irvin Waller, a University of Ottawa criminology professor, Ontario is the only major jurisdiction in North America without a "victims' rights" law.

Earlier this month, the legislature unanimously approved for study just such a bill.

An Act to Establish the Rights of Victims of Crime, or Bill 113, was introduced by Cam Jackson, Burlington South Progressive Conservative MPP. It now will go to committee for detailed study.

Because it is an opposition member's bill, it may very well die there rather than be called back for final approval.

But it was quite clear from the tone of the debate surrounding its passage that victims' rights are one of those issues whose time has come.

New Democratic MPP Peter Kormos spoke in support of the

bill, and urged that, if anything, it should be extended. He noted (as too few on the Left do, actually), that some so-called crimes against property are actually crimes against persons, that having the possessions of your life and their associated memories trashed can be as traumatic emotionally as being bumped on the head.

Even Liberal government members, who were mildly critical of some of the wording, felt impelled to list all the good things the Grits are already doing for crime victims.

Grit MPP David Fleet noted such pilot projects are already under way as the crisis assistance and referral service in the solicitor-general's ministry that refers victims to volunteer counsellors. And he noted the assistance program for victims and witnesses run from the attorney-general's ministry.

Jackson's bill deals with principles rather than specifics (since opposition bills cannot deal with the spending of money, per se). One set of these principles would require victims to be treated properly at all times, including allowing a victim of sexual assault to be interviewed by a police officer of the same gender if so requested. A second set would ensure the victim was part of the judicial process (such as in the use of victim impact statements) rather than a helpless bystander. A third set of principles would make it easier for victims of crimes to obtain monetary compensation through civil actions against their

assaultants. Some of it is so blindingly obvious that the wonder is why it hasn't already been implemented. Victims' impact statements, for example, should be mandatory for all sentencing and parole hearings, as well as releases from hospitals for the criminally insane.

Some, on the other hand, bother me just a mite.

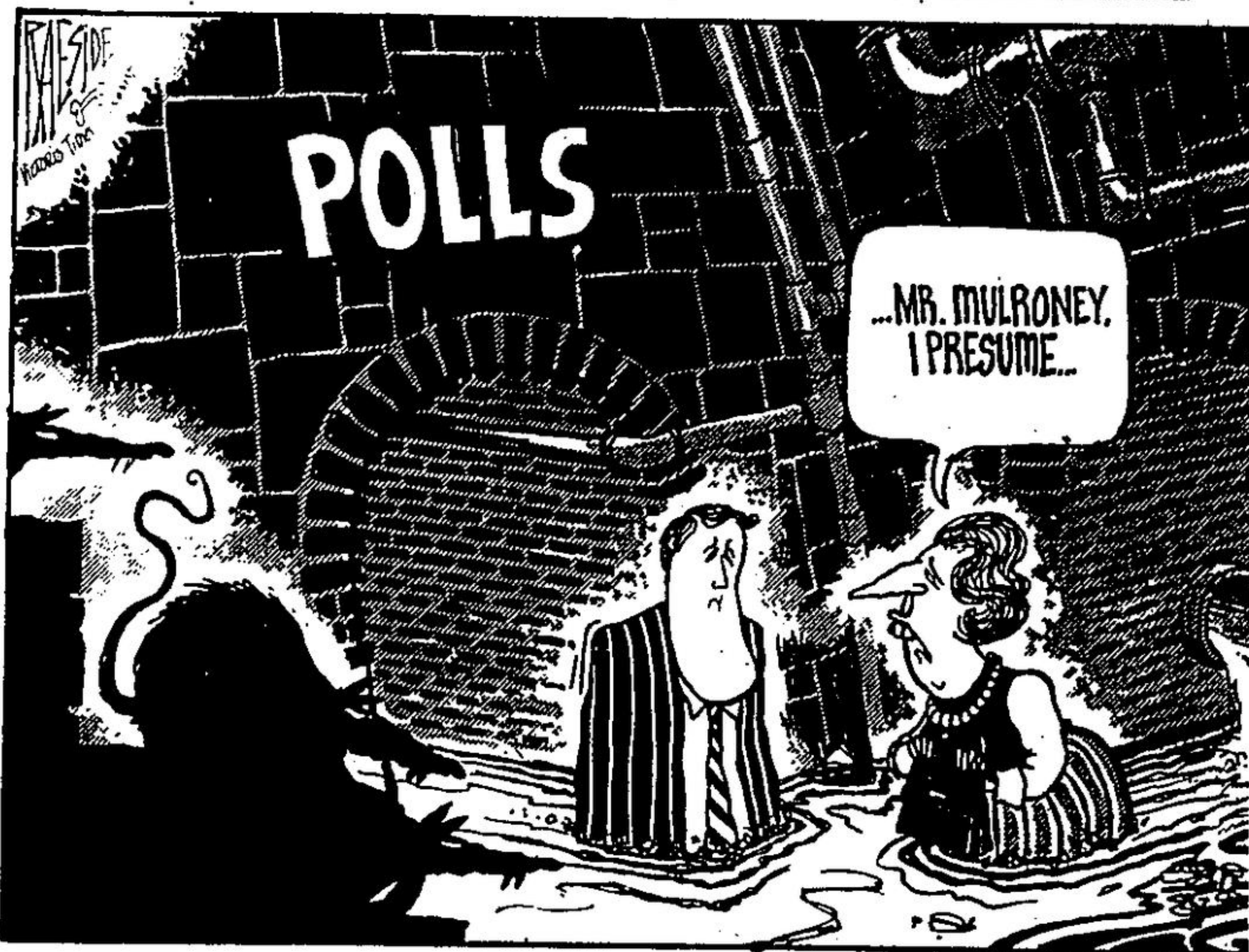
One of the great evils of our society is how we've institutionalized being a victim. Everyone (except maybe an able-bodied non-criminal white male) is seen as a victim, usually of some impersonal or uncontrollable force. That attitude really doesn't need reinforcing.

Jackson's principles include a victim having "access to social services, health care and medical treatment, counselling and legal assistance responsive to their needs."

But if there is anything we should have learned over past decades it is that setting up formal programs along these lines isn't terribly useful. (This is opposed to the volunteer counselling mentioned above, for example, which probably is quite useful.)

The lobby/self-help group Victims of Violence has some horrendous tales of how victims were subjected to insensitive or inappropriate behavior by officials in the judicial, social service and health systems. No law is going to change that. We can't legislate human perfection.

Still, it's a worthwhile bill, and deserves further consideration.



Two Tory rebels had reason

Vic Parsons
Ottawa Bureau
Thomson News Service



OTTAWA - Were the two Alberta MPs who got the boot from the Conservative caucus treated fairly?

Probably your answer depends upon whether you admire the government's planned goods and services tax (GST), or whether you regard it as a curse on the country. David Kilgour and Alex Kindy made it clear they held the second option.

But let's leave aside for now the potential impact on pocketbooks and look at one justification for the expulsion of Kilgour and Kindy from party ranks,

Some senior Conservatives say the defiant duo should have toed the party line because they knew during the last election campaign what the Tory tax policy was. They benefitted from Conservative support in Alberta on Nov. 21, 1988, the argument goes, so now they should hold their noses and support the GST.

There are a few flaws in that viewpoint.

Sure, it was well-known that Finance Minister Michael Wilson was committed to the so-called Phase 2 of tax reform, which would remove the iniquitous manufacturers' sales tax. Wilson had condemned that tax as a silent killer of jobs.

But, there was little certainty about how this was going to be done.

TAX FLIP-FLOP

Indeed, a partner with the accounting firm Clarkson Gordon wrote a month before the election call that Ottawa had flip-flopped several times on the question.

"In the past 3 1/2 years, the Tory government had proposed, one by one, almost all possible modifications to the tax - then abandoned

them," said Peter Wood.

During the campaign, there was little further elucidation. Wilson did say at one point that he was "contemplating a nine-per-cent rate." He said groceries and drugs would be untaxed, and problems of housing affordability would be addressed. He rejected predictions a new sales tax would raise \$10-to-\$14 billion in new revenues.

But free trade was the main focus of the election. Sales tax reform, along with other issues, was lost in the shuffle.

After the election, Wilson's GST plan took shape. The rate was first set at nine per cent, then dropped to seven last December. The range of goods and services to be taxed was set out. But while this was happening, some of the earlier commitments seemed to fall away.

Ottawa had aimed for a national sales tax, which would have combined both federal and provincial levies. It became apparent in the spring of 1989 that such an integrated tax was unlikely.

Meanwhile, of particular concern for Kilgour and Kindy, it was made known only one province

(Continued on Page 7)