

Slowpitch president questions town support

Sir:

As someone who participates in men's slopitch in Georgetown, I felt that a letter explaining the support we do and do not get would be appropriate now that the season is coming to a close.

The Sunday morning Service Club league is a group that has been in existence for over 10 years. Besides the service clubs and some player sponsorships, there has been constant unwavering support via sponsorships from several local merchant organizations.

Two years ago, the Georgetown Men's Slopitch League was formed. The first year saw 16 teams in the league and the second year there were 27 teams. For next year, we already have applications for three new mens teams, nine mixed teams and there are three teams that we could not accommodate in this years schedule. All of these teams have had sponsorship from local merchants like Colour Your World, Leferink Disposal, Barrager's Cleaners, Time-Out Roadhouse, MVP Sports Distributors, Kinney Canada, Aloha Restaurant, The Copper Kettle, Riverside Spa, Country Lane Video, The George and Dragon, Royal Pizza, Duff's Quarries, Ashgrove Welders and Dave's Service. In short, very good participation from players and sponsors.

Without the participation of these sponsors in financing their teams, thereby helping finance the league, we may not have ever had the opportunity to play baseball. The Masonic Temple and the Elk's Hall have been made available to us for use in having our meetings and again, our expression of gratitude cannot be strong enough to them.

Finally, no league can run without a group of dedicated volunteers offering to donate large amounts of time. Mr. Jim Connally has run the Service Club league for some years now, and every year the extent of his efforts go unpublished, but not unnoticed. He and his assistants cannot get the proper amount of thanks that are due them. The Georgetown Men's Slopitch League has an executive of five people and representatives from every team who have given huge amounts of time and effort into creating the league, the rules, the schedules, running tournaments, dances and administering the leagues affairs. Without being redundant, these people deserve thanks for their efforts.

In spite of all the time and effort of the volunteers and the financial support of sponsors and service clubs, why is there such

apathy on the part of the Town and the local papers, in supporting and publishing the efforts of over 1,000 participants in these two leagues.

The Town's problem is that they cannot accommodate all the teams that want to play. The diamonds that are being made available in the fairgrounds, in Acton and in Glen Williams are marginal in quality. Diamond C in the fairgrounds is typical. Every player knows to position himself on the rock when playing right field and on the bare spot in left field, while avoiding the gopher hole in centre. The Town allows groups to use the fairgrounds for very worthwhile projects, like the fall fair and bang-o-rama, but put no restrictions on them, like parking in parking lots versus the infields.

These diamonds have never been top dressed and the only water they see is rain water. All these problems make for dangerous grounds to play, when the bounce could be up, down, right, left but definitely, not predictable. More than one ball player has had a snowfence post attempting to ply its way into his body. Georgetown's diamonds are a disgrace in quality and quantity when compared to towns that support baseball. Towns with populations 75 per cent less than ours have diamonds that have outfields good enough to run across without fear of injury from obstacles.

The diamond space is critical in this Town and efforts to increase diamond space have actually been thwarted. The GMSL was chastised last spring by the Recreation Department for taking on new teams citing a lack of diamonds. This a very short while after this same Rec department reported to Council that there was so much spare time on the Town fields that they could not justify building new facilities. When told that new facilities were due in 1994 the GMSL offered to lease the old dump site on Maple from the Town and build diamonds at their own expense. The Town referred the idea to the Ministry of the Environment, plus every known Town department, knowing a minimum of two years would expire before an answer came back. The Town apparently has no property that could be used to accommodate 1,000 taxpaying baseball players.

Each facility has a minor ball league. Georgetown, Acton, Glen Williams, Hornby and Limehouse minor ball leagues that are slow to organize and very protective of diamond times. While the adults must submit schedules for play

by early February, for play to begin early May, the minor leagues are allowed to put in blanket requests, covering and holding all the facilities until after their registration, late May. The result is minor league teams playing on diamonds that have outfields so far out of reach for these kids even steroids won't help. The kids are playing twice a week plus practices, to use up the excess times booked by the minor league executives. Major diamond times are often used for minor league games, while adult teams are shunted off to play behind Park School. There are sufficient school diamonds to accommodate all the minor league practice time and sufficient major diamonds to allow everyone, minor and adult, to play once a week. The inequity in diamond allocation currently leans towards minor ball. Who does the Town think is paying taxes, the kids or the adults?

This is probably the wrong

forum for bashing the efforts of the local papers, but with this many men and women involved in one sport in two leagues, why are the local papers not reporting more than 25 word game summaries and the occasional standing list? Why are the sponsors not saying to you "I want my advertising dollar to include some coverage of my sponsored teams"? I compare the coverage of adult baseball to your coverage of kids sports, and I wonder who pays for the papers and who buys the goods being advertised in your paper. The battle with the Town, and there cannot be another term used, over diamond time could use some supporters. These supporters will not appear without the public being made aware. I ask that you seriously look at the plight of the baseball playing public in Georgetown and make the situation known, especially in this, an election year. Maybe one of the candidates will take up the

cause and win himself a few thousand votes. They would have mine.

There were several teams from Georgetown that went to the Ontario Provincial playoffs for Slopitch. This says there are some truly fine ballplayers in town. Is this not something worth nurturing and publicizing? Should the Town not be proud of these accomplishments? Are we going to wait until we have a winning Raider season before we stand up and cheer for someone?

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to have my say.

Peter Wanner
President
Georgetown Men's Slopitch League

Editor's Note: Given limited coverage facilities, we rely on those people involved with various leagues to provide us with information on games and upcoming special events. Your league did not provide us with this information.

Harris queries education policy

To the Editor:

As the father of a six-year-old son, I shared in the anticipation and anxiety millions of parents felt when our children returned to the classroom at the beginning of September. And daily reports in the local newspapers about increasing drug use in our schools and mounting violence in the classroom only added to my existing concerns about the quality of education our children are receiving.

With these growing apprehensions, I, as a parent, legislator and former educator was dismayed when the NDP government decided that Ontario would not participate in a national testing program. In my view, this decision is wrong.

In opting-out of the testing program, the government is being unfair to taxpayers, parents and students. Taxpayers have a right to hold educators and administrators accountable for the thirteen billion tax dollars used to educate our young people. We have a right to know if we are getting value for our money.

Parents have a right to know if the school system is providing their children with a positive learning environment. We want to ensure that our sons and daughters are gaining the skills they will need to lead prosperous and rewarding lives. Our children are the future of this province.

And our children have a right to excellence in their schooling to ensure that their real needs are met and their full potential is realized.

As a parent, I want my concerns addressed. As a taxpayer, I deserve answers. Participation in the national testing program would provide us with some of these answers.

But the NDP government doesn't seem to want to know if our schools are performing up to scratch. We deserve better. I urge each and every one of you to write Bob Rae and tell him that we want this decision reversed.

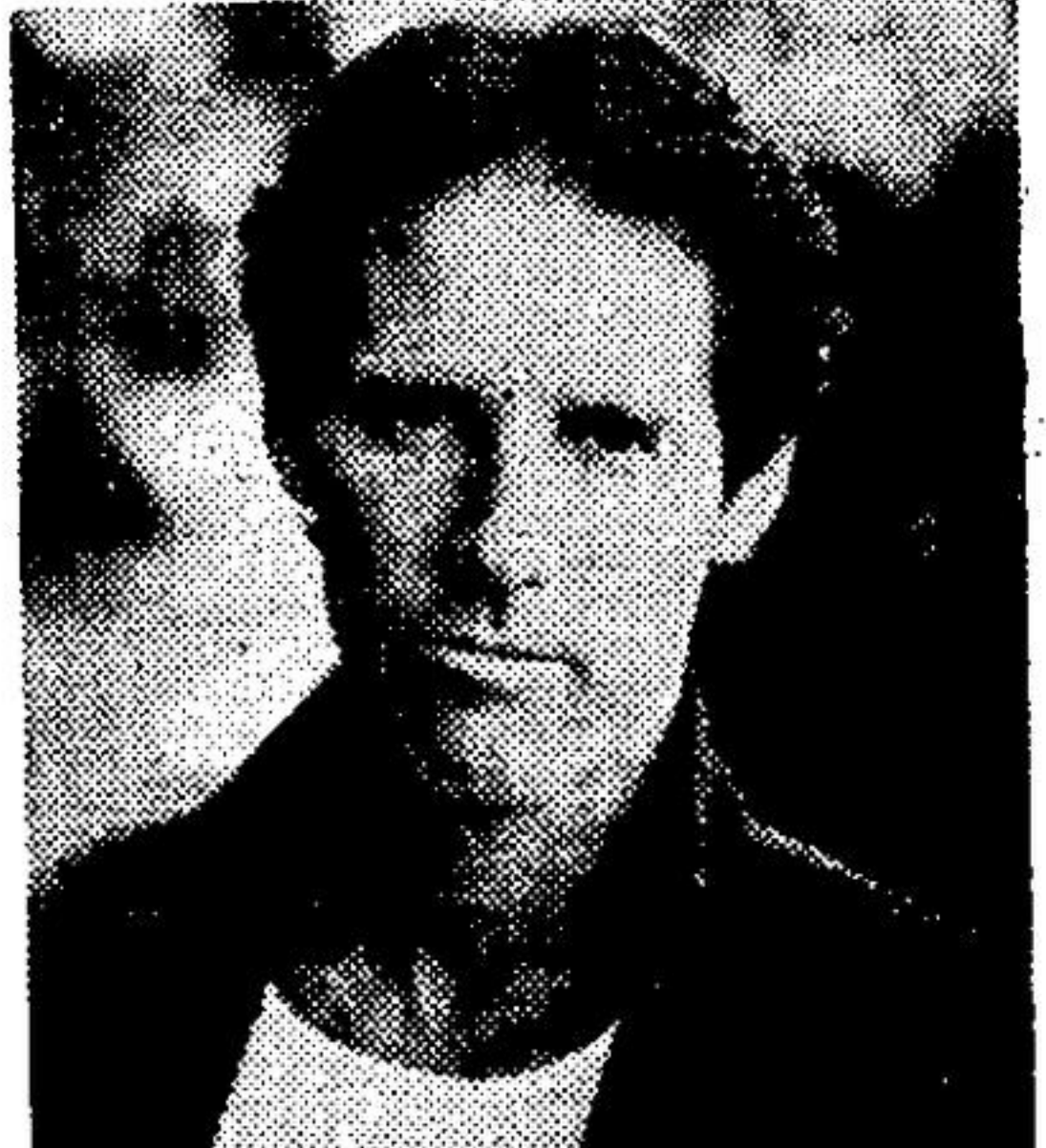
Mike Harris, MPP
Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

YOU COULD WIN!!

The Learning Annex and the HERALD presents....

The Doors

Riding On The Storm: The Sixties, & Now with John Densmore



John Densmore

The Door's career lasted a brief four years, but like The Beatles, their influence changed our culture. It's been 20 years since the Doors took the stage, but still, they remain one of the most popular rock bands of all time.

Rock promoter Bill Graham says "John Densmore was on the inside looking out, watching a new world dance to a new psychedelic drummer. He shares his frankness and a sincere respect for the truth".

John Densmore was a founding member and drummer for The Doors, keeping the beat behind Jim Morrison right from their first performances in the nightclubs of Sunset Strip. He has survived the pressure, the spotlights, and the indulgence of America's most popular psychedelic band, and is here to tell about it.

Oliver Stone, director of the movie The Doors, praises Densmore for his "self-experienced insights as a survivor and a seeker".

John will also play his drums...

If you're a musician, you won't want to miss this class as Densmore discusses The Doors music, how the songs evolved, the legendary recording sessions, the worldwide tours and more. And there will be plenty of time to ask John your personal questions.

You'll Get To See John's Private Doors footage...

Densmore's presentation - part lecture, part performance, part video display - features rare footage of the band. In an eclectic tour of an era that transformed popular American culture, Densmore will discuss the tormented genius of Jim Morrison, the Doors' singer, and his own fascinating journey from teenage musician to overnight fame.

Whether you're a musician or a Doors fan, don't miss this once in a lifetime opportunity - up close and personal with John Densmore. Seating is limited. Call today to reserve your tickets.

Bring A Friend ONLY \$5 more



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Mr. Densmore's lecture fee will benefit The Minority Student Scholarship Fund and The Institute for Positive Education.

To Register

The Doors: The Sixties & Now With John Densmore is on Sunday, September 29 from 1-4 p.m.. Send your name, address, PC code and check or money order for \$34 or \$39 for 2 to: The Learning Annex, 4 Collier St., Toronto, Ontario M4W 1L7. Charge your order! Visa*, Amex*, or MasterCard* accepted. Send your account no. and expiration date.

For immediate reservations call 416-964-0011

call THE LEARNING ANNEX 416-964-0011

Just answer the Skill Testing Question and drop off your ballot at The Herald, 45 Guelph St., Georgetown, and you could win a double pass to John Densmore's "The Sixties, & Now!"

Question: "Who Was The Lizard King?"

Name _____ Phone No. _____