

# New environment group has worthwhile ideas

The recent formation of local environment group, Silver Creek Environmental Association, probably has some residents asking themselves: 'Why does the Town need another local ratepayer group?; these groups only stir up unnecessary trouble!'

I base this conclusion on comments denouncing the local groups as radicals, that were made during the recent municipal election campaign by politicians and members of the public alike.

To counteract the public's negative perception of local environmental groups, I pointed out in last week's column the important role local group's Protect Our Environmental Resources, (POWER) and Ecology Awareness Group - Landscape and Environment, have played in ensuring the Niagara

Escarpment's natural features are maintained.

Continuing on this theme, I now want to examine the Town's newest environmental group, Silver Creek Valley Environmental Association.

Although the group has only recently formed, several of its members, including group spokesperson Ashley Ranson, have been working for quite a while on protecting Silver Creek from being damaged because of development.

It was Mr. Ranson and several others who first informed Halton Regional staff of the existence of two dormant landfills located in the valley - the same area Halton Region consultants had identified as a suitable location to build a new trunk sewer to service development in Georgetown West.

If the project had gone ahead



Ben's  
Banter  
by  
Ben Dummett

without knowledge of the contents of the dormant landfills, then construction of the trunk sewer would have meant disruption of the landfills and the subsequent contamination of the valley.

The project would probably have gone ahead because it was the least expensive option.

As it stands now, the Region is re-examining the valley trunk sewer option with respect to the effect construction would have on the landfills and in turn the valley.

Now that Mr. Ranson and others have united under the group name Silver Creek Valley Environmental Association, their mandate has been expanded from protecting Silver Creek Valley to include the protection of Black Creek, the Credit River, hazard lands, groundwater recharge areas and woodlands.

Successful protection of these areas from harmful development means the adoption of an ecosystem approach to planning, advocate group members.

The ecosystem approach, among other things, requires measuring the cumulative environmental im-

pact development projects have on the surrounding area.

The Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront has indicated it will recommend to the Provincial and Federal governments that they adopt the ecosystem approach to determine how and where development should proceed.

In supporting such a new and innovative approach to planning, the Silver Creek Valley Association shows itself to be forward thinking and not, as some people may want to believe, a group committed to doing nothing but creating headaches for local politicians.

Before commenting on the usefulness of a local ratepayer group, people should take some time to understand the group's work.

# Maybe Canada needs a new political system

While the unravelling of the various Federal constitutional initiatives could be ascribed to partisanship and incompetence, we may want to look at the drama from a different angle.

The repeated constitutional disasters (the patriation of the Constitution without Quebec, the Meech Lake's fiasco, the rebirth of strident nationalism in Quebec...) cannot be simply imputed to our political leaders. After all it is simply not likely that ALL our leaders are vapid heads.

All partisanship put aside, we have to recognize that we have had, and we still have, at least some, competent and highly intelligent people in government.

Is there another reason for what looks like a disaster in waiting? And is the word disaster the right word to use?

What if instead of a negative outcome, the process of change would lead us to a better political structure?

Strangely, only in Quebec is change expected to be beneficial, anywhere else in Canada we seem to fear change.

Let us move back to the past and review our history and then let us move to another situation and see if it bears any lesson we could learn.

In our past there is no "God given" reason for the existence of Canada.

An Italian discovered North America and his Country (the Republic of Venice) did not even consider taking, even nominal, possession of the new lands.

The French send over a few thousand people and proceeded to usurp the rights of the native population. A bunch of wealthy British adventurers took over a huge mass of land, North of the French possession, simply to get some furs. Then came wars, revolutions, and Canada came into being, as a counterweight to the revolutionary, idealistic United States.

Lacking a proper identity the new country got an appropriately vague name "Dominion". Not a Kingdom, not a Federation, not a Confederation, just Dominion. And good luck to he who tries to figure out what that means. If we look at our troubles today we can



Another  
View  
by  
Carlo Tesla

see the roots in the past.

We call our government "federal" while we celebrate "Confederation day". There is a big difference between a federation and a confederation, and some of our conflicts are caused by the fact that some provincial governments consider themselves part of a Confederation, others part of a Federation, and others change their mind from day to day.

Be that as it may, the people of this strange country managed to create a good life for themselves. People of all origins came to

these "arpents de neige" and made Canada the second richest nation on earth. A paradox? Maybe, but also a demonstration of the power of men and women.

Political structures are not eternal. They evolve and change according to need. Some time the evolution is peaceful, at other times it is violent. But change is unavoidable and largely unforeseeable.

The falling apart of the Soviet Union and even of what used to be the Russian Empire, shows how a formidable political structure, even with centuries of history, can disintegrate in a matter of months.

The once powerful Federal Government of the Soviet Union is now not even able to pay the hydro bill, and runs the risk of being evicted for failure of paying the rent!

And now let us look at Canada with an unbiased eye. We are a different people, living under different geographical conditions, but with some common ideals (democracy, tolerance) and some common interests (trade, independence from our powerful

neighbor). However, we are also very insular.

It is extremely difficult to be accepted in Nova Scotia, or in Trois Rivieres, or in London. Tolerated, even liked yes... but accepted?!

What if the political failure of finding a constitutional agreement would be caused not by inadequate politicians but by the simple fact that a square peg does not fit in a round hole?

What if time has caught up with us, and the obfuscation of the past, the powerful glue of military force which brought Canada together simply will not work any more? What if, instead of trying to fix the unfixable, we start looking at an all new political structure, more responsive to our needs and dreams of today?

There are many ways a "Canada" can exist: for starters what about the one proposed by the Council of Canadians: a confederation of three states, a French, an English and an Indian one? It is just a thought, but when the car cannot be fixed it is time to look for a new one.

## People's Forum

### Crucial time for community

Dear Editor:

Now that the "Blue Book" re Acton quarry landfill is out Halton Hills is approaching a very crucial time which could change our lives drastically. I would like to put a few of my thoughts forward for your consideration.

Firstly, let us be thankful for the beautiful part of the country in which we live and particularly for the abundance of clear pure water right from the aquifer in the limestone formation. Is this worth fighting for? You bet it is - not only for ourselves, our children and grandchildren but for future generations way into the next century. We are all stewards of the environment and we must do our part just as our ancestors and pioneers played their role. We must not destroy what we can never replace.

Secondly this is your fight, the fight of every man, woman and child who lives in Halton Hills and values your water. I ask each and every one of you to participate in whatever way you can. How you ask? First we ask each of you to write a letter to the premier (a copy to the Minister of the Environment), stating your objections and your feelings about this proposal. POWER will see that they are delivered. Next by purchasing memberships and draw tickets for the Bateman prints, and by purchasing the "Game of Georgetown" or mak-

ing a donation. A great big thank you to those who already have. It helps pay the bills. POWER has lobbied at every level of government. I remember when R.S.I. first brought this proposal forward. They expected to have garbage trucks rolling into the quarry by 1989 (Acton Free Press, June 3, 1987). We have held them off this long. Now let us all work together and put forth a final blow which will put an end to that idea forever as KEEP has done with Lac Minerals in Milton.

As treasurer of POWER I can tell you our war chest needs replenishing as our expenses are many. We are confident we have a good lawyer who has proven

himself in the success of the Niagara Escarpment Commission Amendment 52.

Lastly and certainly not least I would like to commend Beeline Travel for their financial support. POWER is sincerely appreciative of their generosity. They are donating \$50.00 a month until this proposal is defeated and they challenge other businesses to do the same. Businesses or individuals let us hear from you. We can be reached at Box 274 Acton, L7J 2M4 or I can be reached at 853-0039.

Thankfully yours,  
Marjorie Kirkwood,  
Treasurer of POWER.

### The facts of life

Dear Sir:

As soon as I get The Herald in my hands I look at the "letters to the editor" page, searching with eager anticipation for one of the bemused notes from the beloved deputy leader of the Family Coalition Party of Ontario, Mr. Giuseppe Gori.

His letter, "Compensation Denied" (The Herald, November 26) did not disappoint my expectations: "...a woman who was inseminated with an HIV infected egg..." he wrote. Would someone who knows Mr. Gori explain to him

the facts of life, as who does and what and to whom?

Sincerely,  
John Gams,  
Georgetown, Ont.

### Write us a letter!

The Herald wants to hear from you. If you have an opinion you want to express or a comment to make, send us a letter or drop by the office. Our address is 45 Guelph Street, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 3Z6.

All letters must be signed. Please include your address and telephone number for verification.

The Herald reserves the right to edit letters due to space limitations.

## Poets' Corner

Baby Slumber

The innocence.  
The splendour.  
Of a baby.  
In slumber.  
Is special.

As I stand,  
Looking,  
Hardly daring,  
To breathe,  
I wonder,  
Where do babies go,  
In slumber?  
Do they go to a land, where  
milk flows in rivers?  
Or a land where trees grow  
cookies?  
Or does each baby have his own  
special land,  
Where anything can change,  
Just the way they wish to be?  
As I stand,  
I wish,  
That I knew,  
Which was true,  
For I like,  
To be a baby.  
Too!

Leah Marion Carney.

An Autumn Dawn

In the cool awakening of an October dawn,  
The trees stand tall with their leaves half gone.  
Their lush green coats of the summer past,  
Have turned to shades of an autumn cast.  
So rich, the golds and browns or reds,  
That they can't help but turn  
the hidden heads.

People do stop too stand and gaze.

And some try to describe these trees ablaze.

But they always fall short of the beauty they see.

For they are mere people like me and not thee.

James Turner  
Georgetown

THE DOVE

The dove  
Flying across the sea,  
with grace,  
moving alone and free.

Nowhere to go  
Nowhere to stay,  
off on the horizon  
Fading away.

Mary Moore, Acton.

WIND BLOWS

Whistling wind blows,  
turning the fallen leaves,  
Stopping between breaths.

Catherine Kinnon, Acton.

BROKEN PROMISES

Shattered hopes of forever go  
wanting,  
Lying broken with promises  
past -  
Like the shell of a tulip in summer,  
A beauty too fragile to last.

B. Brooke,  
Acton.