

Disturbing trends

Halton Police recently reported that there were fewer deaths (10) on area roads in 2009 compared to the previous year.

Seven fewer deaths— or a 40 per cent drop— to be precise.

That is certainly welcome news.

However, mixed with that good news was the fact that two disturbing trends remain: some drivers are still drinking and driving and many refuse to wear their seatbelts.

Of the 10 road deaths in Halton in 2009, alcohol played a role in three of the fatalities while not wearing a seatbelt was a contributing factor in four deaths.

“Responsible drivers have as powerful an influence on improving road safety as do police or engineers,” said Chief Gary Crowell. “Buckle up, slow down, don’t drink and drive and don’t be a distracted driver. These are simple, easy ways you can help ensure you arrive safely at your destination.”

Halton Police’s three-pronged approach of education, engineering and enforcement (in co-operation with Halton Region and other community partners) can only go so far in making our roads safer.

Steps are also being taken to deter careless drivers— fines will be increasing for several serious traffic violations such as failing to wear a seatbelt (\$200) or failing to stop for a red light (\$260)— and a new law prohibiting drivers from using handheld devices while driving comes into effect February 1.

But the ultimate responsibility rests with each and every person who gets behind the wheel of a vehicle.

It is those drivers who must somehow understand the seriousness of their actions (or inaction) before they, or someone else, becomes a statistic.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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WEB POLL RESULTS

A surgeon rushing to the hospital to perform an emergency operation on a patient was recently stopped and ticketed for speeding by a Toronto police officer. Was the officer right in ticketing the doctor?

- Yes. The law is the law (25%)
- No. The officer should have used better discretion and let the doctor off with a warning. (75%)

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Letters to the editor

Few examples of good development

Dear editor,

I was encouraged by Dr. Peter Kurylłowicz’s letter on development Dec. 30.

It is quite backwards that so many of us now consider “development” to be a four-letter word because we just assume that it will be bad news— there are so few recent examples of development that nourish the soul and spirit, as additions to traditional main streets were apt to do. Upon mention of new development on Highway 7, would anyone assume that it would be anything other than a seedy-looking strip mall fronted with lots of up-front parking housed in a building put up as cheaply as possible that had no intention of contributing to a positive urban landscape?

However, we are lucky in Georgetown to have a functional and useful downtown area, as the downtowns of many other towns have been turned into tourist destinations or trendy places to be seen boutique shopping. Our downtown area serves a purpose and you can get a lot done there. The decision

to keep the library downtown was a very good one. Likewise, the plans for the GO station area are also positive and forward-thinking.

At the same time, though, I don’t think you can simply transplant ideas from Europe into North America. We have a different culture, different densities, and different expectations. And our cars are much more a prosthetic extension of our minds and bodies.

*Matthew Buckley-Golder,
Georgetown*

Thanks for support

Dear editor,

The volunteers who run the Upper Credit Humane Society’s Thrift Shop in the Moore Park Plaza would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have supported us over the past three years by donating all the wonderful items we sell and making our store a regular place to shop.

We continue to be amazed at the generosity of this community. All proceeds go directly to help the animals in our shelter and they also say thanks.

*Wendy Jones, volunteer,
Upper Credit Humane Society,
Erin*

Snowballs no joke

Dear editor,

’Tis the season for throwing snowballs... but kids are already taught in school that throwing snowballs is not allowed.

Perhaps it is time to emphasize to kids that throwing snowballs at cars is NOT allowed and these kids should surely be reprimanded or do community service to amend their mistakes.

Mill Street and St. Joseph School is a favourite spot of these renegade kids. My windshield sustained a scratch from the massive impact of a snowball thrown directly at my car. I turned around and stopped at the St. Joseph’s parking lot, together with another vehicle, which also sustained a hit. We both confronted two boys crouching by the bushes waiting for cars.

This is a serious offence and should be looked into. I do not have compassion for these kids. I tried to call the non-emergency police line to no avail.

Please call attention to this seemingly minor infraction, but could brutally lead to a fatal accident.

*Evelyn Ashrafi,
Acton*