

Sound advice

Thanks to a working smoke alarm that sounded early last Friday morning a Georgetown family of six is alive today.

Their story should be enough to scare each and every homeowner in Halton Hills to ensure there are working smoke alarms on every floor of their home.

Forget the fact that it is the LAW in Ontario that every home be equipped with at least one working smoke alarm on every storey, including the basement and outside every sleeping area.

Forget the fact that homeowners, landlords and tenants who do not comply with this law face a ticket of \$235 or a fine up to \$50,000 (or \$100,000 for corporations).

Forget the fact that if a person intentionally disables a smoke alarm they are guilty of a provincial offence and may be subject to a fine.

However, local homeowners should not forget the fact that a working smoke alarm gives you a fighting chance if a fire does break out.

Since 1997, the number of fire deaths in Ontario has declined by 50 per cent, but every year there are tragic news reports of people perishing in a house fire where the smoke alarm was either not working or the homeowner had disabled it or the batteries had run down.

Let's be blunt.

There is no good reason for not complying with the smoke alarm law or for testing your alarm regularly and keeping it clean. To not do so is inexcusable, dangerous, irresponsible and potentially deadly.

Anyone not following the letter of this law is only asking for trouble.

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 Anonymous letters will not be published.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

Halton Police report there was an 8 per cent drop in the number of criminal occurrences last year.

Do you believe Halton is actually becoming safer?

- No (65%)
- Yes (35%)

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Letters to the editor

Liberals have a proroguing past

Dear editor,

I have learned many people didn't know proroguing was a legal option.

Moreover others have been given the impression that when the Liberals prorogued it was "appropriate".

I would like to set the record straight.

In 2003 the Liberal party prorogued for 82 days— no parliament. Why? Perhaps they were trying to avoid Governor-General Sheila Fraser's damning report on the sponsorship scandal. (That was 1 of 16 times).

Bob Rae, the Liberals' second in command, prorogued provincial Parliament three times after Rae's NDP won power Sept. 6, 1990.

By 1994, he was running double-digit deficits and he'd doubled the debt. He prorogued the third time on Dec. 9, 1994. Parliament did not sit again until the legislature was dissolved April 28, 1995. Rae didn't even bring in a budget for that year. For four months there was no parliament.

Grandstanding about democracy is useless if you're up to your knees in hypocrisy.

L.J. Schertzl, Georgetown

Let kids be kids

Dear editor

Re: Snowballs no joke (Jan. 19 letter)

And to think I sometimes forget how great it can be to live in Canada— that the worst threat to someone's peace could be something as simple as children throwing snowballs.

In some parts of the world it could be bandits waiting to murder travelers and pilfer their belongings or a roadside bomb that could destroy your vehicle in an instant.

Yes, the distraction caused by the noise of a snowball hitting your car could be dangerous, and the whole "don't throw snowballs" lecture should include the consequences of a distracted driver hitting someone or something.

But really, this is not a serious offence or a brutal crime, and it shows a lack of perspective on reality to say it is.

I think there are important things that our police, prosecu-

tors, judges, correction and probation officers have to deal with, and making it illegal for children to act like children should not be one.

Jamie Deforest, Georgetown

Hold those pooches

Dear editor,

In response to the letter entitled "Keep dogs leashed on public trails" (February 23), I would just like to commend Councillor Jane Fogal for having the courage to stand up for the residents of Halton Hills with respect to dog owners who act irresponsibly and let their dogs wander unleashed in public areas.

I, too, have had run-ins with boisterous dogs, and would like to remind residents that leash-free parks exist for the sole purpose of letting one's dog run uninhibited and free. You will rarely find someone who does not own a dog at these parks.

Use public trails and walkways, but remember that others have to use them too. Keep your dogs close by and on a leash when in general public areas.

M. Vrankic, Georgetown