

Talking point

Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong isn't the first politician to want to reform Question Period, just the latest.

This Thursday Chong, an easy-to-talk-to polite chap, will bring forward a motion in the House of Commons to reform Question Period. Chong's motion contains six specific proposals:

- Elevate decorum and fortify the use of discipline by the Speaker
- Lengthen the amount of time given for each question and answer
- Require that ministers respond to questions directed at them
- Allocate half the questions each day for backbench members
- Dedicate Wednesday exclusively for questions to the Prime Minister
- Dedicate the rest of the week for questions to ministers other than the Prime Minister.

In a perfect world, Question Period is supposed to be the 45-minute set aside each day for MPs to civilly ask questions of the government in an effort to hold the government of the day accountable for its decisions.

However, in recent years Question Period has often resembled a cross between an ultimate fighting match and a Kindergarten class full of kids let loose in a candy factory. Herding cats would be easier than getting elected officials to forgo the grandstanding, caterwauling and name-calling that is often associated with Question Period.

Chong's motion contains several interesting suggestions such as requiring ministers respond directly to questions asked of them and lengthening the amount of time for each question and answer.

We would suggest that lengthening the entire session from 45 minutes to perhaps an hour and a half would be an improvement.

It will be interesting to see if all parties can reach common ground on this issue and not just on items such as blocking the auditor general from looking at MPs spending practices.

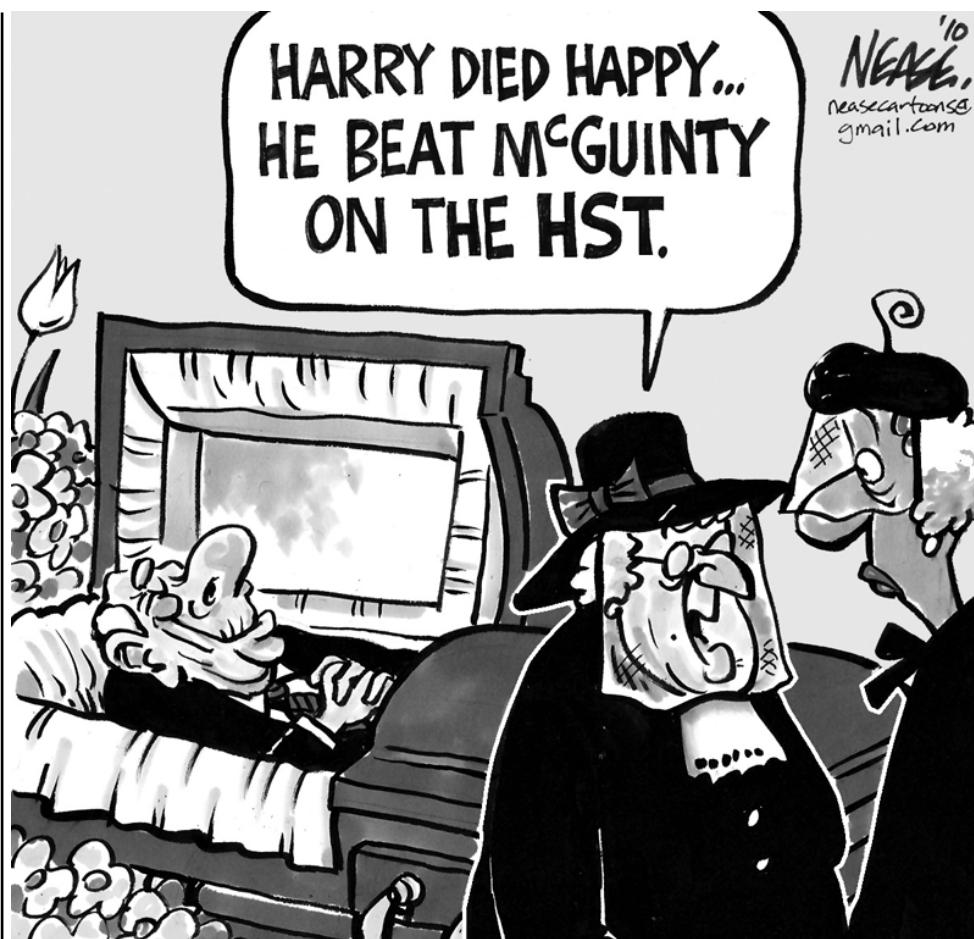
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WEB POLL RESULTS

Which of the four remaining teams will win the Stanley Cup?

- Chicago Blackhawks (29%)
- Montreal Canadiens (39%)
- Philadelphia Flyers (27%)
- San Jose Sharks (5%)

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Letters to the editor

Resident wants mailbox returned

Dear editor,
 I hope this finds the ears or heart of the person(s) I need to address. I am all for those who choose to pick through piles of stuff on big pickup/bulk week collections. But you must remember that unless asked by a property owner you are not permitted to trespass onto someone's property for your scavenger hunt.

The Town clearly states that those who want to rid of things are to put it ON THE CURB. Not until a few days after the most recent pickup, did I realize that someone had taken my cast iron (albeit broken) mailbox that my mother left for me when she passed. For some reason I cherish that mailbox and truly do not appreciate anyone coming onto my property and taking it.

If you have any morals at all, you may consider at least returning my mail that was in the box when you took it! But where the heck will you put it? You took my mailbox!

P.S. To my letter carrier(s), please accept my apology for any

inconveniences or confusion this ignorance may have created for you.

Elisabeth Kraus, Georgetown

What is MP's stance?

Dear editor,
 MP Michael Chong where do you stand on the matter of the Auditor General's request to audit the accounts of Parliament including the expenses of its members?

Personally, I find the refusal of the Parliamentary Committee to accede to the Auditor General's request for an audit an affront to all taxpayers.

Do Members of Parliament have something to hide?

Rod Taylor, Georgetown

Doggy do's and don'ts

Dear editor,
 I know that many people were picking up garbage to celebrate Earth Day, doing their bit to protect our environment.

I have a special request for those people who walk their dogs on the Hungry Hollow trails and stoop and scoop. Please go one step further and take the bags home to dispose of them. Some people carry them to the end of the trail and then deposit

them against the trail signpost. (Unfortunately some people still leave them at the side of the trail.)

The Town is promising to put garbage cans at each entry site which should help, but meanwhile no one is picking up those plastic-covered pieces of excrement full of bacteria. If you are a dog lover and care for your animals please extend that care to other animals and humans and clean up completely after your dog.

Ann Geh, Georgetown

CtK's Annie was great

Dear editor,
 The sun certainly came out at Christ the King last week as the school's production of *Annie* opened.

I have been to many school plays but this one stands out. I was in awe of the talent of all the actors and actresses on the stage—the character development, the beautiful singing and fantastic dancing. Many times during the performance I thought, "Are these professional actors?" the play is that good.

I must commend the students and the teachers for all their hard work and dedication to this project, it certainly paid off.

Maria Bruno, Georgetown