

Gone to pot

Over the past several weeks Halton Police officers have been beating the bushes—literally.

Officers were busy uncovering nearly a dozen rural marijuana grow operations (along with a few residential ones) in a sweep that netted 1,500 plants worth an estimated street value of \$2 million.

Five people from south Halton were charged.

According to Det. Sgt. Nishan Duraiappah of Halton Police Drugs and Morality Unit most of the rural grow ops were of a “third-party basis”.

“They (those running the illegal operation) would, for example, trespass on a large rural property owned by a farmer or a real estate development,” said Duraiappah.

Most property owners would be unaware of the grow operations on their land.

The largest grow op in Halton Hills was 150 to 200 plants found at Trafalgar Rd. and 27 Sideroad.

Halton Police say marijuana grow operations pose a safety risk to both the public and police officers and over the coming weeks growers will be returning to their crops to harvest them.

They offer tips to the public if they find a grow operation:

- Don't touch the marijuana plants due to possible chemicals on them.
- If confronted by a marijuana grower, just leave the area, record any licence plates and call police.
- Do not approach an outdoor grow, due to the low percentage of grows being booby-trapped or guarded.

If you discover an outdoor marijuana operation call Halton Police at 905-878-5511 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) by texting SMS#CRIMES (274637) or visiting www.haltoncrimestoppers.com.

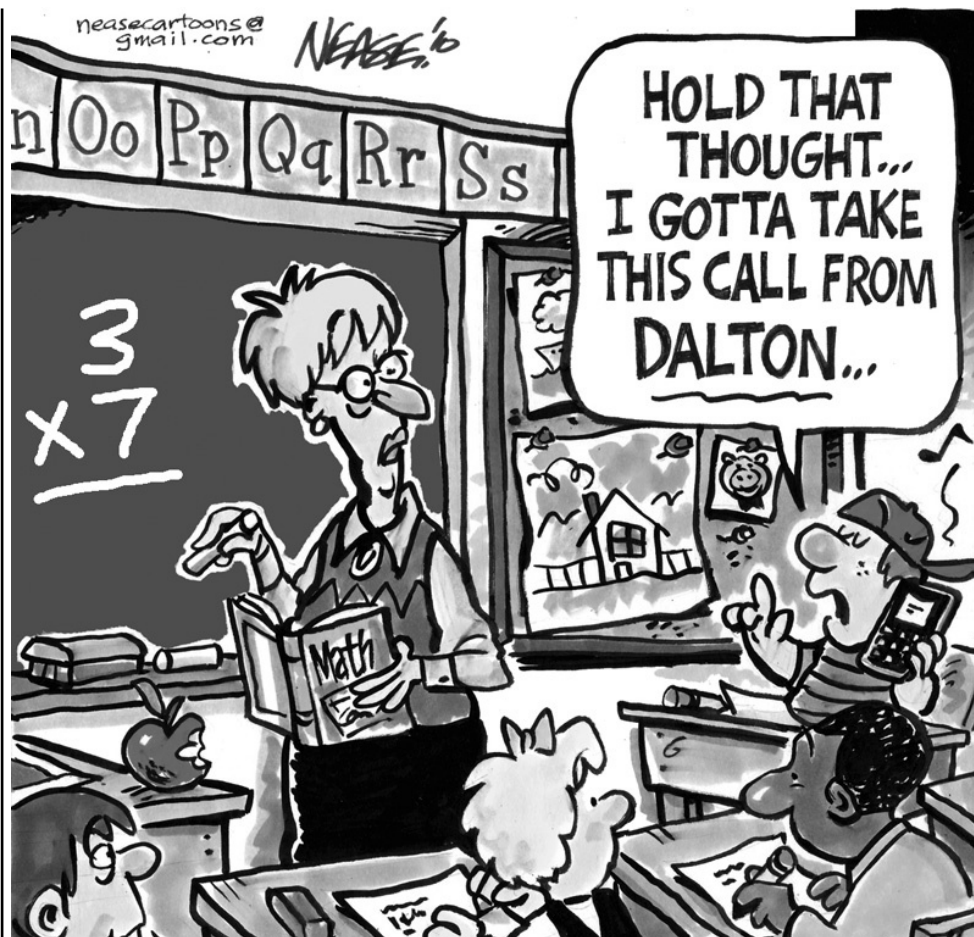
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E-mail: jmcghie@independentfreepress.com
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Steve Nease

905-873-0301
Publisher: Ken Nugent
General manager: Steve Foreman
 (sforeman@independentfreepress.com)
Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell
 (ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)
Managing editor: John McGhie
 (jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)
Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler
 (ngeissler@independentfreepress.com)
Classifieds
 Kristie Pells
 (classified@independentfreepress.com)
Accounting
 Rose Marie Gauthier
Editorial
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor
 (cgamble@independentfreepress.com)
 Ted Brown: Photography
 (tbrown@independentfreepress.com)
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer
 (ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports
 (emaher@independentfreepress.com)

WEB POLL RESULTS

Premier Dalton McGuinty says school boards should consider allowing students to use cellphones in the classroom to access online information. Is this a good idea?

- Yes (7%)
- No (93%)
- Don't know (0%)

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Letters to the editor

Loud motorcycles prevent accidents

Dear editor,
I would just like to respond to the recent letters posted about motorcycles in our town.

I started riding about a year and a half ago and have since become involved with a group that does a lot to support local and national charities. Our local chapter supports Autism Halton, a very good cause. Every year we put on a “Show and Shine” in the Price Chopper parking lot on Father's Day. This event attracts a lot of bikes and, yes, some of them are noisy. This year we raised more than \$1,500 in this one-day event.

I do understand the complaints about loud pipes on bikes as they can be very loud indeed. However, as I experienced just this afternoon when riding home from work, people just don't seem to see motorcycles on the road. I was almost in an accident because a driver did not “see” me. Had I had loud pipes it may have got his attention and the incident could have been avoided.

I ride my bike every day and I see people do stupid things; many of

which are dangerous either to themselves or others. Bikers are doing what they have to do to get noticed. If you want the bikers to be quiet then you need only do one simple thing— look!

As the saying goes: look twice, save a life. Watch for motorcycles.
Brad Gillies, Georgetown

Other vehicles are noisy

Dear editor,
I am writing in response to the letters that have been printed recently in regards to loud motorcycles.

I, too, live on a road that seems to attract motorcyclists, however I find that they really do not take long to pass my house. Yes they are loud, but then so are lots of other vehicles. People also like to modify their truck and car exhaust systems and these I find often to be louder than most motorcycles.

Also, not all motorcycles have to have a modified exhaust system to be loud, some come from the factory that way as do some cars, trucks, and buses.

So let's not single out one particular group as there are many more offenders than just those that are on two wheels.

Carrie McCaffrey, Erin

Cops back registry

Dear editor,
Re: The national gun registry debate
It is a fact that the GTA is far different than rural Alberta or small town P.E.I., but officer and public safety knows no boundaries. The Canadian Police Association along with the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police and the Canadian Association of Police Boards are united in their opposition to Bill C-391.

There have been disputes over the amount of times police access the registry. The system is accessed nationally some 11,000 times daily. We here in Halton do so on a regular basis. We are confident that most Canadians would agree that if it can prevent human injury or death, it would be worth it.

In the past 10 years, 16 Canadian police officers have been killed on duty by a firearm. Fourteen of those involved a long gun.

The Halton Regional Police Association represents over 900 uniform and civilian members and is a member of the Canadian Police Association which is the national voice for over 41,000 police personnel across Canada.

*Robert Waller, President
Halton Regional Police Association*