

Priority one

With the Town's shopping cart already overflowing with items to run through the check-out counter— arenas, seniors' centres, cycling paths, parks and trails to name a few— another goodie was tossed on top of the pile Monday.

In what Halton Healthcare Services President and CEO John Oliver called an "extraordinary request", HHS asked council for \$4.546 million contribution towards the proposed expansion and renovation of Georgetown Hospital.

"It's your decision that is going to trigger this," said Oliver.

The \$12.196 million project is required now in order for the 50-year-old hospital to accommodate a new CT scanner, approved but not yet purchased, because they have nowhere to put it.

The CEO explained that it would likely be seven to eight years— and that's not guaranteed— before the hospital would get funding from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for this project. Lobbying by health officials and Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnett have proven fruitless over the years.

(Thanks for nothing, Mr. McGuinty.)

Oliver listed numerous stats outlining how the project would benefit the community but perhaps one stat was most convincing: the hospital's emergency department is designed to serve 14,000 visits each year; it currently handles 32,800.

A special public meeting, in conjunction with the Monday, Jan. 24 council meeting, will be held to allow members of the public to hear the hospital presentation, and Town Treasurer Ed DeSousa's suggestions on how the Town could chip in its share. The public would be asked to provide feedback.

While council has been under pressure to determine how far into debt it wants to go to accommodate the many wish-list projects, we suggest HHS's request for upgrades to an invaluable facility that serves **ALL** the community should now be at the top of that list.

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 Anonymous letters will not be published.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. Publication is not guaranteed.

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WEB POLL RESULTS

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty has hinted he may not finish his term if re-elected this fall. How do you feel about this?

- If he's re-elected he should finish his term (7%)
- He is free to quit any time in his term if re-elected (24%)
- If he doesn't intend to finish his term he shouldn't run (69%)

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Letters to the editor

Cartoon shows newspaper's bias

Dear editor,

The offensive cartoon by Steve Nease (Jan. 4) shows yet again your simple-minded editorial bias.

The implication of the cartoon is that because it's cold and there is unusual weather, global warming is not happening. If this were just a light and thoughtless cartoon then there wouldn't be a problem. But in the context of the past few years, where moneyed interests have been working so hard to change public opinion against any efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the cartoon takes on a sinister meaning. Our government and industry publicists such as the inappropriately named Friends of Science have shamed us before the world.

In how many Metroland papers did this cartoon appear? It seems you are neither "independent" nor "free" as the Georgetown and Acton banners proclaim.

I think you should state your ownership so we know who is making these editorial decisions. If your editor says he is free of influence and not even pandering

to the owners then he should come out and state his opinion on this environmental issue.

Rick Hall, Caledon

(Editor's note: The newspaper's ownership (Metroland) is listed on this page every issue (below left) as well as on our website. Each Metroland paper's editorial department operates independently).

Second thought on arenas needed

Dear editor,

I was heartened to read that a majority of Halton Hills Council members deemed it appropriate that "sober second thought" be given to the proposal to build three new ice pads (January 6 article "Arenas decision on ice").

To put the proposal into context, Council is being asked to saddle the property taxpayers of Halton Hills with a debt of \$25.2 million (i.e. \$1,193 for each and every assessable property) so that 4,260 children (8.0% of the current population of Halton Hills) can "(get)... enough ice time".

Simply because the municipality has the authority to raise money through taxes, for various municipi-

pal services and projects, should not be taken as a mandate to do so in the absence of due consideration for the needs, rather than wants, of all the residents of Halton Hills and the ability of property taxpayers to foot the bill.

K.R. Borkowski, Acton

Growth 'inevitable'

Dear editor,

Living in the country, I know how nice the peace and quiet is to experience and I don't want that feeling to disperse.

It may not seem like it, but it really wasn't that long ago there was a big and open field where the Superstore, the new subdivision and Christ the King Catholic high school currently reside.

We all know it, but some of us don't want to accept it; the impending urbanization is unfortunately almost inevitable. Over the past few years, Brampton has been slowly filtering in closer and closer to the heart of our little and innocent town.

I may not be a fan, but what happens happens; it's the way of the world.

Megan Reilly, Grade 12 GDHS Georgetown