

Read all about it

If you were illiterate, you wouldn't be able to read this newspaper or thousands of other items that provide direction, enjoyment, context or information needed to grow and navigate through life.

Thursday (Jan. 27) is national Family Literacy Day, an initiative that encourages families to spend 15 minutes per day reading or practising a literacy activity together.

Studies have shown that higher literacy skills translate into a healthier nation, more civic involvement amongst residents and are linked to economic success.

The theme for Family Literacy Day 2011 is Play for Literacy, which can include all types of play that encourages literacy and numeracy development, as well as comprehension skills such as board games, card games and imaginative self-created activities and games.

ABC Life Literacy Canada offers a few tips on how parents can engage their children in literacy with these fun tips and activities:

- Follow a recipe together— it's a fun way to practise reading, math and comprehension.
- Surf the Internet to discover fun and educational sites.
- Make everyday tasks learning experiences. Ask your children to write out a shopping list, address an envelope or help make a calendar of weekly activities.
- Let children count out the change when making a purchase. Reinforce the importance of math in everyday life!
- Introduce a family board game night where everyone is encouraged to read instructions, spell words and keep score.

For more information, visit www.familyliteracyday.ca.

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 Anonymous letters will not be published.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.

E-mail: jmcghe@independentfreepress.com
Mail or drop off: Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1.

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NEASE: neasecartoons@gmail.com

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
 (jmcghe@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

Should local municipalities be responsible for any funding when it comes to hospital building projects or expansions or should all the costs of such projects be paid for by provincial tax dollars?

- Municipalities should pay some of the costs (48%)
- The Province should pay all the costs (52%)

Go to www.independentfreepress.com

Letters to the editor

Readers speak out on arena issue

Below and on page 7 are excerpts of letters received over the Town's recent decision to defer capital budget approval for funding for three arenas.

Perhaps the problem is we have a council that is out of touch with the needs and activities of our residents.

The HHIUG (Halton Hills Ice Users Group)... has agreed to user fees and mergers as samples of their willingness to work with the Town and yet we are no closer to a resolution.

Recently my son played a game in Orangeville in which Georgetown was the home team and Acton was the visiting team. My 13-year-old's team is assigned ice time at 9:30 p.m. on a school night. Is it council's intention to push families out of town? Does it want to become a retirement community?

Halton Hills has been negligent when it comes to ensuring the recreational needs of our youth are being met. I agree increasing taxes and going into debt are not pleasant, but neither are inactive youth. Perhaps the Town does need to take a second look... are three more rinks really enough?

J. Murphy, Halton Hills

Hockey in Halton has kept my kids busy and out of trouble. I would support tax increases for these arenas and possible ice surcharges to offset costs.

Harry Charalambides, Georgetown

There once was a time when each age group had an "all star" team to represent the town. Now it is not uncommon to find four or more "rep" teams in each age group, each with expectations of 3-4 ice times per week.

It is unclear to me why we need to have "rep" teams made up of the second, third and fourth stringers, using disproportionate amounts of ice-time. The only way to modify the public's behaviour to meet the desired end, is through financial means. In other words, you'll have to pay to play. Privatize the new arenas, give entrepreneurs incentives to build and operate them, and get the users to foot the bill.

C. Wilson, Georgetown

I would hope that our Town council would pay close attention to the youth in our community and make it a priority to allow them the opportunities they felt were promised when they and their families moved to Halton Hills.

We, like many other families in this Town are willing to help fundraise and pay our fair share to make these three

arenas a reality.

Brenda Geim, Acton

My son plays for a Georgetown hockey team that practises in Erin and has home games in Orangeville.

My family and I feel that every dollar paid in taxes are dollars well spent. However, the situation with our ice rinks is completely unacceptable and we need to remedy it immediately.

Jack Mastromattei, Georgetown

Did we not just go through this a few years ago? The last time we had an ice shortage, we decided to add a single sheet of ice. I commend communities like Oakville and Milton for planning ahead and building projects, instead of waiting until there was a crisis. The majority of growth in Halton Hills will be around 2021. We will be having this exact same conversation in five years... again.

According to Stats Canada, overweight rates are at record highs. If we, as adults, cannot provide the means for children to be active, what do their futures mean to us? Inactive adults.

Councillor Jane Fogal, wants more time to figure out how this will affect her bike paths and parks. This community is in crisis right now. Represent us and build ice.

Jay Anderson, Georgetown