

Flawed thinking

The reporting of criminal activity—and alleged criminal activity—has been a staple of newspapers forever.

Alerting the community to illegal activity and identifying those both charged and convicted is something that is not done haphazardly.

Doing so, we believe, provides a public service. We inform readers of areas in town that have been targets of break-ins, of ongoing scams, where vandals have struck, etc.

We have, since 1996, identified those who have been charged with crimes. We believe not publishing names offers little value to the reader or the community as a whole. We also believe publishing names of the *accused* can act as a deterrent to others.

That certainly pertains to those who may consider driving after drinking. If the fear of having your name in print for impaired driving has stopped even one person from getting behind the wheel while drunk, we believe our policy has proven successful.

Unlike some other newspapers, we do not limit the publishing of names of those charged with impaired driving solely to the holiday RIDE campaign in December. That, in our mind is unfair.

During this month Halton Police, which is the source for ALL “police blotter” items, wanted Halton newspapers to publish the breathalyzer readings of drivers charged, but would not release their names, fearing it could prejudice their court case.

We asked police officials to continue to provide us with the names of those charged and not their readings. They agreed.

However, this past week Halton Police charged a Georgetown driver with being an astonishing four and a half times over the legal limit. Police issued a separate press release to all media, without naming the individual.

After the story was picked up by other media in the GTA, Halton Police refused to reveal the driver’s identity to us arguing (perhaps rightly) this driver—and his readings—could now be identified by our story that would name him.

That is why the driver’s name does not appear in today’s story on page 3.

We do not believe it is right that a person who is allegedly driving while more than four times over the legal limit is not identified when all other impaired drivers are, or have been.

Halton Police were undoubtedly well-intentioned in their decision to publish breathalyzer readings as means of raising awareness of the hazards of drunk driving but this decision was flawed in our eyes.

We believe you, our readers, were owed an explanation as to why this omission occurred.

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Letters to the editor

GDHS students congratulated

Dear editor,
 I was in awe after being treated to an inspiring performance by the Georgetown District High School music program, *A Classy Classic Christmas* last Thursday evening.

All the bands, ensembles, choir, solos and duets performed with professional precision, but that is not why I was so impressed.

Students learned on Monday that their music teachers had been transferred out of the school, and on Tuesday they were told that no staff member would be available to support the performance of the Christmas concert.

With two days’ warning, this large group of more than 250 Grade 9 to 12 students took over the planning, choreography, and execution of the entire event, even down to the conducting.

Without any adult direction whatsoever, the students handled the evening with poise and class. As challenges to the production arose, students were undaunted and quickly problem solved and proceeded with the show. What in-

dependence, what leadership, what resilience!

If these are the leaders of tomorrow, I feel grateful that we will be in good hands. Congratulations to the GDHS music program students.

*John Lanthier,
 Georgetown*

Acton light show is disappointing

Dear editor,

I just finished reading an article about Light up the Hills and how great these events were in both Georgetown and Acton.

I understand that there are more than 200 trees lit up between the two locations. I have driven by Dominion Gardens and it looks amazing, but I have also driven by the Acton location and there are a total of six trees lit up.

I’m sure there is a reason for this but maybe we can change this and have the rest of the trees by the soccer field and hockey arena covered in lights next year. Let’s not forget about Acton when it’s time to light up the hills.

*DJ Nascimento,
 Acton*

Santa Calls thanks

Dear editor,

The Town of Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department would like to extend a very special thank you to everyone who contributed to the annual “Santa Calls” program.

A big heartfelt thank you to Rick Chambers from Optimist Club of Georgetown who assisted in recruiting more than 20 volunteers over three days. Their efforts are inspirational and have made a lasting impression on many children. In this busy world, it’s wonderful to have people who will take the time to share with others.

To the school principals, Kindergarten teachers, and parents—thank you for participating in our 2011 program and helping to make it such an incredible success.

A final thanks goes McGibbon, Subway and Swiss Chalet for providing the fuel for Santa to call so many children.

With everyone’s contributions and hard work Santa spoke to more than 900 Kindergarten children and their families to wish each and everyone a very Merry Christmas.

*Frank Prospero,
 Recreation Supervisor -
 Community Development
 Town of Halton Hills*