

EDITORIAL

with Frances Learment

With one of the lowest crime rates in the GTA and Golden Horseshoe area, it is easy for Halton residents to be lulled into a sense of justified safety, or being free from harm. That is even more pronounced, for some, in North Halton where geographic distance and a pride in community make every day life just seem even safer.

That illusion was shaken, for some, on Monday when an armed gunman robbed a Bell store in Georgetown, getting away with an undisclosed number of cell phones. The brazen mid-morning heist involved a lone male "brandishing what appeared a black firearm."

No shots were fired and no one was hurt, but three local schools went into "hold and secure" mode during the investigation, which is on-going for a white, male, aged 25 to 40. Several made the comment that the gun incident was "too close to home," and probably involved a suspect from rapidly-growing communalities to the east or south of Halton Hills.

Naive to think small towns can avoid "urban" crime by dint of location and the desire for a small-town quality of life? Yes, but less comforting after this gun incident.

With tragic school shootings still in the news south of the boarder, Halton police announced it had signed a Halton Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol this week. It provides schools and community partners with a "consistent approach to evaluate risk and effectively share information in order to avert potential tragedies," according to the police release.

With provincial and Regional grants, 250 school and community members received Violence Threat Assessment training and protocol training begins next month.

Hope it never has to be used in a Halton school.

PAST PAGES

TEN YEARS AGO

• The 'average' Acton property owner will pay four per cent more this year for Town taxes – that \$838 or \$32 more following Council's approval of the budget.

• The McKenzie-Smith Bennett Grades seven and eight fledgling hockey team received a generous donation of new jerseys from Siemens Canada Ltd., whose general manager lives in rural Acton.

FIVE YEARS AGO

• Taxpayers face a 9.8 per cent jump in the own portion of their tax bill as Council debated a \$25-million operating budget with little "wiggle room."

• An inspection by Ontario's Chief Firearms Office found areas of the Guelph Rod and Gun Cub in Eden Mills were "non compliant." Safety issues were raised by neighbours who complained bullets were landing on their property.



FREE SKATE: Approximately 130 people accepted the invitation for a free skate at Acton arena on Sunday afternoon, courtesy of Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott, who skated with wife Lisa and youngest son, Dean, 13. – Frances Learment photo

Cabin fever musings

With almost two weeks of "house arrest" with both kids sick, and with only a few moments of escape to either a doctor or pharmacy, I found myself a bit stir crazy with cabin fever. The little guy got this construction set for Christmas and at one point I found myself staring at the construction men and noticing they had a large resemblance to the 70's disco group the Village People.

In between positioning our Village People into the YMCA dance poses and capturing them in pictures while trying to explain the dance to the kids, I found myself pondering a few things. First I was thinking about hockey. Specifically, I was thinking about the return of the NHL and wondering if the strike or the lockout or whatever it was, was really that bad?

I suppose there are the die-hard fans in hockey withdrawal. For those I noticed the CBC was playing repeats of old NHL games which I could not understand for the life of me why anybody would watch a repeat of a regular game. I know some businesses could have been affected by the lack of NHL games, like the bars near the arenas or retail stores specializing in NHL merchand-



By **Angela Tyler**

dis. However, I can't really recall anybody I talked with in the past few months that was devastated by no NHL games. If anything, maybe some of the junior teams or OHL league benefited by it all. My query now is if the playoffs used to seem to go well into the spring, does this mean they will go into the summer this year?

I'm not sure if it was during breaks in my renditions of YMCA or while the kids were napping, I was reading some newspapers online and noticed Justin Trudeau's hair. What the heck happened there? First, let me admit I think he is a handsome man. When I heard he was going to follow his father's footsteps into Canadian politics I said he was probably going to get elected because of his name and his looks if nothing else. Secondly, I am well aware that a political career choice wreaks havoc on the person. Have you ever looked at a picture of Bill Clinton when he was first elected President and what he looked like in the end of his run? Boy,

did he age rapidly, although I'm sure all his scandals didn't help.

Back to Trudeau. As I said, he is a handsome man or was? Then "Movember" came along. He supported a great cause however, some men are just not meant to have facial hair. Now he is sporting his shaggy dog look. He went from clean cut, nice styled hair to a mop of hair that is long enough to wonder if he can see properly. I don't get it. If you want to be in federal politics and you want to have the trust of the country then get a haircut at least and look the part.

And finally, I read that British bookies are now taking bets on who is going to have their baby first... Kim Kardashian or Kate Middleton (Duchess of Cambridge). This was in a legitimate newspaper. Let's see we could report on world items such as Middle East conflicts, the inauguration of President Obama or even the NHL resuming, but instead they focused on this. Ugh. I have nothing else to say on this one.

By the end of the week I realized one thing very important. I was ready to get out of the house and quite thankful the kids were finally well enough too.



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