

COMMENT



The way we were

'Plowing' the roads in '58

Before the advent of gas-powered snowblowers, snowplowing was sometimes done with horses, as shown in this photo outside Terra Cotta General Store in 1958. Straddling the Towns of Halton Hills and Caledon, Terra Cotta was once known as Salmonville for the abundance of Atlantic Salmon in the Credit River at spawning time. While salmon disappeared with development, they were reintroduced in 1988 and are still part of the charm of Terra Cotta today.

Text courtesy of Heritage Halton Hills/Photo courtesy of Esquesing Historical Society

From our readers



DOING THEIR PART!

Jason, 9, and Paige, 7, of Acton, spent some of their own time on Sunday cleaning up street garbage left over from last Wednesday's windstorm. A lot of papers, cans, and boxes were left everywhere after being blown out of the recycling bins left curbside for pick-up. Proud mom Kelly, who took the photo, is hoping this picture would encourage others to get out there and clean up their neighbourhoods.

*Have a photo you want to share?
Email — with details — to
cgamble@theifp.ca.*

Hoax: (noun), an act that is meant to trick or deceive

Is the proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP) a hoax, according to the dictionary definition of the word?

The idea for an ORPP was initially conceived by the Liberals before the 2014 election.

By promising a new provincial pension scheme, they hoped to capitalize on the anxiety many Baby Boomers feel about whether or not they've saved enough to enjoy a comfortable retirement.

"Vote for us," the Ontario Liberals implored in essence, "and worry no more. We'll look after you in your old age with our new provincial pension plan."

But they neglected to mention that Ontario workers currently in their late 50s and early 60s, who are closest to retirement, would pay very little into the ORPP, and thus would receive very little in the way of benefits.

"Stephen Harper's the problem," the Ontario Liberals charged. "He's so mean he won't enhance the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), and he won't help us. If Justin Trudeau is elected, we can work with him. We won't need to bring in an Ontario pension."

But they forgot to add that Mr. Trudeau might have other priorities.

"Trust us," the Ontario Liberals said. "We're good stewards and we can look after your money better than you can."

But they hoped voters had forgotten more than a decade of scathing reports from the Auditor General about their wasteful spending.

"We'll have an arm's-length board administer the program," the Ontario Liberals promised.

But they didn't disclose how much

it will cost to administer the plan, and that it will overlap and duplicate the bureaucracy of the CPP, which has exploded in recent years.

And conveniently, they stopped talking about the fact that, all along, they'd been planning to use the funds to pay for the Premier's pet infrastructure projects.

"The ORPP will be wonderful," the Ontario Liberals concluded.

But they forgot to mention that cash-strapped workers' paycheques will be reduced by almost two per cent to pay for their share of contributions.

And they downplayed their own Ministry of Finance estimate, that the plan may lead to the loss of thousands of jobs, as employers scale back hiring to pay for it.

Based on this, our Finance Critic believes it may cost Ontario 54,000 jobs.

The Ontario Retirement Savings Plan means less take-home pay for workers, higher payroll costs for employers, fewer jobs, more bureaucracy and dashed hopes.

But is it a hoax?
You can decide for yourself.

My wife Lisa and I would like to thank everyone who attended our Family Skate events in Georgetown, Acton and Aberfoyle on successive Sunday afternoons last month.

It was great to enjoy one of our classic Canadian winter pastimes together.

Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott welcomes your comments.

He can be reached at 1-800-265-2366. His website address is www.tedarnott-mpp.com.



TED ARNOTT

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