

# EDITORIAL

with Frances Learment

## Participatory democracy

Over 9.2-million people are eligible to vote in the 41st general province election next Thursday - a vote that will cost \$90-million to stage following a short campaign which featured approximately 650 candidates and a lot of finger-pointing.

In the 2011 vote, just 49.2 per cent of Ontario voters - an alarming record low - cast ballots. Here in Wellington-Halton Hills, 52.2 per cent made the trip to the polls and overwhelmingly re-elected PC incumbent, Ted Arnott, to office.

Here, in Wellington-Halton Hills, the participatory part of this whole democratic exercise seemed to stump two candidates who were neither seen nor heard from the day the Writ was dropped. Although Libertarian Party flag bearer Jason Cousineau, and Freedom Party of Ontario candidate Mitch Sproule went through the nomination process, neither was seen nor heard during the campaign, and 10 days before the vote Sproule's email and cell phone were no longer in service.

If even some of the registered candidates don't want to participate, who can fault the voters? There are places in the world right now where citizens are fighting and dying to vote, yet we seem to think it is a chore, or maybe some don't bother, assuming incorrectly that their one voice won't make a difference. It can, and with the help of special ballots, advance polls, vote-by-mail, and new accessible technology, it is easier than ever to cast your ballot.

## PAST PAGES



### TEN YEARS AGO

• Mayor Rick Bonnette said he, Council and the public are "ready for a fight" to save the obstetric and paediatric units at Georgetown Hospital, moves Bonnette said would increase mortality of both infants and mothers.

• Acton High School student Heather Maxwell, 16, was appointed as one of two student trustees on the Halton District School Board. Maxwell sat on Acton's student council and was a member of the Halton student senate.

### FIVE YEARS AGO

• The handiwork of local artists was showcased in downtown store windows as the Acton BIA (Business Improvement Area) helped spotlight the talents of local artists with *Celebrate the Arts*.

• Halton Hills Community Energy Corporation got out of the telecom business after Town Council authorized the sale of Halton Hills Fibre Optics and Hummingbird Wireless to Atria Networks for \$4.7-million.



**RIVETING TALE:** A large crowd of kids was held spellbound last Thursday as an Acton librarian read the book *Go Away Big Green Monster* to them during the weekly Family Story Time at the Acton HUB, located at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School. - Ted Tyler photo

## The mysteries of childhood knowledge

Sometimes, I really wonder how our kids - or any kid for that matter - know what they know. There is always something they say or do that makes you take a step back and think, "how do they know that?" or "when did they learn that?"

Last summer, both of our kids had bicycles. Little J kind of rode her's, but not without the training wheels and help. The little guy liked to sit on his. By fall nothing much had changed. The tires on their bikes were still looking like new and the bikes were packed up for the winter. In the spring, on the first day we got them out, both kids knew how to ride a bike by themselves. I asked the Dude if he showed them and he insisted he did not. I can usually tell when he is extending the truth and I knew he was not. How did they just know?

The other day, I walked into the little guy's room and his singing bear was playing. Both of the kids love the bear - it sings an Elvis song and they bounce around with their kid guitars jamming to it. This time, they were linked with their bodies facing each other,



By Angela Tyler

arms properly held and they were trying to dance, proper ballroom type dance. The Dude came in and asked me how they knew how to dance, and if I showed them. I didn't. I was as stumped as him. It might not have been the prettiest ballroom dance, and surely not Dancing With the Stars-worthy, but they were trying.

At times, it's hard to let them do the things they know or want to learn. Every day I catch myself struggling to let go and let them do things, instead of me doing for them. It can be little things, like pouring milk into a glass, but I've cleaned up a lot of milk from the floor.

I'm getting a lot of the "I knooooooow mom. I can do it. Let me." I don't think I'm ready for this. I wasn't expecting that kind of talk at four. I certainly wasn't expecting her to inform me the other day that she needed a moment by herself, and that she was going to her room. I didn't know if I was

in shock with her pronouncement, or jealous that she was able to, and I wasn't.

If the little guy thinks I shouldn't be sending an email or be on the computer, he will just come over and turn off my screen. If my cell phone is charging and plugged in and rings, as opposed to the sound it makes for a message, he will run, unplug it and bring it to me. While shopping, he also insists on updating my grocery list on my phone.

Long gone are the days of getting him to grab the box of cereal and toss it in the cart. Now, he won't do that until he "taps" the item off the list.

I don't ever remembering using sunscreen or bug spray when I was a kid, yet they live by both and have no qualms about reminding me if I forget. The other day, Little J abruptly and sternly informed me "Mommy, if you send bug spray to school it CANNOT have DEET in it. It has to be un-DEETED." She's in JK. How does she know about DEET? I don't even know if I know what DEET really is.

Maybe one of them can explain it to me.



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