

EDITORIAL

with Traci Gardner

The stigma of mental illness

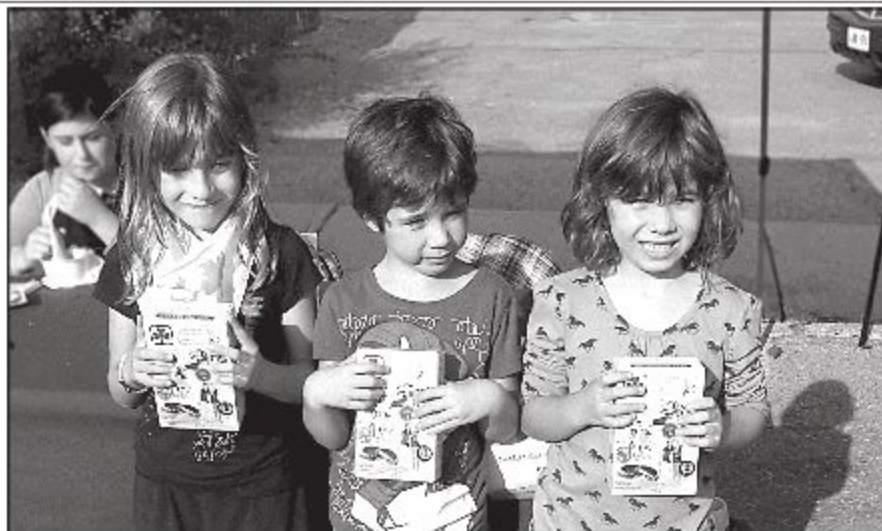
One of the biggest concerns in mental health is the stigma that surrounds it. This stigma marks someone as being different from others and unaccepted, and it is this belief that leads to discrimination. There are still attitudes that view symptoms of mental illness as threatening and uncomfortable. It is these attitudes that sometimes prevent those who are suffering not seeking help.

Many people who suffer from mental illness report that the stigma they experience from members of the public, friends, family and co-workers, and even at times from the very services that they turn to for help, has a more devastating impact on them than the illness itself. They often feel judged, shamed or embarrassed.

According to the Canadian Mental Health Commission, 42 per cent of Canadians are unsure if they would socialize with a friend who has a mental illness, 46 per cent think that people use the term mental illness as an excuse for bad behaviour, and 40 percent of parents say they would not even tell their family doctor that they had a child with a mental illness. Those results are staggering, and show that things are not changing fast enough.

It is important to be able to speak about it openly, without shame or fear. This is a huge step forward in recovery. We must endeavour to create a stigma-free environment of acceptance and understanding because it encourages those who need it, to seek help and support.

We know that reducing stigma is a huge challenge, but it begins with education. And it is up to each of us to seek this knowledge. A good reference is www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca



COOKIE TIME: Visitors to last Thursday's Farmers' Market were able to purchase Girl Guide Cookies from sisters Kaitlyn, Jennifer and Jordyn Garton-Buvan. - Ted Tyler photo.

It's your right to vote

It's quite apparent the municipal election campaigns are in full swing. "Vote for me" signs scatter the country side and at every corner it seems.

I am finding the election this time a bit more interesting. First, it's hard not to be interested in the Toronto race. Between Rob Ford's recent health issues and now the race heating up between Rob's now running for Mayoral position brother Doug and John Tory, it's hard not to keep interested. I am quite surprised that Olivia Chow isn't progressing further ahead in the polls. Between her ongoing activity in politics as well as her husband, the late Jack Layton, I was expecting higher rankings in the race so far.

I've been researching our local candidates by reading literature provided, checking out their website if they have one, creeping them through social media avenues and just plain-old-fashioned talking to them in person when the opportunity arises. I'm also finding when I see something I want to know more about them, I've gone back to searching online for more information. With the unlimited resources of the in-



By
Angela Tyler

ternet I do believe this is the most educated I have ever been in regards to having enough information to really vote in an informed manner.

I think we are lucky here in Halton Hills with our candidates. First, I used to think it was sad that we don't have a lot of people running for office. Now, when I drive through towns such as Milton who have so many candidates with eight wards and up to seven candidates in each ward running just for local council it can be a lot to figure out who you want to vote for.

The other thing I think is really good about our town is that most of the people who are running for every office are "local people" who have community involvement and are known in our towns and are more established, not just brand new to the area. I may not know each person individually, however with the use of the internet I am able to find out about the candidate.

I am surprised with some that I thought I might not have known them however, in fact, I already had knowledge of them or their community involvement. When I vote for someone, I want to know they have community involvement not that they just moved to town and decided to seek office for whatever reason. I think with a larger community with a lot of candidates it would be more challenging to figure this out.

I realize too, sometimes, in my opinion especially with local politics it is good to get new people into office and a new perspective. However, for me, I want to know the person I am voting for has an established track record which includes community involvement and a stability in our town that they are not just running for office for personal gain or on a whim.

The most important thing to remember about this municipal election is to vote. It is our communities future that you are helping choose. Advance polls are available on October 15 and October 18. Election Day is October 27. If you are eligible to vote then please do vote. It is your right.

PAST PAGES



10 YEARS AGO

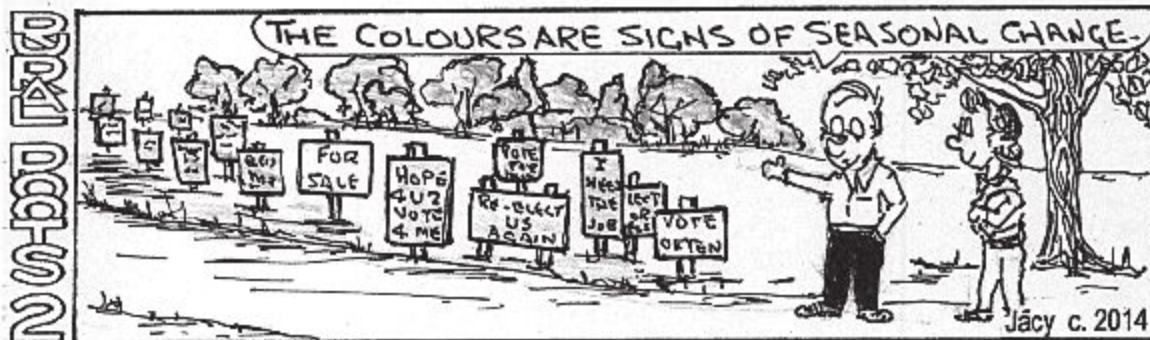
• Councillor Clark Somerville prepared a Notice of Motion asking council to consider allowing parking again on the South side of Mill Street after merchants signed a petition stating that the total parking ban is hurting their businesses.

• An Acton man had lots to be thankful for on Thanksgiving after receiving a successful live donor kidney transplant. Dan MacCallum had been surviving on daily dialysis before receiving a kidney from a former co-worker.

FIVE YEARS AGO

• Town Council agrees to waive the \$61,510 in development charges for the new Acton Urgent Care Centre building permits, which means Dr. Nather Alsharji and partner, could proceed with plans for a new urgently needed medical centre.

• Risk Watch, an injury prevention program for school aged children becomes part of the curriculum for all of Acton and Georgetown elementary schools, to promote safe decision making, and avoiding preventable injury.



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