

# EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

## Power in paint

There is something particularly insidious about swastikas – especially when used as hate crime symbol and stupidly spray painted in public and private places to shock anger and break the law.

On the weekend, someone spray painted swastikas on the wall at Acton High School, and on three road signs in the Third Line/32 Side Road area. That's hate crime graffiti, a Criminal Code offence targeting race, ethnicity, religion, age or sexual orientation.

A rear window and door at the Town Hall Centre on Willow Street was defaced with graffiti, and the front window of the Off the Wall youth centre was spray painted with what could be letters – so-called graffiti art.

Regardless of the type of graffiti – latrinalia is the name for washroom graffiti – it is a growing, expensive problem, that if not removed, gives the impression that no one cares about the overall state of the community.

People in Halton do care – and in a big way – the mandate of the multi-member Graffiti Action Group (GAG) is to eradicate, educate and enforce graffiti bylaws. GAG said social costs related to graffiti in Canada is \$2-billion annually.

If you know who is responsible for this latest spate of graffiti in Acton, call Detective Constable Paul Harrower at 905-878-5511 ex.2113, or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).



**DOG DAYS:** The Dog Days of Summer are a very hot, stagnant period of mid-summer weather. The name comes from the ancient Roman belief that Sirius, the Dog Star, which is close to the sun, was responsible for the hot weather. Gracie, a Jack Russell Terrier, knows how to beat the heat. – Frances Niblock photo

## Looking Back

### Ten Years Ago

- School was not out for approximately 4,000 Halton public and separate school students, forced by bad grades to attend summer school.
- Dublin Line residents appealed to Town Council to pave or hard top their dusty road which is full of what they claim are dangerous potholes.
- Between 40 and 45 employees of Rockwood Gardens lost their jobs when the American company that owned the mail order seed, bulb and plant company, declared bankruptcy.

### Five Years Ago

- Passenger rail service in Acton could be a reality if the Federal and Provincial governments agree to improve commuter rail service on the so-called North Mainline.
- Once again, a flurry of activity by large machinery on the former Beardmore Tannery land sparked development rumours for the 160-acre property.
- Halton will investigate increasing capacity at its Acton waste water treatment plant, but the water-related freeze on development remains in effect until testing at the Prospect Park well is complete to ensure it can meet Acton's needs.

# Farming vs. freeway

The fight against a potential 12-lane highway on prime agricultural land across the south end of Halton Hills is gaining momentum and supporters. In a unanimous vote last Wednesday, Halton's Planning and Public Works committee joined Town's battle against a proposed east-west corridor – called option 4-3. That vote was to be ratified at Halton Council yesterday (Wednesday).

Provincial plans show two major highways – the 4-3 option between Five and Ten Sideroads connecting at the 401 and Tremaine Road, and option 4-2, supported by the Town, for a north-south corridor running along Halton Hills' eastern edge, connecting at the 401/407.

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette convinced his committee colleagues to support the Town's

position against the highway, arguing it is "not necessary" and violates the Town and Region's Official Plan visions for slow growth and protected agricultural land.

Backed by facts, not emotion, Bonnette detailed the Town's multiple consultants' reports indicating that option 4-3 would impact heritage features and watercourses, consume 119-hectares of land, and lead to urban sprawl. The Town argues widening the 401 to 12 lanes in a core/collectors system, not 10 lanes as proposed, would negate the need for an east-west highway corridor.

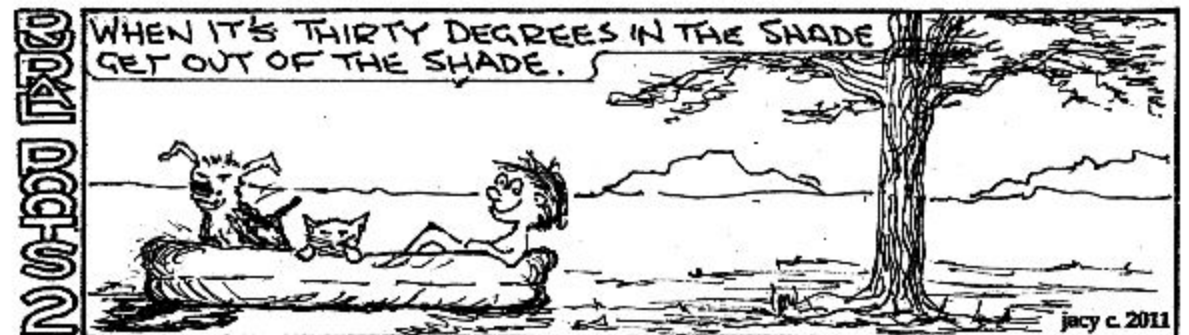
"[Option] 4-3 would lead to urban sprawl, as most 400-series usually do, and that flies in the face of citizens of Halton Hills – I'm sure through Halton Region – which have been following the

Sustainability Plan," Bonnette said, adding it would "give a serious body blow to agriculture." A staff report said option 4-3 would provide "network redundancy."

Halton also wants the Ministry of Transportation to accelerate all of the currently planned works in Halton so landowners in potential highway corridor areas are not in limbo for three-to-six years as routes are investigated and selected.

Bonnette said the Halton Hills community has risen to the occasions to oppose option 4-3 by inundating the Minister of Transportation with thousands – approximately 5,000 to date – with anti-4-3 postcards.

The citizen opposition group is using Facebook and Linked in Blogs to spread the word. Lawn signs are in the works, and a public meeting is being planned.



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