

GRAPEVINE

PA DAY

Elementary and secondary schools with the Halton District School Board, Halton Catholic District School Board and Upper Grand District School Board will be having a PA Day this Friday, April 28.

FREE COUNSELLING FOR YOUTHS

The Elizabeth Fry Society Peel-Halton NOW programs offers free counselling for Halton Hills youth between 12 to 24 years old on Thursdays at the Halton Hills Public Library, Acton Branch, 17 River Street. Please call 289-233-1871 for more information and to book an appointment.

MUNCH TO THE MOVIES

On the PA Day this Friday, April 28, kids are invited to Munch to the Movies at the Halton Hills Public Library. Bring your lunch and munch. Both branches will be showing Moana at 12:30 p.m. Drop-in; space is limited. For more information, visit www.hhpl.on.ca or call 905-873-2681 ext. 2520 or 519-853-0301.

EARTH WEEK CONTINUES

Earth Week celebrations continue for Town of Halton Hills with the Halton Hills Earth Day Event on Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Robert C. Auston Operations Centre at 11620 Trafalgar Rd. Residents can purchase trees for a nominal fee (4 trees per person until 10 a.m.), pick up free compost or wood chips—remember to bring a shovel—drop off hazardous and electronic waste, as well as enjoy breakfast and a barbecue lunch.

EARTH DAY AND SUSTAINABILITY FAIR

This Saturday, April 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. come out to the Georgetown Market Place. Local organizations will showcase their good work in the community that make Halton Hills a great place to live. Donations to the local food banks will be gratefully accepted.

Also, Green Leadership Tours will be available on Saturday, April 29 throughout the community. For more information, visit www.haltonhills.ca/earthweek

ROBERT LITTLE SPRING MUSICAL

Robert Little has added an additional performance of the Spring Musical, 'Jukebox Time Machine' on Wednesday, May 17 from 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. This musical has iconic songs from the 1930's – 2000's. There are eight Grade 3, 4, 5 classes (175 students) involved, including Junior Everybody Dance Club and Glow Choir. Acton Seniors and community members are invited to this free show.

CANADA'S 16TH PRIME MINISTER

Canada's 16th and youngest Prime Minister, Leader of the Progressive Conservative (PC) Party Joe Clark was elected as Prime Minister in June of 1979, a day shy of his 40 birthday. However, his minority government made it difficult for him to accomplish much during his mere nine months in office. Clark's government did establish the Freedom of Information. After promising tax cuts during his election campaign, but his budget including a four cent per litre gas tax in an effort to ease inflation and reduce the budgetary deficit, appeared to some as a politician who did not meet his promises. When a new election was called in 1980—the PC's hoping to gain a majority government—Clark's broken promises had a negative effect on his campaign. The Liberals won the election with 147 seats to the PC's 103.

After 1983's Conservative Convention, Brian Mulroney was elected to as party leader. Clark, however, was elected as party leader again in 1998. In 2003, when the Progressive Conservatives merged with Stephen Harper's Canadian Alliance Party, creating the Conservative Party of Canada, Clark announced her would not join the new caucus.



Charles Joseph Clark
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LETTERS

The views expressed in these published letters are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The New Tanner Publishing Ltd.



Response to Trish Bell's 'knotted knickers'

To the Editor,

I am a feminist. Like Trish Bell I believe in gender equality. I also encourage the young women in my life to achieve their goals; goals that they have been enabled to achieve by the women right's advocates who have cleared the way for them. These trailblazers may have called themselves feminists, or not, the label is unimportant as their actions spoke volumes. It is, however, inaccurate for Trish to classify all gender neutral language advancements as political correctness.

It is important that we adapt to changes in wider society with corrections to job titles. When I was growing up the terms mailmen, firemen, stewardesses were commonly used. They were also fairly accurate at repre-

senting the gender make up of those professions at the time. The problem was that, as a young girl, I did not understand that it was possible for me to become a mailman or fireman. That is why gender neutral professional titles are important. Young girls have to know that all professions are open to them and not just because their mom told them so but because our language has adapted to reflect the new reality. And I'm not sure what dictionary defined man as only "members of the species Homo sapiens" - I looked. The definitions that I found clearly also use the word "male"; but I digress. After conducting an unofficial poll of some men in my life they unanimously said that the change from mailman to letter carrier and fireman

to firefighter had not been at their expense. They actually found my question humorous.

In addition, Trish made reference to the tendency of women to do better in school and that they may be less likely to lose their jobs in some sectors, which may be true (I'm not fact checking), but she has not taken into account that many women later lose their competitive advantage in the workplace when they go on maternity leave. The full benefit of a woman's further education may never be actualized.

So from one capable and equal Canadian to another - you keep doing what you do and I may publicly disagree with you again in the future.

Melanie Flake
Rockwood

JUST A THOUGHT

Ode to the old



By
Trish Bell

When I was young, there was an unspoken rule that those in our society who were far beyond our years were to be revered and respected. We called them by their title unless (and this was a true privilege) they said so, and even then, most of us didn't. We listened when they spoke, for they had the experience of life to back up their beliefs. They were, without exception, to be treated with respect, dignity and, at the very least, compassion. They had, after all, paid their dues, participated in society and had earned that right. Cultures all over the world have adhered to this mentality for eons, but, sadly, it appears that Ontario is done with the status quo in regards to our seniors, and such arrogance and mistreatment should shame us all.

This week, the fact we are not doing enough for our seniors repeatedly came up at Queen's park. All over our province, people are waiting for long term care beds that just aren't there. According to the Ontario Long Term Care Association, "changes in 2010 to a much stricter admission criteria mean seniors are now much older, frailer and in need of more specialized medical and personal care than before because the funding isn't there to support them in these care facilities." Burlington is a prime example; according to Community Care Access Cen-

tre (CCAC), Burlington has 10 long-term care facilities, and a total of 1279 spaces. With seniors now outnumbering children, that number doesn't seem close to adequate, and it isn't. With over 176 000 people calling Burlington home and over 16 per cent of them now over the age of 65 that means that we'd need roughly 28 000 to accommodate everyone. True, most people do not require a long term care bed just because they reach 65, but if we continue to raise the cost of living, lower their available incomes and make them wait for health-care to such a point that seniors can't remain independently in their homes, we are, by choice, forcing them out. And with insufficient beds the options of rock and hard place come to mind. In our Burlington example, for instance, just 30 beds will be available come month's end, yet anywhere from 515 to 2575 individuals are currently on that waitlist, with some waiting for years because the criteria is based on the fact there will never be enough beds. In short, we are now triaging old age care like a battlefield medical unit.

Yet, that isn't even the worst of it. It was recently discovered that the raw food allowance per senior in Ontario's LTC program is a meager \$8.33, \$1.40 less than the convicted criminals currently incarcerated. The idea that we treat them worse than prisoners is repulsive. Dieticians of Canada's 2015 report said, "it was clear [LTC] facilities were serving cheaper protein foods and fewer fresh fruits and veggies due to budget constraints." Although, one might argue that \$240 for groceries a month is better than some living at home on meager pensions with outrageous hydro bills, clearly, our seniors deserve much better. And while there are several government programs available, they are confusing, difficult to find and even harder to qualify for, so our kith and kin will continue to find themselves stuck somewhere between the cracks, dreading end of life care that continues to get worse instead of better. Perhaps some of the \$368 million for health promotion, \$19.6 billion on seniors affairs and the more than \$51 billion spent on health and long term care could actually take care of the people who helped take care of us, not so long ago. For as Pope John Paul II said, "a society will be judged on the basis of how it treats its weakest members."