

EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

Plan for a safe and happy New Year

A few months back, the Halton Regional Police opted to release the names of individuals charged with impaired driving. Sure enough, every week a list of individuals charged is released—anywhere from just a few to as many as a dozen or more. But what is perhaps most baffling is that in spite of decades of anti-drinking and driving campaigns, driving under the influence remains an issue.

Earlier this month, Halton Police—along with police officers across the province—launched their annual Seasonal R.I.D.E Campaign. In 2016, the Seasonal R.I.D.E Campaign conducted 266 roadsides tests, made 51 impaired driving arrests and issued 54 road suspensions. Again, one is left to wonder how this continues to go on?

R.I.D.E Campaigns as well as organizations like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (M.A.D.D.) have for years worked to reduce the numbers of impaired drivers, and yet there are still people operating their vehicles while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Throughout the years, there have been too many tragic and senseless cautionary tales. Stories of lost loved ones, lost freedoms and lost lives. After all this time, all the campaigns, there really is no excuse. We know not drive after we've had a drink. We know to plan our way home before we head out for a night. So, the question remains, why does this continue to happen? And after so many years and so many campaigns, ignorance is no longer an excuse—if it ever was.

Police consider driving impaired a "Crime in Progress" and seek the community's help by reporting drunk drivers. The Safe Roads Program encourages people to report suspected drunk drivers by calling 911 with the following information:

- A description of the vehicle.
- Nearest intersection.
- Direction the vehicle was headed.
- A license plate number, if possible.

This year, with New Year's Eve just days away, if you plan to go out to celebrate, and if you plan to drink, also be sure to plan how you will get home. Call a cab, have a designated driver, or make your arrangements to stay with a friend. However, whatever you choose to do, be sure to make your plan before you've had that first drink.

Don't take the chance to gamble with your own life or someone else's. It's not worth it.

Be responsible, plan ahead, so everyone can have a safe and happy New Year.



Blair Minnes, Nicole Lisa Craig, Tom Nagg performed in Songs for a Winters Night at the Acton Town Hall on December 7. - Alex Hilson photo

Did we do our best?

One of my friends recently asked others if they had met their charitable donation goals for the year. I said to her I had never really thought about having a charitable donation goal. She, however, said we have goals for everything else, so why not charitable donations?

Years ago, I remember people would say you should give 10 per cent of your earnings to your church. These days, fewer people seem to go to church, and I'm sure that is reflected in the weekly collection. However, should charitable donation goals only be classified in a monetary sense?

While reflecting on my year; my own little 2017 in review, I took a look at myself. Did I really have a charitable donation goal, and if I did, was it met? Were my charitable donations monetary, or giving of myself? What had I done to help others, and more importantly what was I teaching our children? Setting a good example for our kids is incredibly important to me.

I do stuff to help others because that is what I like to do, and it is what I was taught. I grew up in a household where my parents showed me how important community involvement was and how we could also be a part of it. My parents were great examples of this to me. Give



By
Angela Tyler

when you can financially, and give of yourself even more.

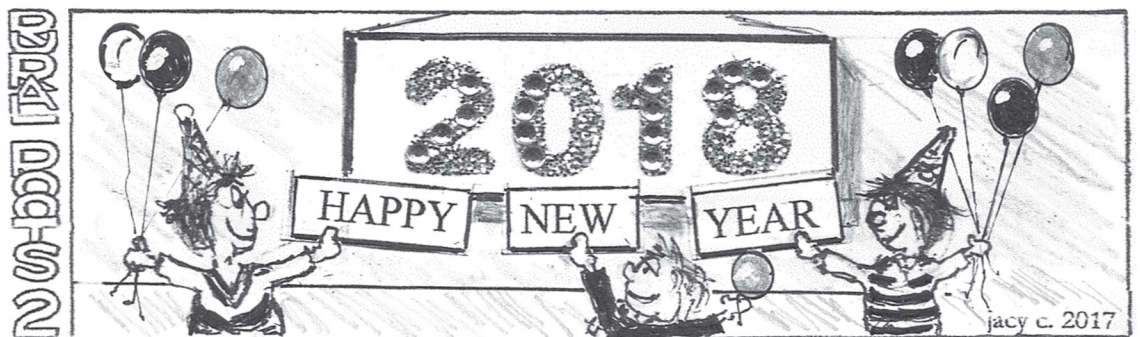
My dad always told me, especially at Christmas time, to give to the Salvation Army because when he was a young boy his uncles told him that they always made sure when they were in the War they had care packages. I find myself repeating this story to our kids now. Whenever they see a kettle at Christmas, they both ask me for change to donate. I remind them to say thank you and Merry Christmas because that was what I was taught. Yet sometimes, in the age of plastic cards, our donations aren't as fruitful as they have been. However, there's always coins at the bottom of my purse.

Saying thank you seems like such a redundant phrase and since it is pretty much basic manners you might ask why I remind our kids to say thank you. It's simple, really. That person manning the kettle or helping at a church bazaar or volunteering at the Fall Fair is doing it for no other reason than it makes them feel good about helping when you get right down to it. In my

opinion, each one of them deserves a thank you—no different than you would thank a waitress for bringing you your dinner, or thank the crossing guard when they stop traffic for you to cross safely, or thank your barber for cutting your hair.

Did I meet my charitable donation goals this past year? I think I did. I donated financially when I could, and I got more involved in our kids' school, local sports, and the community. Over the years as our family grows, our financial donations and community involvement evolves as well. However, what I am learning, though, is that our kids understand the concept of giving. They are asking how they can get involved in our community and are giving of themselves.

What I did learn this year is the part of my life that likes helping others and giving of myself is like the rest of my life, which is sometimes a non-stop roller coaster ride. This year's charitable donation goal for me is to continue to do what I am doing, but learn to recognize there needs to be a better balance of time. That's the key to basically everything in today's world...balancing time. Hopefully I can correct that example I've shown our kids.



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