

# OPINION

## Silence hurts

This past Tuesday (Sept. 10) marked World Suicide Prevention Day and the Halton Suicide Prevention Coalition (HSPC) used the day to help promote its key message of “Silence Hurts” throughout the region.

Clearly this is an issue for which there is far too little dialogue and for far too long has been dealt with as a ‘dirty little secret’.

Suicide touches many lives. Suicide is not an uncommon occurrence. Suicide is an issue which should garner open discussion and not be cloaked in secrecy. Suicide can be prevented.

“Suicide is a real issue in our community,” said Chris Pickersgill, Chair of the Halton Suicide Prevention Coalition. “The coalition’s goal, through community forums and our other resources, is to help reduce the stigma associated with suicide and mental health. Help is available in Halton.”

A free community event was held in Oakville Tuesday which, among other things, focused on the subtle signs of someone considering suicide and how to respond; how to seek help as an individual or deal with a loss; and what local supports are available.

A similar event will also be held at Georgetown District High School on October 8. The Georgetown evening (7-9 p.m.) will also include a youth break-out session.

To find out more about the HSPC, and how to get help, visit [www.suicidepreventionhalton.ca](http://www.suicidepreventionhalton.ca).

For services available to those struggling with depression or mental health issues, call Halton Region to speak with a public health nurse by dialing 311 or 905-825-6000, or visit [www.halton.ca/mentalhealth](http://www.halton.ca/mentalhealth).

### WEB POLL RESULTS

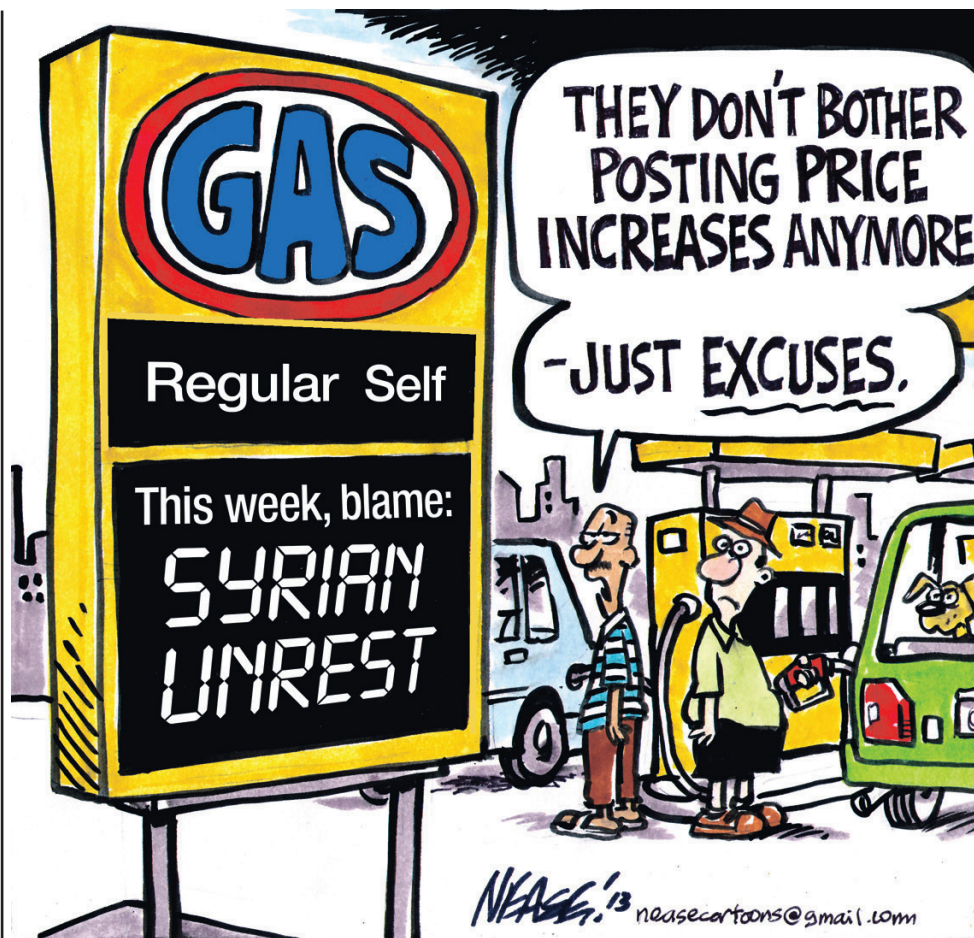
(Go to [www.theifp.ca](http://www.theifp.ca))

It's fall fair season. Will you be attending the local fairs this year?

- No. I don't go to either fair (53%)
- Yes. But only the Acton Fair (24%)
- Yes. But only the Georgetown Fair (12%)
- Yes. I will go to both the Georgetown and Acton fairs (11%)

### The Independent & Free Press

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## Letters to the editor

### Turkeys, butterflies victims of pesticides

Dear editor,

A short distance from where I live is a small farm.

Prior to the last 2-3 years there is a field that used to have wild turkeys in it most of the time I drove by. Then they were gone. The odd turkey might sometimes be seen, but not often.

Wildlife, like man, if it gets a good place to live usually stays in the same area. So what changed? There is no hunting on this property, so the turkeys were not chased away.

This property is owned by a friend. This spring he was showing me how he planted his garden to attract butterflies. It was impressive. He said he had a host of butterflies each year, which he loved to see. A couple of weeks ago I asked him, “How are the butterflies this year?”

He said he has seen no monarchs, and only had two butterflies. This fits in with my own observation in my garden— no butterflies at all.

So what has changed?

Then I found out that the person who rented his land was now growing genetically modified (GM) soy. So there you have it. Pesticides on the seeds—a crop that kills wildlife.

It is well known that wild animals do not like eating GM crops— hence the turkeys departing. The pesticides produced by the crop are killing the butterflies, and I suspect many other animals/insects.

If people do not wake up to this killing of the planet soon they may not wake up at all.

John Shadbolt, Acton

### Stranger's kindness won't be forgotten

Dear editor,

Recently I lost my wallet. I had to go through the tedious process of replacing everything.

My day began at the Service Ontario office on Guelph Street in Georgetown. I had all my documents to help me obtain a new copy of my licence but in my haste forgot to bring cash. It was still

habit to use my debit card.

When the clerk informed me I had to pay \$15, I had to admit I had no money. Before I could say that I would go home to get some cash, a lady beside me piped up.

“I’ve got that.”

“What?”

“I’ve got it, don’t worry. I’ve lost my wallet once too!” And she came over and used her debit card.

I was shocked, pleasantly so. In my happy shock, I forgot to ask her name. I did thank her, but want everyone to know that this mystery woman was a huge part of making my day better.

Thank you again—I can’t wait to pay it forward!

Kelly Friis,  
Georgetown

### Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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