



Artistic expression

As problems go, the donation of an \$800,000 art collection is a nice 'problem' to have.

But make no mistake, Fred Helson's recent generous donation of exquisite artwork has created a bit of a pickle for the Town and various local artists and arts groups.

In a nutshell, Helson's donation was gladly accepted by the Town, which quickly decided the best place for the collection was the Gallery at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre. The Gallery was renamed the Helson Gallery in honour of its benefactor and perhaps rightfully so.

But, by doing so, the local arts community, which often used the Gallery to showcase its works, was told the Gallery was no longer an option for their displays.

Alternative—and much smaller—locales had been suggested as had movable displays—art on wheels if you will.

No wonder the artists feel "insulted" and as if they've been shunted aside.

Mayor Rick Bonnette says restricting artists from the Gallery is "not going to happen."

But, at this point that appears to be exactly what has happened and the Town has botched the way it communicated its message to the arts community.

Even Bonnette acknowledged there was "some miscommunication".

Surely there is a solution for this problem either through artist Laura Kingsbury's suggestion of allowing artists use of the Gallery for the roughly 12 weeks a year it's needed or perhaps there is a suitable facility currently in town that could play host to the shows.

Town officials and local artists need some face-to-face time to work out a solution—which shouldn't be difficult considering there are several creative thinkers on both sides of the table.

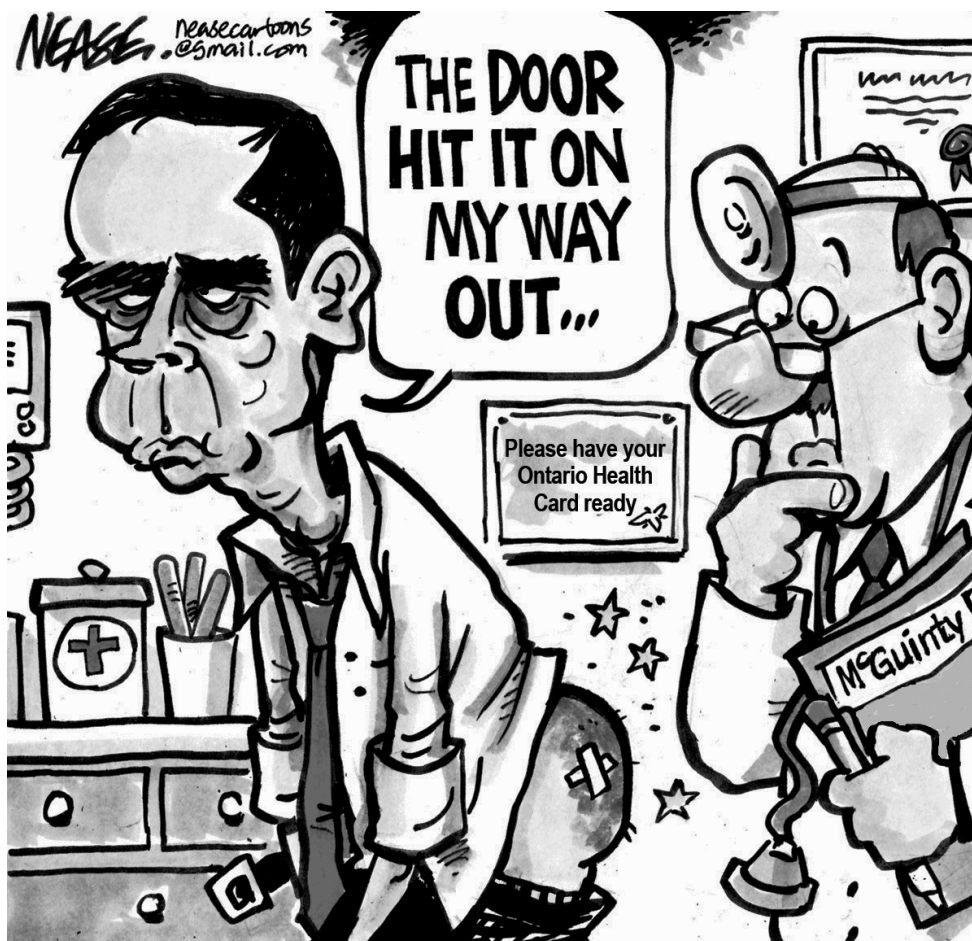
WEB POLL RESULTS (Go to www.theifp.ca)

With contracts now imposed on Ontario public school teachers, should they return to providing extra-curricular activities?

- Yes. The fight is over... for now (65%)
- No. They have the right to withhold that service (35%)

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Letters to the editor

Belated thanks to hospital staff

Dear editor,

On October 27 our granddaughter woke up with serious medical symptoms and a great deal of pain.

Her mother phoned Telehealth Ontario and got a sympathetic hearing, excellent questions and credible advice. The nurse suggested that our granddaughter be taken to the Georgetown Hospital emergency department within the hour.

After a brief 15-minute wait, she had been admitted by an effective and friendly triage nurse and was in the capable hands of Dr. Kelly Williams. The information provided to the Telehealth nurse had been forwarded to the hospital's emergency department. Blood work processed in less than an hour confirmed that our granddaughter had mononucleosis. She was immediately given an intravenous with medication, pain killers and fluids to deal with dehydration.

The patient was back home within three hours—happy as a lark!

This is an accurate description—but the fact that she wanted to hug a nurse who was sticking needles into her makes us suspect there was some-

thing really great in the I.V. fluid.

As this happened around Halloween, her kid brother had a costume suggestion—Mono Lisa.

Nicole has recovered fully. Thanks to everyone involved—great job!

Pav Penna, Georgetown

Loss of Gallery is 'devastating'

Dear editor,

Regarding the newly dedicated "Helson Gallery" at the Georgetown Cultural Centre.

While I appreciate the tremendous gift that Mr. Helson has donated to the town, I don't think the Town council and the general public realize how devastating the loss of the Gallery is to local artists and groups.

I was invited to a meeting and tour of the new facilities to try to find alternate space for "community" art. There was precious little. I felt demeaned and marginalized. It was akin to telling the local theatre groups that the theatre was being given to a more culturally significant group from Toronto and that they should be happy just putting on skits in the lobby.

Could not a solution be found to at least share the "Gallery" facilities? Should not our Cultural Centre, funded

by local taxpayers and donations, be more inclusive to all local art forms?

Laura Kingsbury, Georgetown

Transparency needed

(This letter was originally sent to Town council. A copy was made available for publication.)

Dear Mayor Bonnette, Town Councillors,

Given there is enough space available at the new library gallery to accommodate the various parties, we do not understand why the local artists are denied the space that had been allotted them for decades in the old library and promised would be available to them in the new library. The local artists need this space as there is nothing that even comes close anywhere else in town. We have nowhere else to go.

Many of us have been asking why the decision to accept the Helson donation has been made without first consulting the local art community and why there was and still is such a lack of transparency surrounding this situation. Surely we should have been consulted before being cancelled out of our space at the new library.

Please let us share in the new space at the new library.

Inge Kremer, Georgetown