

Depression is democratic

Depression is that most democratic of maladies: it affects everyone, including the rich, the famous, and even the iconic – like Hollywood superstar Robin Williams.

The funnyman's not-so-funny death via suicide this week brings into sharp focus the fact that all of us are susceptible to this most debilitating of mental illnesses.

Depression chooses its victims unwisely, and its list of sufferers is long and varied: from stay-at-home moms to an electrician to a high-powered executive.

Reaching lower lows is what it's all about, a term coined by English poet John Milton. It's still unclear what part genetics or environment play in its manifestation, but for its sufferers it doesn't matter: it creates a sense of hopelessness, and often leads to self-medicating.

Williams took this route many times in his life, falling into the trap of drug use and alcohol abuse as ways of lifting him out of his despair.

It only plunged him further down, and finally, to this week's desperate act.

Depression is an illness, not a weakness. The number of people suffering serious depression in Canada is startling. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) has the caseloads to prove it. You must check out the CMHA/Peel Branch website (www.cmhapeel.ca) to find out more.

We must all be on the look out for signs of it in our friends and family, and make them get help. Start by checking out the CMHA website.

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

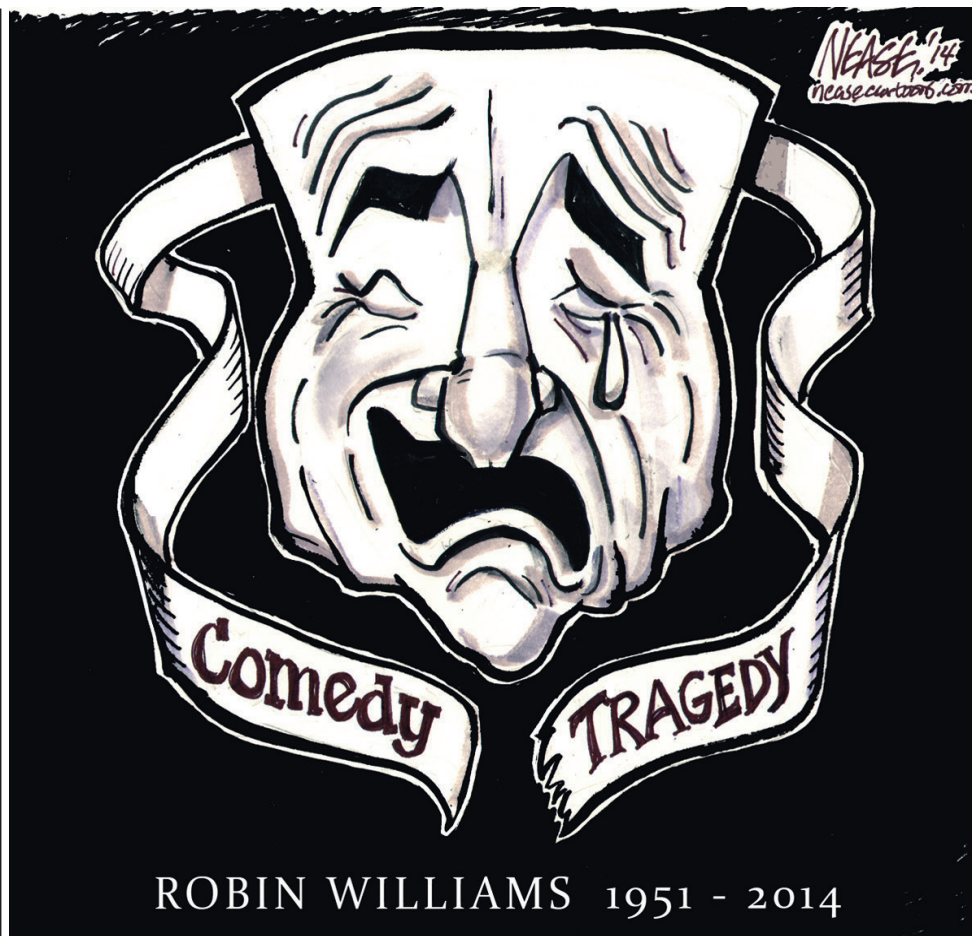
Extreme flooding, more tornadoes are inflicting damage on Ontario towns this summer. Do you think Halton Hills is prepared for a weather emergency?

- No (68%)
- Yes (32%)

The Independent & Free Press

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Letters to the editor

Motorists must slow down

As a resident living on Delrex Boulevard, I'm acutely aware of the higher volume of cars, and their apparent lack of adherence to speed limits posted between Sargent and Rexway.

During school terms it appears drivers pay closer attention to their speeds.

However, during, out-of-school times, including summer, car speeds are exceeding the limits especially during the night year round.

Last year the crossing guard, previously on duty at Norton, was moved to the intersection at Sargent and Delrex.

A move I commend because that intersection is crucial with a multitude of school children walking in both directions as well as vehicles.

With safety in mind for all, adding a speed bump, like on Prince Charles, or adding a stop intersection between Sargent and Rexway, would slow down the speeders.

Some safety measure must be implemented now, rather than wait for a casualty to happen.

C. Clark,
Georgetown

Thanks for the online fuel

RE: Fuellocal online crowd funding offering.

I would like to thank the IFP and Metroland Media for making this local crowd funding tool available to the public.

After reading the article in last week's Independent, I browsed the site and found the service easy to review, competitive and well planned.

Since 2006 I have been volunteering and working in Haiti.

Recently I've begun my own initiative—a documentary on disability and persons living with disability in Haiti.

Your new service came at just the right time for me.

I have launched abilityhaiti on the Fuellocal site and response has

been immediate.

Perhaps your readers would like to see what I mean. <https://fundrazr.com/campaigns/0pSp7>

Thank you again for such a valuable and innovative service.

Eric Doubt,
Director, Canadian Institute
of Marketing

Live each day

When a person's spouse (husband or wife) dies, they are not losing a person in their life, they are losing three— their best friend, companion and lover.

With the good weather, enjoy your time together.

Norman C.R. Foote,
Halton Hills

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