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Thank you

Yesterday (Wednesday), Halton Hills celebrated Canada's 148th birthday with events in Glen Williams, Acton and Norval. It was a time of fun, friendship and making memories.

Without the year-long planning by organizations such as the Glen Town Hall Board Canada Day committee, the Acton BIA, Norval United Church and Acton Fire Fighters Association, plus the aid of service organizations, community groups, churches and even schools, these events would not happen.

Think about it— Canada Day, without the noon day parade and rubber ducky race in Glen Williams, without the entertainment in the park or the fireworks whistling over Fairy Lake. No, it's not something to even contemplate.

We thank all the volunteers who spend countless hours, not only throughout the year, but also on Canada Day to provide such a memorable day for us all. Bravo to you all.

Let's bike to the moon together

As summer official kicks off, we remind everyone to sign up for the Halton Hills Community Bike Challenge. The theme for this year's theme is 384,000kms— Reach for the Moon. Residents simply have to sign up at the website and then record their summer riding kilometrage.

The goal is 384,000— the distance to the moon— and since its launch in April, close to 117,000 kms has been recorded by 652 Halton Hills residents.

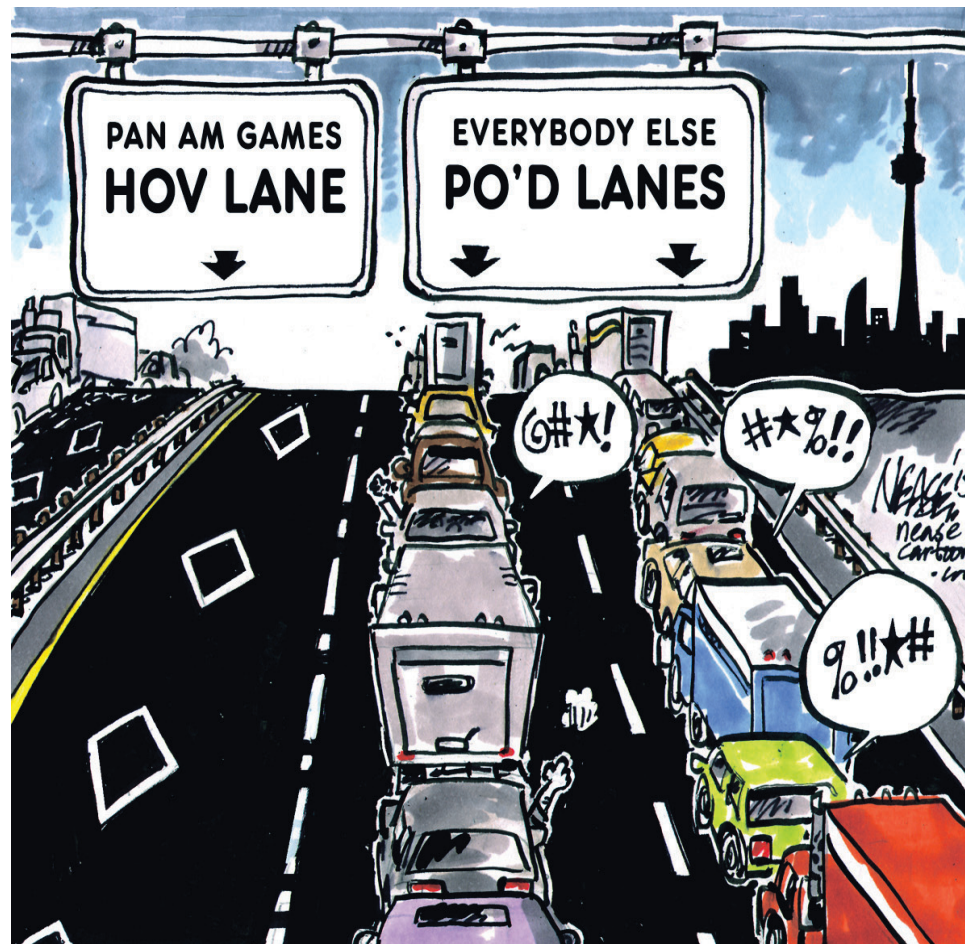
The Challenge is open to residents of ages and riding abilities— and it's free.

Once the goal is met, \$61,000 will be donated to the Georgetown Hospital Foundation by Mat-tamy Homes' Peter Gilgan Foundation (\$25,000), Canadian Tire (\$20,000), PWC EpicTour Halton (\$5,000), Georgetown Terminal Warehouse (\$5,000), Superior Glove Works (\$2,500), Ollies's Cycle and Ski (\$1,000), Young Denistry (\$1,000), HealthSpan Wellness (\$500) and Betty D'Oliveria Realtor Royal LePage (\$500).

So just grab a bike and go have fun. And don't forget to register your kilometres at www.haltonhillsbikechallenge.ca

The Independent & Free Press

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Letters to the editor

Start the debate now on issues that affect all of us

In early June, nearly 2,000 fellow Mayors and municipal leaders met from all across Canada, from small municipalities to Canada's largest cities, and made a united call for a federal leaders' debate on the issues Canadians face in their day-to-day lives.

Issues like how to create jobs, make housing more affordable, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and keep our communities safe. These issues are not just local issues, they are national issues.

They are national because they are common to cities and communities from coast to coast to coast. And they are national because the measure of a strong Canada lies in the strength of our hometowns.

That is why I am joining voices with other Mayors and municipal leaders from across the country to call on the federal party leaders to hold a debate on how we can work better together as levels of government on common goals.

It is easy to see why the federal government needs to work with municipalities and debate municipal issues. Municipalities receive eight cents of the tax dollar and own over 60% of all the roads, bridges, water and waste water infrastructure in the country. We need the federal government to partner with our communities to fund transit to reduce gridlock, work on affordable housing, community safety and infrastructure that will ultimately improve our quality of life.

We want to live and raise our families in vibrant and healthy communities. We care about our economy prospering and jobs being created. We believe everyone deserves to have a roof over their head.

We want to protect our environment and believe that clean water should not be a challenge for any community in a country like ours.

We value the safety of our neighbourhoods. And we know that, as a country, we can be leaders on the international stage and that we all benefit from connecting globally.

These are goals that transcend jurisdiction and partisan differences and warrant debate on how we can achieve them.

This fall's federal election will be hard

fought. I would like to hear the federal party leaders share their vision for cities and communities.

How, if Prime Minister, their government would partner with municipalities to create jobs and drive growth?

Or address local, national and international challenges like increasing trade and investment and climate change?

How will they work with us to make Halton Hills and all of Halton Region more livable, safer and greener?

Some of the party leaders have already agreed to a debate but we need to highlight why this is needed.

Visit <http://hometownproud.fcm.ca/> and sign the petition.

We need to be asking the candidates of all the parties where they stand on municipal issues.

Today's communities are tomorrow's Canada. The debate starts here; where our potential as a country lives, works, plays and dreams.

Clark Somerville
Halton Hills Wards 1&2
Regional Councillor
1st Vice-President
Federation of Canadian
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