

## Play safe

Back-to-back tragedies occurred recently leaving a 14-year-old boy in critical condition after falling off his bike while riding on an Etobicoke trail, and a nine-year-old boy fighting for his life after being pinned by an all-terrain vehicle in southwestern Ontario.

Five children between the ages of two to nine were riding on the ATV, none of them were wearing helmets or protective gear. The thread that ties the two tragedies together was the fact that no one was wearing a helmet.

We can't turn back time to determine if the outcomes would have been different if they had, but we can warn parents about these tragedies in hopes that they ensure their children make safe choices in the future. And parents should follow their own advice, too.

It's not an easy task to convince a teenager to put on a bicycle helmet considering the 'cool factor' involved, but it is the law. Anyone under the age of 18 is required to wear a bicycle helmet in Ontario under the Highway Traffic Law.

In fact, Ontario is part of just a few Canadian provinces that require youth under the age of 18 to wear a helmet.

Only a handful of provinces—British Columbia, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island—have made helmets mandatory for everyone.

It's something the Ontario Coroner's Office wants to happen. In a 2012 report, the coroner concluded that all of the 129 cycling deaths in Ontario from 2006 to 2010 were preventable. Only 35 of the 129 cyclists killed were wearing helmets.

The peak age for cycling deaths was 45 to 54, and 86 per cent were men.

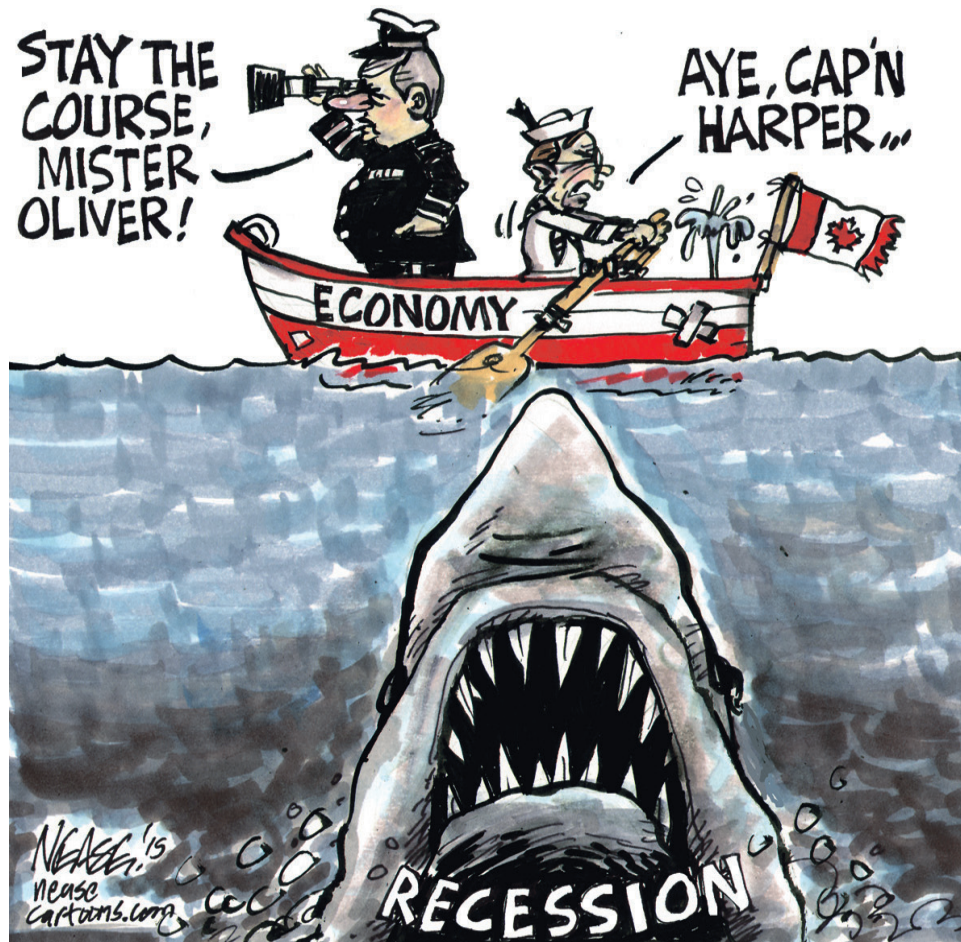
Adults should be the ones leading by example. Helmets have been proven to save lives, and children will be more inclined to strap on their safety gear if they see mom and dad are doing it too.

On any given day you can find a trail of cyclists winding their way down Caledon's country roads. It's highly unlikely that you would catch any one of them not wearing a life saving helmet.

The thought of a skull hitting the pavement without any protection just doesn't mix. It's not worth the risk to not wear a simple piece of equipment.

### The Independent & Free Press

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## Letters to the editor

### ALS event was great, says reader

I had the honour of attending Acoustic for ALS, organized and hosted by John Muirhead.

The talent was amazing, Stand By, Small Towns, John Muirhead, Erica Knox and last but not least Sanjay B. We really enjoyed the talent and different musical genre of each performance.

What I really find incredible is that one young person, John Muirhead, had the motivation to organize an event like this for a cause for which he has had little direct contact.

It is so refreshing to see young people take on a charitable cause and volunteer their time and talent for that cause.

The venue, Red Door Gallery, is full of impressive artwork in different mediums. This hidden gem in downtown Georgetown should be visited by all.

We are truly lucky to live in a community where young people have empathy and give so willingly.

Dr. Jeff Sutherland

### Thanks for the heritage help

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario's Halton Hills branch would like to thank the residents of Halton Hills and the *Independent & Free Press* for supporting the successful nomination of The Barber Paper Mill for Heritage Canada's Top Ten Endangered Places List.

This list draws national attention to sites at risk due to neglect, lack of funding, inappropriate development and weak legislation.

Under the title "Stakeholder Impasse Threatens Industrial Heritage Site" Heritage Canada states, "Since 2010, the Town of Halton Hills, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and the owner/developer Everlast Group Ltd., have failed to negotiate a viable site plan agreement for the adaptive reuse and mixed-use development of the Barber Mill site."

The Town of Halton Hills Cultural Master Plan identifies the mill as "a heritage jewel and a resource that should be protected, preserved and enhanced as a

community resource."

As we approach the 150th anniversary of Confederation, it's time for stakeholders to return to the table and find a solution for saving this important piece of Canada's early industrial development.

Patricia Farley,  
Branch President

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario  
Halton Hills

### Letters policy

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