

OP ED

"Op Ed" — old time newspaper term meaning the page opposite the editorial page. This page has traditionally been held open for opinion pieces, letters, and comment from various sources.

Activity Line

Ski season warm-up

By Laurie Burns

Wow!!! Can you believe the snow we had last Thursday and Friday? This week's column is better late than never, I guess.

For many skiers, nothing beats zipping down a slope after a fresh snowfall.

But one wrong move can turn you into a human snowball. Not all wipeouts end with a trip to the emergency room, of course, but according to the United Ski Industries Association, on any given day nearly three in every thousand skiers will suffer broken bones, torn knee ligaments or other ski related injuries.

Getting in shape before strapping on your skis can cut your risk considerably. Strength and endurance training done three days a week for six to twelve weeks prior to skiing is a good way to prepare. (It is not too late to start training).

The best strategy for strengthening your muscles is to work out with weights. You can also do some strengthening exercises using your own body resistance.

Balance Squat

Goal: To strengthen hamstrings

and protect knees.

Stand with your back facing a chair. Lift your right leg up behind you and rest it on the chair. Keeping your back erect, slowly bend your left knee and lower your body until your thigh is nearly parallel to the ground. Return to starting position. Do 10-12 times. Reverse legs.

Tip: Protect your back by keeping your chin and your pelvis tucked.

Back Hyperextensions

Goal: To strengthen the extensor muscles in your back, which keep your spine erect during a ski turn and contribute to balance.

Lie on your stomach on the floor. Rest your hands on the floor under your chin if you have back problems. If you do not have problems with your back, then you may do the more advanced version. Clasp your hands behind your head and lift your chest and head as one unit. Hold for 8 seconds and lower down. Do ten times.

Calf Raises

Goal: To strengthen your calves, which help with balance. Stand on your left foot and lift up onto your tiptoes. Slowly lower



your heel to the floor. Do 25 times. Reverse legs.

Endurance Training

Goal: To increase your endurance, you should be walking, riding a stationary cycle, or stair-stepping. Try to build your conditioning time up to at least three times per week for 30 minutes.

Even if you are in the best of shape, don't overdo it once you get to the slopes. Ski no more than three days in a row, then take a day off.

If you don't take a break, your energy level will deteriorate, and by the fourth day you'll be at greater risk for injury.

For more information about exercise, feel free to contact Laurie Burns at 877-0771.

Laurie Burns is an Exercise Physiologist and operates Work That Body Fitness Programs Inc. in Georgetown.

Parliament Hill report

Garth Turner MP
Halton-Peel

The House of Commons rose a few days ago.

Question period ended. All the cameras and microphones vanished. And MPs like me were able to return to their homes for the last Christmas of this Parliament.

A lot has happened quickly in national politics. Two weeks ago I was on my feet in the Commons saying it was time - after 28 years - that Canadian troops should be brought home from peacekeeping duties in Cyprus.

I also said Canadian taxpayers should be getting more help from the United Nations and other countries for doing more than ten times our share of peacekeeping around the world.

Well, a few days ago the government agreed, and next year the mission in Cyprus ends. That should save us about \$14 million a year - not a huge amount in terms of the national budget, but every bit helps these days.

And speaking of the budget, there's a tax cut coming. Effective January 1, personal income taxes will be reduced by \$1.8 billion.

This is happening because federal spending is being cut big time. All government departments will have reduced budgets, all government subsidies are being slashed and changes will be made, so people who quit their jobs voluntarily won't qualify for unemployment insurance.

The special interest groups, of course, are howling. There are still a lot of people who want more government in this country. But I am not one of them. I have been urging Finance Minister Don Mazankowski to give us lower taxes, less government and more free enterprise. So, this tax cut - while it is not huge - is a move in the right direction.

But I do have one fear: that the Ontario NDP government will once again raise provincial taxes and

wipe out the effect of Mazankowski's cut. Premier Bob Rae has been hinting at that. There's even talk that Ontario will start taxing things like real estate, and charging us tolls to drive on the highways we've already paid to build.

This is one of the great failures of Canadian politics. There may be various levels of government, but there's only one taxpayer. And as these governments adopt different policies, it's the taxpayer who gets crunched in the middle.

It's time we had more cooperation among federal, provincial and local politicians. We need to attack the duplication, overlap and waste between governments.

I wrote about that three years ago here in this column, and have been singing the same song in Ottawa.

Now the federal government has agreed, and the economic statement a few days ago vowed to address this problem. Finally - and the only real winner will be the taxpayer, not the politicians.

A last note on patent drugs. A law was passed last week extending the protection that manufacturers of new drugs get on their creations. The patents will now be protected for 20 years, up from 17 years.

In return, the manufacturers have pledged to spend at least \$500 million on research and development and the creation of new jobs.

This brings Canada into line with all our major trading partners who give the same length of protection. It makes it possible for us to live by the terms of the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), which is the set of rules governing international trade.

The critics say this will increase the cost of drugs and, partly, they're right. But Ottawa is also beefing up the drug watchdog agency which polices those costs and now has the power to order rollbacks.

This has been a controversial law. Some people think Canadians should be able to take drugs invented elsewhere and knock off generic copies here simply to have lower prices.

But others, including myself, think we should protect patents, encourage investment here and strengthen those drug companies which are coming up with miracle cures.

The way we can keep health care affordable is not through lower drug prices, but through better drugs which keep people out of hospital beds and extend their productive lives. The future will show us, time and again, that wellness medicine is the best possible investment.

Councillors congratulated for MVA stance

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Halton Hills Construction Association, I would like to congratulate the Mayor and Regional Councillors of Halton Hills for their hard work on the Market Value controversy.

Whether you support or oppose market value assessment, everyone should know what Market Value means to their taxes before it is implemented. Few people now know what that effect will be.

Halton Region's one year deferral will give more opportunity for everyone to become familiar with Market Value Assessment and to suggest how it can be fairly implemented.

Special thanks are in order for Councillor Rick Bonnette and Chairman Peter Pomeroy.

Councillor Rick Bonnette worked tirelessly and effectively in bringing the importance of Market Value Assessment to everyone's attention. He deserves a great deal of credit for a job well done.

Chairman Peter Pomeroy showed great leadership in bringing the issue back to Regional Council. He saw the need for greater public input and made it happen.

Regardless of what Council's ultimate decision on market value may be, the one year deferral will provide an opportunity for public input and help make that decision a good one.

Yours truly,

Don Ricciuto, President

Halton Hills Construction Association

For Pete's Sake

OH LOOK, HONEY!
CRYSTAL! OH GOD,
I'VE GOTTA SEE SOME!



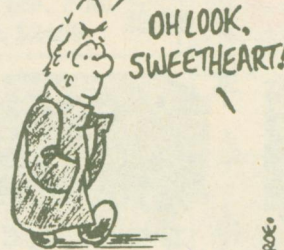
"MONEY"?! LOOK! THEY HAVE
THE PANDA, THE
CHOO-CHOO TRAIN,
THE DOLPHINS...



\$300⁰⁰?! ALL OF WHICH
OF COURSE
I'D LOVE TO
GET FOR CHRIST-
MAS!!



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