

Editorial

The People's Corner

Rights and responsibilities

Seniors centre on the line

The Georgetown Seniors Association will no doubt be pictured in a harsh light by a number of Halton Hills residents because of increasingly strident demands for a seniors' centre.

This is unfortunate, because the association, ably led by president Les Mellish, is following proper procedures and only requesting a service which is available not only in other Halton communities but virtually across the province.

The bottom line, however, is funding - or lack of same - and, simply stated, in Halton Hills, the cupboard is bare.

Similarly, Halton Hills town council would feel the taxpayer's wrath should a tax hike be imposed solely for the creation and administration of a seniors centre.

Basically put, the Georgetown Seniors Association is in a no-win situation at an awkward economic time.

At a seniors association meeting last Wednesday, members voted on suggested possible temporary sites for a centre because funding for a permanent facility won't become available until the year 2000.

Of five sites considered, association members voted overwhelmingly for a facility at Dominion Gardens.

We question this choice, again because of the finances involved.

Yearly rental would be in the \$60,000 - \$70,000 range; maintenance costs would have to be factored in and the seniors are also requesting the town Recreation and Parks Department supply a full-time coordinator at a salary range of between \$32,000 and \$40,000.

Sources involved in proposing that the Georgetown Legion on Mill Street be considered as a temporary seniors centre claim the full Legion offer wasn't disclosed.

These sources claim that the Legion offer involved full use of Legion facilities, downstairs and upstairs, six days a week at either no charge or minimal rent.

The Legion would also absorb janitorial and maintenance costs and provide the seniors with a private office in the building.

The downstairs area of the Legion has wheelchair access and the seniors could avail themselves of dart boards, a shuffleboard, a pool table as well as a large supply of playing cards, cribbage boards and other possible games which may be required.

In addition, the Legion is prepared to install a chair lift should seniors require use of the upstairs hall.

With the Legion, seniors association members and already-employed town workers working together to plan activities, surely a full-time paid coordinator would not be required in this scenario.

There is no denying the Georgetown Seniors Association deserves a centre of their own.

But in these times of fiscal restraint - with taxpayers in virtual revolt against all levels of government - realistic compromises must be the order of the day.

Otherwise, the seniors centre dilemma may once again be shelved indefinitely.

To the editor:

According to The Oakville Beaver (Feb. 10, 1993), there are Oakville residents who are upset with Halton Board of Education officials after their names were used in a Burlington newspaper article concerning Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act requests.

I remind the reporting and editorial staff at The Beaver that there have been numerous articles and letters to the editor which have made reference to these Oakville residents and their requests for information and appeals under the

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation. I refer to issues of The Beaver dated April 15/92, June 3/92, Nov. 4/92, Dec. 4/92, Dec. 16/92 and Jan. 24/93, to name a few.

Like many others, I find it curious that a newspaper which has given so much coverage to every aspect of spending by the Halton Board of Education now appears to sidestep the question of costs in order to champion the privacy rights of a group of very vocal individuals who have used the media extensively to express their positions and intentions.

All Halton taxpayers have a right to ask questions, not just a selected few. I have asked a number of times to meet with some of these Oakville residents so that they can provide evidence to back up the serious allegations made against Key Communicators. All of my requests have been refused or blocked by unrealistic legal requirements.

With rights come responsibilities and perhaps we should ask how responsible these Oakville residents have been?

Lorie Jocius,
former Halton Hills resident

Seniors' needs ignored

To the editor:

At last Wednesday's Senior Association meeting, councillor Rob Heaton indicated that there was no money for a Seniors' Centre due to the Town's commitments to funding projects such as the Acton firehall, and repairs to arenas and swimming pools. He did not, however, address my concern which remains - why do our town councillors place such low priority on the needs of seniors in deciding how to spend our tax dollars?

Like the other lady who spoke at the meeting, I do not want to see our taxes raised; but I am concerned that council does not seem to recognize that seniors' needs deserve at least equal consideration with those of other interest groups in our community.

Mr. Heaton appeared surprised that some of the seniors present thought they might be dead before a seniors' centre is provided, but this is very possible; it happened to my father who died last year. He enjoyed playing bridge, whist, cribbage and dominoes, and he loved to discuss current events with others. However, as his eyesight failed and his joints stiffened he became less able to get around. Since I was at work all day, he was alone all day.

If we had lived in Milton, or Oakville, or Burlington, I could have arranged for him to attend a Seniors' Centre where he would have had a chance to socialize with others. But this was not available here, so his last years were lonelier than necessary. I am sure there are other seniors living here who are likely to experience this kind of end to their lives. It is for this reason that I feel our elected representatives need to examine why it

appears, that in their view, seniors' needs are less important than those of other age groups.

Finally, while the upstairs area of the Alcott Arena may be worth \$200,000 on the town's books, it is not worth two cents to a senior who cannot climb the 21 stairs to reach it! May I suggest that our council-

lors and town staff study the changes associated with aging and the needs of the elderly, before coming forward with any further proposals for a temporary Seniors' Centre.

Yours sincerely,
Isabel A. Brown,
Georgetown

Snowmobilers condemned

To the editor:

I am writing to express my concern and anger over a dangerous activity occurring regularly in Acton. Whenever we have a snowfall, certain idiots on snowmobiles take to using the public sidewalks as a thoroughfare to the edge of town. They apparently do not want to dull their skis on the bare or sanded roadways.

A snowmobile is as dangerous as any automobile. Last I checked, I am not permitted to drive my car on a sidewalk. What is worse is that often, they are driven by reckless young men who are not even eligible for an automobile license. I fear for a young child who turns a blind

corner on a street and is mowed down by one of these reckless morons. From my observations, it's just a matter of time.

My brother-in-law was nearly killed in a snowmobile accident this winter. A friend of his was not so lucky. These machines do NOT belong on public sidewalks at any time under any conditions. For my part I will continue to call the police every time I see this insanity. I use my cars to block the sidewalk to snowmobiles, while permitting pedestrians to pass. I urge other concerned parents to do the same.

Leigh Bartlett
Acton

Killer cards a concern

To the editor:

I am the Halton Board of Education trustee for Ward I - Oakville, and I recently attended the Board of Directors' meeting for the Ontario Public School Boards Association, of which I am a voting member.

Killer cards are a concern to all parents and responsible members of our community. Reflecting this concern, OPSBA has supported the following resolution:

THAT OPSBA write to the

Secretary of State and Federal Minister of Revenue requesting that the federal government quickly undertake the appropriate steps to institute federal controls leading to blocking the entry of "Killer Cards" at all custom depots across Canada.

As a trustee and a parent, I was happy to support this resolution to prevent popularization of human pain and suffering.

Lynne Clark
Trustee
Ward 1- Oakville

One of Jim's boys

To the editor:

Having read and enjoyed your article "Rodent's Racket" has made this comment a must. Coming from a hockey family also, I didn't have to be reminded who James (Tubby) Ford was as he was my Pee Wee hockey coach when I played in the old arena on John Street.

His dedication to the sport and the way he treated us boys on his team was superb. I enjoyed playing

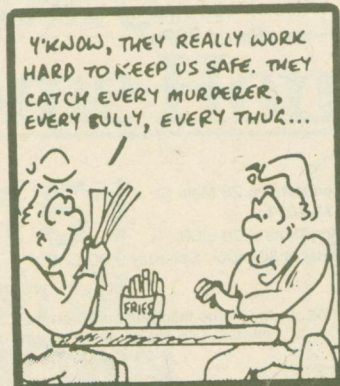
for Mr. Ford's team and am delighted his is this year's choice for the Hockey Heritage Award.

Congratulations, Jim! To me, you were a great guy and this year a great choice.

Thanks for the memories. Hope to talk to you awards night.

Sincerely,
Peter Norton
(one of your boys)
Georgetown

For Pete's Sake



by Roe

Letters Welcome

Halton Hills This Week welcomes your letters. Letters must be signed and include your full name and address. Names will be withheld on request.

Halton Hills This Week reserves the right to edit, revise, or reject any letters on the basis of factual errors, punctuation, spelling errors or as a result of space limitations.

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