

Editorial

Ruffling civic feathers

As our front page People's Forum indicates, cynicism and distrust of both our political system and our politicians - at all levels - runs deep. Not only in our community of Halton Hills, but, it is fair to state, clear across the strata of the public weal.

The particular question we asked concerned the laying of charges by Project 80 investigators against Halton Region Chairman Peter Pomeroy and three others but in the informal poll, a deeper bitterness - a sense of betrayal, surfaced.

Ironically, this writer also was offered a glimpse of the other side of the coin when confronted both in person and through the magic of telephone anonymity by people who felt both our paper and your obedient scribe were wrong in going into such detail concerning the charges which were laid.

Is this yet another malignant form of NIMBY (Not in my backyard) taking a cancer-like hold on the body public?

One should hope not!

Community newspapers do indeed have a responsibility to the communities they serve. But this responsibility requires - indeed demands - that both the good news and the bad news is delivered.

This writer also feels that a community newspaper has the right to comment or question activities involving the community - just as the community has the right of response either through letters to the editor or by simply forsaking that particular newspaper.

Freedom of choice it's called.

This writer and this newspaper won't back down from issues affecting the community.

This is not necessarily a 'tilting at windmills' philosophy.

But perhaps the following anecdote might help to clear-up a few misconceptions about this particular writer.

Ah yes, I still remember the advice? I received so well.

It came in a pub in northern Ontario from an old Irish acquaintance of mine.

At that particular blip in time, it looked as if a brawl was about to break out in the drinking establishment.

He grabbed my shoulder as I turned towards the percolating brouhaha and intoned, " Haven't I always told you to keep the eyes in the back of your head wide open, turn your hat around and lower it when you see what you shouldn't be seeing?"

I recall blearily attempting to hold on to the bar while at the same time trying to let this obvious pearl of wisdom sink into my semi-consciousness.

After what obviously must have been an eon measured in milli-seconds I offered a snappy comeback.

"So what happened to your face?", I demanded.

"I never could afford a hat," he gleefully exclaimed, joyfully wading into the warring wastrels.

This is the attitude - with obvious limitations in terms of good taste - that journalists should adopt.

Moreso, in many cases as it concerns community newspapers, where the majority of the reporters - and editors - seem to be content to skirt issues that concern and involve their respective communities rather than confront them with the chance that a few civic feathers might get ruffled.

This writer always did prefer the windblown look.

Colin Gibson

Got a Beef or a Comment?

Drop your letters off at
232 Guelph St., Unit #9,
Georgetown L7G 4B1
or fax them to (416) 873-2254

Halton Hills THIS WEEK

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The People's Corner

P.O.W.E.R. brings water issue forward

To the Editor

Since the question of water for Acton is in the news, P.O.W.E.R. thought that readers might be interested in the letter that we sent to the region a couple of months ago.

United Aggregates, by their own records are pumping 1.5, 1.4 or 1.7 million gallons of water per day from the Acton Quarry. If the region were to expropriate the quarry for a reservoir and water source, it could be a win - win as this would also end the dump proposal. What an intriguing thought that is!

At P.O.W.E.R.'s next meeting on Wednesday, May 26th, 8 p.m. at Georgetown District High School, representatives from the Planning Department will present the Draft Official Plan for the Region. We will especially be discussing the future water supplies for the Town of Halton Hills.

Get it right

To the Editor:

A letter entitled "NELC values are challenged" in a recent edition of your paper incorrectly quotes me as saying that "the Niagara Escarpment Landowners' Coalition (NELC) is best suited to safeguard the natural conditions of the Niagara Escarpment." The fact is that I have said that the Niagara Escarpment Plan is best suited to safeguard the Escarpment and that that Plan is best administered by the Region. This was the position supported by all three political parties when they approved the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act.

The letter also incorrectly indicated that my husband and I wanted to build a housing development in the middle of the Escarpment. The fact is that we have received draft approval to build 19 houses on land more than a mile from the Escarpment in an area where low density plans of subdivision are permitted by the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

Lois McClure, Co-Chair
Niagara Escarpment
Landowners' Coalition

Don't polarize Canadians

To the Editor:

In a recent letter to your paper, a correspondent seemed to set two groups of Canadians against each other. One group consisted of blacks, homosexuals and religious minorities, while the other consisted of "simple Canadians".

As a resident in Georgetown, I declare my opposition to me further polarization of Canadians. While recognizing that there are fears within our community involving employment, nevertheless we need to work to redress past employment inequalities.

In my opinion, anyone who contributes to division among Canadians is a true simple-minded Canadian. We need leaders with skills in reconciliation and nation building.

Thomas M.S. Kingston
Georgetown

Everyone, members or not, is welcome to attend and bring your questions to that meeting.

The following is a copy of the above-mentioned letter:

Mr. R. Mohammed
Commissioner of Planning and
Regional Municipality of Halton
1151 Bronte Road
Oakville, Ontario

Re: Acton Quarry as Water
Supply and Reservoir

Dear Mr. Mohammed:

P.O.W.E.R. is aware that the Region has been looking for water supplies for Acton and Georgetown. We feel that groundwater is really the only alternative when we compare to Lake Ontario water quality.

P.O.W.E.R. has long felt that the Acton Quarry would make an excellent water reservoir and water source. We would like to formally request that the feasibility of this project be investigated.

Halton Region should have a study on file, The Georgetown Water Supply Study carried out by Hydrology Consulting Engineers and Geologists in 1985. This is Project #840 and according to Map #2, to a lay person, there certainly appears to be a very large supply of water in the area immediately south of the quarry.

At the end of quarrying, United Aggregates Ltd. would be required

to rehabilitate the site at some cost to them. If the region were to expropriate the site UAL would be spared this cost. As you are well aware, the Acton Quarry is presently the proposed site for a landfill. The Region and the Town of Halton Hills are currently expected to spend some fairly large sums on an Environmental Assessment Hearing. This money could be channeled instead to the cost of expropriation. Then, if we consider the cost of new well investigation or the cost of bringing water from Lake Ontario with the added cost of extensive treatment of that water only to have a product that residents do not want to drink, the Acton Quarry as reservoir and water supply becomes very attractive.

It is a short distance to pump to Acton and it is all downhill to Georgetown. A large reservoir would give all of Halton Hills greater security in times of drought.

For all of the above reasons, I hope you will give our proposal serious consideration. I am enclosing correspondence from a hydrogeologist, Wilf Ruland, to support our request.

Barbara Halsall
President of P.O.W.E.R.
Georgetown

Presumptuous

To the Editor:

With all the media attention the issue has attracted, it's most disconcerting that the most blatantly unbalanced and abusive coverage of the Project 80 allegations occurred in a local paper - yours.

The lead paragraph of your May 15th "News" item on the charges was, in fact an Editorial "comment" and should have appeared under a banner which identified it as such.

As for its thrust and wording, I found your implicit pronouncement of guilt "fetid" in and of itself.

Most every other media operation reporting on the matter has managed to distinguish between the concepts of "charged" and "convicted". Indeed, the only "guilt" proven is yours - for presuming theirs.

Steve Dawkins,
Acton

GDHS students agree don't drink and drive

By Adam Poulstrup

Three major anti-drinking and driving awareness groups are working together to help Georgetown become a safer place.

It's estimated the number one killer of teenagers in this day and age is the end result of drinking and driving. Everyone knows it's a problem, yet people still aren't taking it seriously enough and the proof is, it still claims enough lives to make it a number one killer.

That's why a group of O.A.C. business students from Georgetown District High School have teamed together with our school's chapter of S.A.D.D. (Students Against Drinking And Driving), to prepare a drinking and driving awareness assembly on Friday 9 a.m. in the school cafeteria.

The management studies O.A.C. group called T.A.M.P.A. (Team Association Making People

Aware) which includes Katherine Porritt, Adam Poulstrup, and Todd Butwell, are working with S.A.D.D., whose members include Kristie Butler, Heather Macewan, Ryan Brain, Jenn Symmes, and Stacy Colarossi, to help ensure that students with, or even without their license, never get behind the wheel drunk.

A wreck donated by Fred's Towing, which symbolizes the result of a drinking and driving accident will be on display in front of the high school, on Guelph St. from today until Friday. In addition, there will be a presentation held by M.A.D.D. (Mothers Against Drinking And Driving), entitled Close to Home, a very graphic portrayal of accidents caused by drinking, or drunk drivers.

So many lives have been taken for such an inexcusable cause, it's time for these accidents to stop! Be aware, don't drink and drive!