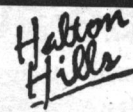


Opinion



THIS WEEK

Halton Hills This Week, Weekend edition is published every Saturday at 232 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 4B1, and is printed in Oakville at Q.E. Web Printing. Halton Hills This Week claims copyright on all original editorial and advertising material created by its employees and reproduced by this newspaper. Such material may only be reproduced on written consent of the publisher. In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time.

PUBLISHER: Ken Bellamy **EDITOR: Colin Gibson**
OFFICE MANAGER: Jean Shewell **CIRCULATION MANAGER: Marie Shadbolt**

HALTON HILLS THIS WEEK IS INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED.

PHONE: 873-2254

FAX: 873-3918

National Party supporter

To the Editor:

This election I voted for the National Party. I did this because of phylogenesis and the future. Phylogenesis is an area of evolutionary science concerned with the birth of a species. Every great evolutionary step forward has been preceded by an explosion of phylogenetic energy.

The development of mammals and homo sapiens both occurred after a plethora of similar forms arose and disappeared. Historically, once a biological niche is exposed, it is quickly filled by a divergent variety of species competing simultaneously. Throughout this period of unprecedented competitive stress a superior form evolves that eventually comes to dominate the niche.

Despite the overtones of my presentation of this process, for people familiar with the concepts, I am not a social Darwinian but a Teilhardian futurist.

Yes, I realize the difference between parliamentary politics and Pliocene competition, but both are theatres of creation with similar organic dynamics over different time periods. We are witnessing a period of great national stress, exposing a vacuum littered with fragments of visions. One vision that is evolving a viable coherence is offered by the National Party.

How great is our national stress? Our economy is dying because our planet is dying. I was mortified by the lack of attention placed on environmental issues by the mainstream parties in this last election.

How many billions of tax dollars have been spent for welfare, retraining, unemployment, and regional development to apply band-aids to populations that have mined out their hills, cut down their forests, poisoned their rivers, farmed out their lands and, most recently and tragically, fished out their oceans?

Our rape and pillage economics have revealed a shameful lack of planetary responsibility and perhaps a recession is too soft a punishment for our crimes. The National Party has embraced ideas of sustainable development, responsible resource management, full employment, environmental quality standards and justice for native peoples. They appear to be the only party to have coherently done so.

We have all used the recent cliché "there is only one taxpayer". In this age of global toxic tourism we have yet to develop a parallel cliché expressing the reality that there is only one atmosphere, only one ocean and only one garbage dump.

Unlike many others, I welcome the emergence of fringe and regional parties into the mainstream. The strong federalism that may have appeared relevant to battle world wars or cold wars has evolved into a despotic self-serving bureaucracy so concerned with partisanship, pork barrel and process that vision and justice have emerged as threatening destabilizing forces to be repressed within the ranks.

The only viable solution for human and planetary survival is the dissolution of federalism coupled with the development of a sustainable, community-based, basic needs approach.

The idea of strategic voting for the establishment parties reminds me of a popularity contest among the dinosaurs on the eve of an ice age. If it is true that a fringe vote is a "wasted" vote then democracy is already extinct and we should be done with this sham. If vision, justice and planetary responsibility are possible within this system then we must desperately work to ensure that our children can have a glimpse of them. My last hope on the political landscape rests with the National Party.

Murray Russell.
Georgetown.

Letters Welcomed

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.

Send your letter to:

The Editor
 Halton Hills This Week
 232 Guelph St., Unit 9
 Georgetown, ON
 L7G 4B1
 Or fax to:
 416-873-3918

The People's Corner

GDHS students remember the sacrifices

By Eileen Ross.

The Remembrance Day assembly held at Georgetown District High School on Thursday seemed to stir more of a reaction from those in attendance than in previous years.

The assembly began, as it's predecessors had, with everyone standing for the national anthem. This was followed by Georgetown Branch 120 Royal Canadian Legion members and veterans including Shell Lawr, Bill Collier, flag bearer and Sergeant at Arms, Harry Bottoms making their way

to the front of the cafeteria.

Leading the procession was GDHS computer teacher Kirk Brush on bagpipes. Town of Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller gave an address at the beginning of the assembly reminding students of the horrors of war, the sacrifices that were made for those who served believing they were defending Canada, as well as the respect that is due the veterans for their bravery in action.

Also present at the assembly were members of the Lorne Scots Militia,

(Georgetown).

The senior drama classes put on three skits under the supervision of drama teacher, Judith Gooding.

The skits focused on the personal views of war for several generations of people. The first skit was about a young man sent off to the Korean war. His loved ones fear he won't return, as his father didn't, who died in battle. But fortunately he returns, virtually unharmed. Many others weren't so lucky.

The second skit showed a grandmother explaining to her granddaughter why she didn't have a grandfather like her friend. The letter she read from her husband was enacted behind a screen and showed the actions and emotions that came through in the letter.

The final skit was set in a

classroom in Europe in which the class members have personal ties with the present war; the Second World War.

One is to be sent over as a nurse, another has a fiancée overseas. Without warning, an air raid alarm goes off signaling the abrupt end to their lives.

An informal poll showed that both students and staff were affected by the performances of the students in the drama classes. They found the assembly to be worthwhile and the performances realistic and seriously done.

We might be young and have no real knowledge of the sacrifices made or the losses incurred in times of war.

But in our own way, we do pay our respects for our freedom.

From Retiring to volunteering

Retirement is said to be the time when you have finished your prescribed hours of working and you now have time to think back through all the things you would like to have done. Now is the time to do them! The experience of volunteering can add an interesting new dimension to your retirement.

Volunteering is done for a variety of reasons. Senior volunteers cite "personal satisfaction" most often as the reason for pursuing volunteer interests. Other reasons include the opportunity to socialize and the need for one to feel he/she is making a contribution.

Feeling good about what you are doing may also have other significant benefits. Research has proven that performing volunteer work, more than any other activity, drastically increases life expectancy. In fact, it is believed that men who volunteer at least once per week will likely live 2-1/2 times longer than the non-volunteering male.

Of course, taking the initiative to volunteer is something you do on your own. For those who rarely leave home, this task can be monumental. But volunteer work can also be done from your home. The rewards of volunteering are many - new friends, new interests, rekindled interests, improved self-esteem and vitality.

Retirement can be a satisfying reward for your years of toil. You owe it to yourself to make the most of it. Volunteering may add to your sense of self-fulfillment. Call Acton Social Services and Information Centre at 853-3310 or drop in to ASSIC at 19 Willow St. North, Acton to find out more about volunteering in your community. We can afford you a variety of volunteering in your communi-

ty. We can offer you a variety of volunteer experiences, the possibilities are endless. (An excerpt from: Good Times Magazine, September 1993).

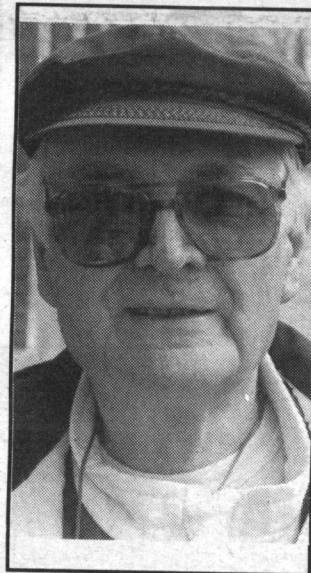
Reminiscing with Steamer

The Old Georgetown Pines

Editor's note: I am extremely pleased to offer to our readers, especially those who are new to our community, 'Reminiscing with Steamer'. Wheldon 'Steamer' Emmerson is a community treasure hereabouts. In various stages of his life he was the local mayor, the sheriff, a kid who tried to join the army when he was too young and got all the way to Britain before being found out and was shipped home (he immediately re-enlisted), a raconteur, a bit of a pain in the assessment of the powers-that-be but always a character - to be loved or frowned upon, depending on which side of his wit you happened to sit. As Managing Editor of the now defunct Halton Hills Herald, I had Steamer as a columnist - on a semi-regular basis. My name is Colin. Steamer insisted on pronouncing it colon. I, in return, addressed him as stammer. The funny thing is, we got along great. And that devil-may-care glint in his eye whenever he asked me to go over one of his columns reduced me to putty. Steamer, good health and good humor. Your courage has also influenced my writing old pal.

By Errol Sandborn

Glance to your right the next time you go south over the rail bridge on #7 Highway. At the junction where the railways split, one line continues to Guelph, Stratford and the west, the other swings south towards Hamilton and the Niagara



Steamer Emmerson

Escarpment.

Imagine a large cluster of pines, perhaps 40 to 50, just west of the rail junction, providing a screen and a refuge. The scene dates back to the 1930's and prompts a flashback with a modern message.

The 1930's were economically more dismal than the last few years. Unemployment approached 20 per cent. There were no safety nets, no unemployment insurance, no medicare, no government pensions. People and families were devastated when jobs were lost.

The period predated grand expressways and family cars. The railroad was trans-Canada. Large numbers of men rode the rails from one end of Canada to the other searching for work, any work. Hobo literature was born in the turmoil, in sealed box-cars, in open air bonfires,

on railway platforms and in groves of trees, refuges at the junction of rail lines. There were risks.

Guards were obliged to move the hobos on, to push them off moving box cars, to call them thieves and murderers, to make them unwelcome. The famous hobo, W.H. Davies, the Welsh poet, lost a leg to the rails. "What is this life so full of care, we have no time to stand and stare."

The Pines was Georgetown's hobo refuge. It accommodated many guests as they passed through. Local mothers knew the score. They sent their youngsters to the Pines with food, clothing, anything they could spare for the hobos.

The "restaurant", which evolved into soup kitchens as the depression wore on, was always open, often filled with the laughter of gratitude. The human touch of an anonymous donor acknowledged, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

Canada grew up in many Pineries. The social history of Canada was etched in the suffering of hobos and the generosity of strangers. The trees have disappeared but the etching remains in the social fabric which keep body and soul together in today's recession.

The Pines were always a delight for old Georgetowners. Their now silent guests would chuckle at the modern safety nets and recall the nostalgia of those days in Joyce Kilmer's 1913 poem.