

The North Halton Compass

Reach then a soaring quill,
that I may write
As with a Jacob's staff
to take a height

CLEVELAND

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BRASS TACKS

Editorial

X's are in; telephones are for naught

Guelph-Eramosa council recently voted on whether to return to paper voting this autumn or stay with "new technology" and the telephone voting system.

The vote was unanimous to take a step backward to the paper ballot, although in this case a step back is just keeping residents in the same place.

According to figures released at the meeting on July 4, the township could save thousands of dollars on paper voting as opposed to using the telephone. It's unfortunate that Bell may have misled council into believing that the system would have been cheaper, but now we know. It allows us the opportunity of using money wisely saved for something more important.

Personally, I would prefer a confidential telephone vote. Think of all the emission fumes from hundreds of vehicles all across our countryside that pollute our air, just to get to those cardboard voting

booths. Think of the time savings if we were able to cast a sacred vote from the comfort of our own home. Think of the saved paper!

Unfortunately, we haven't secured our technology to the point that people can vote for themselves with absolute privacy, and that their ballots couldn't be bought or used by someone else. We will, but obviously it will just take a little more time to safeguard the system. And no doubt, as Councillor Doug Breen suggested at that meeting, other telephone companies will bid for telephone voting systems and costs will eventually tumble.

I don't think we should believe, however, that Bell would dare misuse its system and tamper with results. They may have a record of who voted for whom, but let's not cast aspersions on a company that is creating systems that yes, make them more money, but also smoothly advance us into our next millennium. There are countless safe and secure high tech transac-

tions that take place every day, from telephone banking to internet dealings to simple bank machines. Most of us use them, most of us love the convenience, and thankfully they're here to stay.

Here's hoping that you all get out at election time and make your voice known. We are only able to build a strong community with a great team of elected officials, so use your democratic right and forge a new future.

For now, even though convenience has taken a step backward, we have to look on the positive side: we will have a few temporary jobs in the community during the upcoming fall elections. Guelph-Eramosa will save untold thousands, depending on the actual turnout of voters. And besides doing your civic duty, visiting the polls is a great way to catch up with a lot of neighbours.

Deb Quaille

BLUE SPRINGS SOAPBOX

Compass Correspondence

I am writing in regards to the article "Water, water, everywhere..." in the July 2000 issue of *The North Halton Compass*. I am concerned about the water safety, not only for myself but for the young children and animals in my and surrounding neighborhoods.

I am originally from Brampton, living in the country a year now, and am beginning to understand the seriousness of testing your well water. I was raised on "city water" for my entire 25 years until moving to the country and drinking well water. I believed that nothing could happen to me, until last week when I decided to test my water not only because of the

Walkerton scare, but for the fact that it just didn't "taste right." Lucky for me that I did since it is unsafe to drink.

My concern does not end here... My problem comes from the fact that I was not notified directly by phone, but was mailed my results, which I did request. What if I did not receive the results, which did not include ways to resolve the problem, I may have continued to ingest the infected water. I immediately contacted the Georgetown Health Department and gave them the results over the phone. I was told that the water was unsafe to drink and that I was responsible for the clean up of the well system. I have no problem with that,

except that when I went to the Health Department to pick up the bleaching process directions, I asked who I should be informing regarding the e-coli in the water, to possibly stop and upcoming outbreak. This is what I was told: there is nothing I can do except bleach the well and have further water testing. I was shocked to hear her say that there is an unbelievably large amount of unsafe water infected with the e-coli bacteria in the area.

I have just finished bleaching the well for the first time and am waiting on the results of the second sample. Even with a safe reading I am scared to drink the

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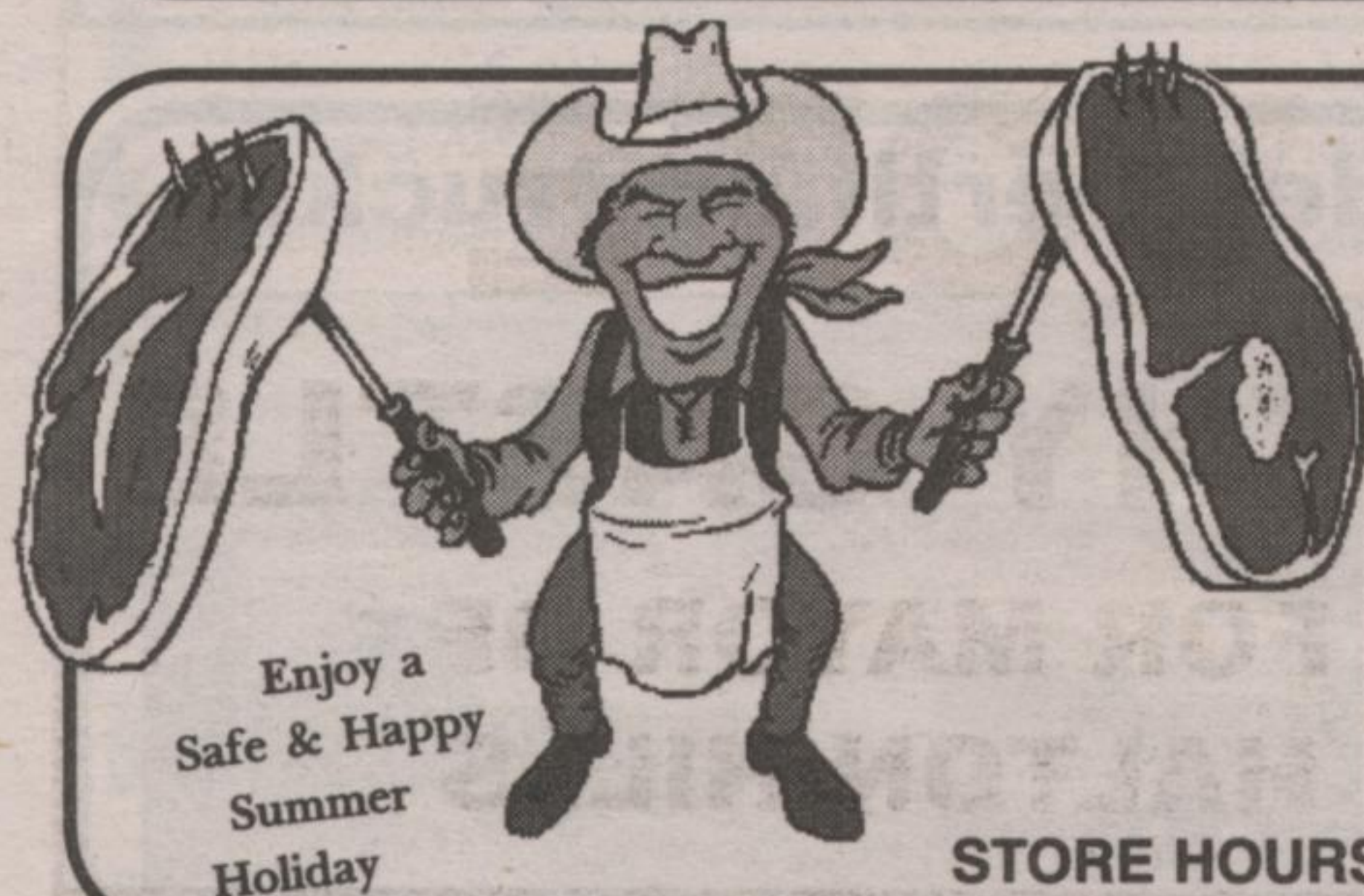


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