

The North Halton Compass

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BRASS TACKS - Editorial

The times they are a changing. In April, publisher Reid Kennedy is going to expand The North Halton Compass's area of circulation to include many of our neighbours in the Region's urban centres.

What will remain the same? In March 1998, when The Compass was first published, Kennedy promised his readers a community paper that would keep them up-to-date on what was going on around them. The mandate of The Compass remains the same. Even though our area of circulation will soon include the towns of Acton, Georgetown and Milton, we will continue to provide our rural readership with community news. Many of us at The Compass not only live in rural Halton, but this is where our hearts reside. The physical structure of all rural areas, the distance dividing its residents, isolates and fragments the population. What brings the rural residents together are its schools, its churches, its friends and the community paper.

The Compass will remain the

voice of rural Halton.

In his first editorial, Kennedy promised to provide the readers "with a plateful of community news." This remains his purpose and his goal. Day after day, smiling all the while, he gives me that steely-eyed look and demands that I get the news, get the news, get the news. His bulldog persistence and single-minded goal often remind me of my dog. Mofassa is a 220-pound Great Dane, the largest dog in the Brookville Veterinary practice, whose sole purpose in life is to fill his stomach. He too stares me down on a regular basis, demanding all the while that I feed him, feed him, feed him. Emptying kibble from a bag into Mofassa's dish is considerably easier than getting the news. However, the residents of rural Halton have for five years played a significant role in helping The Compass to get the news. Letters, phone calls and e-mails from our readers have kept us abreast of what is happening to our local citizens and what is important to them.

Please keep it coming. We want to hear from you because we want to get you the news.



Elizabeth Davey
New editor of
The North Halton Compass

BLUE SPRINGS SOAPBOX - Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

This letter represents the collective voice of those Ontario citizens who are concerned about the proposed southern Ontario mid-peninsula highway.

We demand that all viable alternatives to the proposed southern Ontario mid-peninsula highway be environmentally, professionally and cost-effectively considered. We demand an all-encompassing win/win/win solution, not a political and financial-friends patronizing solution. Environmental and taxpayer investment yardsticks must be used. This is not a choice; it is a taxpayer's right.

As taxpayers and voters in Ontario, we are deeply disturbed that our concerns are neither being heard nor addressed. Whilst our govern-

ment describes the expansion of the environment assessment process to look at three possible routes as "responding to public concern," this action has clearly shown that they have not listened when advised by the public, by municipalities and regions, and by groups like COPE that a new highway corridor is not the best option to deal with future congestion in the Niagara area.

The Ontario government has been given detailed input on alternatives such as rail, public transit improvements, improvement to existing roadways, more strategic and efficient use of existing corridors, etc. We have reviewed the data and have detected zero evidence to date that any of this valuable input has even been heard, let alone considered. It appears a hidden agenda shadows all

viable environmental and financial options. Why is this being allowed?

If our elected officials and our public servants are not listening to us, who are they listening to?

There is a growing army of distressed voters and taxpayers that is banding together and stating that we will not be hoodwinked or pressured by our public servants. This is our country, our province and our region. It is our congestion problem, and we want to and will solve it together.

We trust we have elected responsible leadership, not a quasi-dictatorship. Please demonstrate that our trust is correctly placed. We need to see and hear positive proof that we are being heard.

Robert (Bob) A. Beyette
Campbellville

Dear Editor,

As a 43-year rural resident of North Halton, I and many of my neighbours support the efforts of both Halton Region and councillor Rick Bonnette. Their recommendation that a Rural Recycling and Garbage Pickup Program be created is to be applauded.

The annual cost figure of \$105, mentioned in a staff report, is more cost-effective than getting rid of your own garbage and recycling. Going to the dump every two weeks costs a minimum of \$130 a year just to get in. This does not include the cost of the gas to get there, or the wear and tear on your vehicle. Other municipalities such as Bruce County have a successful program of weekly door-to-door rural recycling pickup for a flat rate of \$12.74 a year. For their rural garbage they charge \$65 a year for one

40-pound bag a week and \$1.25 for each additional bag.

The only way to get rid of your garbage cheaper than \$105 a year is to burn it, throw it in the ditch, or take it to town and leave it on a curb on garbage day. Just look at the private services now available to us in the rural area. I challenge you to find weekly pickup for under \$300 a year, not including recycling.

Because of a few selfish and ignorant individuals who continue to dump their garbage at our recycling stations, we will soon lose them. The cost of these recycling stations, especially their cleanup, consumes many of our tax dollars. These same tax dollars could go a long way if they were used for a worthwhile rural recycling pickup program. Once the stations are closed, do you think these people will then part with their money to dis-

pose of their garbage properly? We will be pulling even more of it out of our ditches and streams. I have spent many Saturdays with my neighbours in Hornby cleaning up our ditches, streams and roadsides in the spring and summer. I would rather not have to clean up somebody else's selfish mess.

By finding an inexpensive way of solving the garbage and recycling problems of rural Halton, our regional government has found a way to help save our environment for future generations. I, together with many other rural residents, hope that these recommendations are soon implemented.

Erik Kowal
Hornby

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