

# The North Halton Compass

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## BRASS TACKS – Editorial

People do make a difference. Within our community, there are people who don't just sit back and complain about how the world is treating them poorly; there are people who actually do something to change the world around them. We applaud these citizens.

Dan and Rosanne Warren, Ralph Southward, Stephanie Kimmerer and Karen McGee did more than just complain to their families and friends when they first noticed tanker trucks roaring down their country roads and through the quiet hamlet of Moffat. They investigated the source of this new truck traffic and discovered that Nassaw Springs, a water-taking operation, was located a short distance away. Further research taught them about the questionable legality of using rural land for the commercial purpose of water taking, and about the threat to the watershed and the environment. How did they react to this information?

They made phone calls, wrote letters, met with politicians, organized information meetings, and appeared before both the Puslinch and the Milton councils. And the result of their efforts? Puslinch council has responded by advising the Ministry of the Environment not to renew or issue any more water-taking permits within Puslinch Township.

Similarly, Lou Bonnette and Mac Sprowl of Halton Hills reacted to their property assessment notices. They too did more than just complain to their families and friends. They researched assessment increases in Halton Hills, wrote letters to the local papers and spent \$600 of their own money to organize an information meeting. Then they formed the Halton Hills Assessment Support Group to help residents with their assessment appeals. Local politicians are now rallying around the Halton Hills citizens, and the

Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) may be taking a second look at the Halton Hills assessments. None of this would have happened without the efforts of those two very spirited gentlemen, Lou Bonnette and Mac Sprowl.

These stories bear witness to the truth of Margaret Mead's statement, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." We at *The North Halton Compass* applaud those citizens who have taken action and affected change in their communities. We also encourage all of our readers to be pioneers of change. When troubled by something of public consequence, don't just complain to your family and friends - at least phone your local councillor or write a letter to the editor. By doing so, you'll be taking charge of your future. The future will not be taking charge of you.

## BLUE SPRINGS SOAPBOX - Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In November, my wife and I received a Property Assessment Notice showing the estimated value of our house and lot at \$319,000 as of June 30, 2001. This was an increase of \$84,000 from the June 30, 1999 assessment of \$235,000. That is a 26.34% increase.

We were shocked by the increase as it would appear we'll have to pay \$600 more in taxes in 2003. In checking the Assessment Records at the Office of the Town of Halton Hills, which has approximately 15,200 properties, I have found assessment increases all the

way from 1%-30% on 20 residences in a three-mile radius of the area where my wife and I live.

This per cent range I find on residences in the three-mile radius shows there is something terribly wrong with the system. It is not fair and seems flawed. It means that many residences are over-assessed, and many are under-assessed. I found properties with similar houses and lot sizes with often \$100,000 difference. In checking assessment records, I also found properties the same size not nearly as good but with higher assessments. If this range of per cent increase is the same across the Town of Halton

Hills as what it is in the three-mile radius of where I live, there is a serious problem in the assessment system.

This new system was supposed to give a more fair and accurate assessment than years ago when the municipalities did the assessment. This does not seem to be the case. It must be pointed out that the Region of Halton is paying \$4.9 million for this service that I feel is not providing accurate assessments. In closing, I plan to appeal the 26.34% increase.

Yours truly  
 Mac Sprowl

Dear Editor,

Now that they want more trees planted, why don't they just plant evergreen trees along the roadways? This would beautify the area, satisfy the need for more trees, help prevent soil erosion and create a natural snow barrier. There is always snow drifting onto the roadways in areas that have open fields

next to the roads making driving dangerous.

They salt, sand, plough and continue to ruin the roads and damage the environment. The money wasted on snow control and maintenance for equipment and roads could be used for the planting. Evergreens would not develop the large branches that deciduous trees have that can fall on the road

or interfere with power lines, and there are no leaves to clean up.

I am sure there can be some agreement on which side of the fence to plant on and the costs. I would think it would save money in the long run and everybody wins.

Thomas D. Lester  
 Georgetown

To the Ministry of the Environment:

With regard to Nassaw Springs' application for water taking, we would strongly recommend the denial of this application for the following reasons:

**The health of the Bronte Creek watershed**

The topography of the Moffat area

is characterized by glacial moraine uplands between which have developed wetlands. These are habitat for a number of uncommon birds and animals including the pileated woodpecker and the northern flying squirrel. Wetland plants such as *Iris versicolour* and *Lobelia cardinalis* grace the swamps.

Most of this wetland, known as the Badenoch-Moffat Wetland

Complex, is Class 1 Wetland. To endanger the health of this wetland, which is already under threat by the increasing housing development and its resultant water demands, through commercial water taking is irresponsible.

**The effect on the local community**  
 Households in Moffat are dependent on ground water for their water supply; and the health of wells in

continued on page 11



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