Report from
PARLIAMENT HILL
By Mike Chong
MP Wellington/ Halton Hills

The arts are not often debated in politics. With issues like healthcare, justice, and the economy taking so much of the debate, the arts end up sidelined. Further, in our modern age, the arts can seem irrelevant, with disciplines like science and technology taking centre-stage.

However, the arts remain as vital as ever, for they are one way we communicate with each other and try to understand the world around us. Through books, radio, film, art and theatre, museums and historic sites, they help us explore our nation's history, as well as other cultures and societies. This helps to strengthen both our national identity and our multicultural understanding.

Governments in Canada spend about $7 billion a year on the arts, money that goes to fund libraries, heritage sites, arts education, public broadcasting, and the literary and performing arts. In our own backyard, the John Elliott Theatre and the Cultural Centre Gallery are just two examples. Remember, the importance of the arts was not lost on the pioneers who settled this land. Indeed, shortly after clearing the land they built the Ennotville Library in 1847, not far from where I grew up.

The arts are often marginalized as a luxury compared to the sciences and technology. Perhaps this is because the arts pursue a method of inquiry that is so very different. While the contribution of the arts to our lives cannot be quantitatively measured like other targets (think economic or technological), this does not make them any less important to our economy and society.

So go out and patronize your local arts scene. You'll have some fun, help the economy and you might even come away with some new ideas.

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On another note, January was Crime Stopper's Month. If you ever have information to help solve a crime, contact them at 1-800-222-8477.

Use caution dealing with door-to-door marketers – O.P.P.

Over the last few months, Wellington O.P.P. has investigated several complaints regarding door-to-door salespersons trying to sell an air filtration system.

In one instance in September 2004, a door-to-door salesman left an air filtration machine with an elderly resident for a 10-day trial period. The elderly resident did not want the machine and returned it. In January, 2005 the resident received a Master Card bill for over $3000 for the air filtration system.

Always be cautious when dealing with anyone who is going door-to-door, police advise, legitimate companies have nothing to hide. Check them out; request detailed written information, a call back number, local references and time to think your decision over.

You may want to check with the Better Business Bureau at (519) 579-3080 and/or the Consumer Services Bureau at 1-800-889-9768 or on-line at www.cbs.gov.on.ca.

Seniors can also get advice from Seniors Offering Support at (519) 767-4445 or on-line at www.sos-guelph.wellington-ca and/or Phonebusters at 1-888-495-8501or on-line at www.phonebusters.com.

Anyone who has had an incident similar to this, is being asked to report the incident to Wellington O.P.P. by calling the London Provincial Communications Center at 1-888-310-1122.

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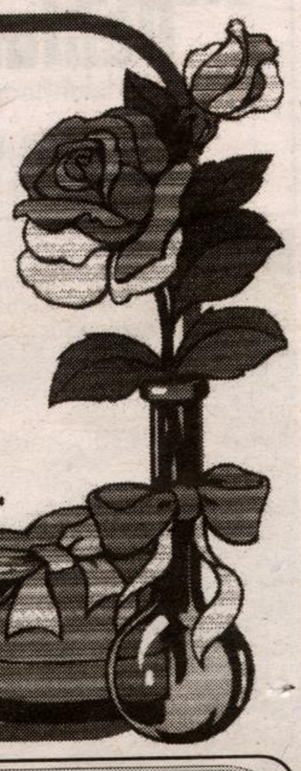

Miniature horses stolen from West Gary farm

Wellington O.P.P. are asking anyone who might assist them in solving the theft of four miniature horses form a West Gary farm on Tuesday, Jan. 25 to contact them at (519) 843-4240 or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

Police said unknown suspect(s) broke into a barn on Side Road 20 between 11:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 24 and 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 25. They gained entrance into the barn through a main door and removed four miniature horses which they loaded into a trailer and fled.

The horses are described as:

1. 5-year-old female light yellow or palomino in colour (pregnant).
2. 5-year-old female brown and light yellow in colour.
3. Yearling pure white in colour.
4. Yearling pure brown in colour.

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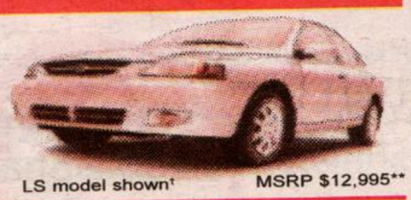

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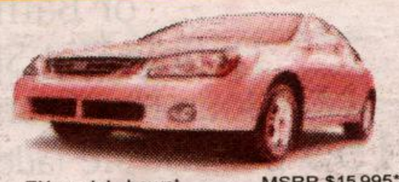

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