

The Independent

Weekend Edition & Free Press

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Deafening silence

This past Friday 22 members of the Halton Region Conservation Authority (HRCA), including Halton Hills Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson and Acton Councillor Clark Somerville, were to have headed to a Victorian Inn in Ingersoll for a strategy session that, in essence, is being held to determine how the HRCA can be more cost-efficient.

The cost for this little junket is \$200 per person. After all, a night's stay at a resort which boasts elegant dining, whirlpools, a spa and spacious rooms in a gothic house doesn't come cheap.

Unfortunately, only one member of the HRCA—Flamborough's Paul Kidd—voiced any concern (or disgust) that the HRCA would spend this amount of taxpayers' money on a strategy session which is essentially designed to determine how to save money.

HRCA general manager Theresa Maguire-Garber defended the out of town trip, saying it will "maintain people's state of concentration, their state of mind."

What's wrong with setting up shop in a boardroom somewhere in Halton and ordering in food or going to a nearby restaurant?

Serjeantson, who was unsure if she would stay overnight Friday, said the Town of Halton Hills doesn't practise "these methods of doing things" but she "would not criticize it either".

She should have—and loudly. So should have others. It doesn't matter if some, like Somerville, say they won't be spending the night. It is wasteful spending and a slap in the face to taxpayers.

PUD



SCHOOLYARD POLITICS

Tories sidestep education crisis

Dear editor,

I'm writing regarding your editorial (Sept. 9) in which you noted that, "This (extra) class will only bring Ontario teachers to the national average of in-class time and from where we sit, more time for students in class is a good thing."

The "more time for students in class is a good thing" part of the sentence is somewhat unclear. Do you mean that it is good for teachers to be with the students in class more often or do you believe that, with this Tory government assault, the students will be spending more of their school day in the classroom? If you believe the latter, then you have been misled or misinformed. The students will still be required to attend the same number of classes.

Secondly, the "national average of in-class time" is misleading and is another way for Harris, Education Minister Mike Johnson and his backroom neo-cons to bamboozle the public. Each province deals with what constitutes "in-class time" differently, therefore, it is extremely difficult to compare provinces' in-class time fairly.

Johnson, Harris, who pulls his strings, have side-stepped the

education crisis now and have led the public to believe that the boards, the unions and the teachers are inept, confused and self-serving, when, in fact, the Tories began the crisis.

Don't be fooled! Harris and the boys can be likened to Pontius Pilate, by the way in which they are washing their hands of the matter (education) and having someone else do the dirty work.

Also, boards across the

province are trying to chip away at dental benefits, wages, sick leave time, etc. and nobody seems to focus on these issues, at least in the public domain. These are very important issues to any worker and teachers are no exception. The public is somewhat unaware of what the boards are really being forced to do by the government. The "extra class" issue is only the tip of the iceberg.

John Hansen, Acton

Letter of the day

Thanks for supporting clinic

Dear editor,

On behalf of the Halton Hills branch of the Canadian Red Cross, we would like to say thank you to all of the people who took part in the recent Acton blood donor clinic.

Once again, the people of Acton showed their concern and willingness to help others. Eighty-five units of blood were collected at the Sept. 10 clinic. With the children returning to school and registering for teams, etc., we appreciate you taking time to help. For those people who couldn't make this clinic, we encourage you to make your donation at any other clinic, as the Red Cross' appeal continues.

Special thanks to Re/Max Blue Springs Realty, which sponsored this clinic and to The Independent & Free Press for advertising the clinic in this paper. Of course, the clinic could not be such a success without the many volunteers who helped run it and the continued support of the Acton Legion.

Through your efforts, you have made it possible to give others the gift of life. We look forward to seeing you again at the next clinic Dec. 10.

Julia Roehrig, chairman, Halton Red Cross Blood Donor Committee

Our Readers Write

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