

The Independent & Free Press

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Gun-shy to govern?

The past few months have not been Halton Hills council's finest moments and more egg landed on council's face Monday night.

In the never-ending saga of the old Acton Arena, council finally (we hope) put an end to this tiresome tale when it reached an agreement with the Acton Agricultural Society (AAS) to allow the AAS to build and operate a new building on the site of the arena which will be torn down.

However, council reached this deal only after the AAS threatened council with a court injunction that would have seen demolition of the arena halted.

Whether the deal is a good one or not is moot, what it maddening is that it took council so long to reach a conclusion on this issue and only did so when threatened with legal action.

Add this to the recent Norval fiasco in which a sanitary pumping station was allowed to be built in an environmentally-sensitive area—a process that was so flawed that public meetings are planned to see that such an occurrence doesn't happen again.

Then there's the entire Georgetown South problem where, rightly or wrongly, council is perceived as being led by the nose by a developer. Folks there, years after moving in, are still waiting for one lousy convenience store to be built in their neighborhood. However, the developer and town council seem more intent on doing a bureaucratic tango than meeting the needs of the residents.

Few, if any, recent development plans have been decided by council. Usually it is the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), or the threat of a visit to the OMB, that determines what will, or won't, be built.

Perhaps members of this council are still reeling from the effects of previous legal troubles (see the Equity Waste Management lawsuit). It seems now that any hint of litigation sends council scurrying to make a decision. The only hand they play with these days is a forced hand.

As one local resident said Monday night, "Council doesn't need committees to tell it what it needs to do. It just has to exercise the power it has."



Class project shows females cool to science

Dear editor,

In early October, the OAC Science in Society class at Georgetown District High School was presented the following statistic by their teacher, Neil Cotton: At GDHS, there are 170 female students enrolled in OAC, and 133 males. However, females only registered 52 credits in OAC sciences this year, compared with 72 registered by males.

This imbalance puzzled the class, and debates were held over the course of two classes to discuss the problem and try to come up with an explanation for the imbalance. Heredity, environment, the brain, and the fundamental differences between males and females were discussed.

The class decided to do something about this problem. They divided into groups and conducted research on such topics as statistics, careers and role models, all related to women in science. The research was synthesized, and the groups prepared presentations. Grade 10 students were chosen to view the presentations because Grade 10 is the turning point; after this grade, science is not mandatory, therefore it was crucial that the benefits of science were exposed to the students.

The presentations were given to five Grade 10 classes. The main goals of the presentations were to inform the younger students about the obstacles women in science face, try to encourage them to stay in science, and illustrate the benefits of taking science courses.

Along with the presentations, eight Grade 10 classes were given a survey made up by members of

Letter of the day

Tories won't fool us again

Dear editor,

This letter is addressed to the four Progressive Conservative MPPs in the Halton Region.

Mr. Carr, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Young and Mr. Chudleigh, we, the public, have had enough. We are disgusted at the constant media bombardment your political party is promoting throughout Ontario regarding education and health care. The millions of dollars you are wasting, and I believe they exceed 50 million of taxpayers' dollars to date, could be better spent improving the very social programs you have devastated. Just think of the hospitals and schools you could fund for \$50 million.

The taxpayers of Ontario do not need to be told through misleading advertising that you are doing a good job. They need to see it in action. Spend the money where it belongs. Spend it on the poor, the homeless, the ill, the seniors, and our future, the children.

Come the next election you will be judged on you actions and their results, not your slick television ads and glossy brochures. We will not forget your crimes against humanity, your waste of tax dollars and your arrogance, and gentlemen, we won't be fooled again.

Ron Caldwell, Burlington

the OAC class. Questions on the survey varied from "Do you think there is a difference in male and female brains?" to "Have you had any negative experiences in science?" The goal of this survey was to discover the perceptions Grade 10s have about women in science, and to gain insight into their personal experiences with science.

The class hoped to reach a

broad audience with this project to get the word out: science is important, and girls can do science! By stressing the importance of math and science, and encouraging students not to close doors by not taking science, perhaps true change in the ratio of males to females in the scientific community can take place.

Emily Thompson, Georgetown

Our Readers Write

The Independent & Free Press welcomes letters to the editor from our readers. All letters must be signed and include an address and a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for content or length and can be mailed, delivered to our office address at 211 Armstrong Ave., Georgetown, Ont., L7G 4X5, faxed to us at (905) 873-0398 or e-mailed to: independent.freepress@aztec-net.com