

It's 'them' vs. 'us' at Ontario Division

Wednesday morning I was part of a delegation of four representatives from this newspaper as we visited the Ontario Division office of the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS), on Yonge Street.

Our mission was simple—we were making good our promise to our readers to deliver the reams of ballots, almost 2,500, to the powers to be at that office, in an effort to convince them that closing the local cancer office wasn't in the best interest of our community.

We were joined by two volunteers from the local branch office, as well as Halton Hills Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson.

I wish I could say we were successful in our quest, but sadly, it was an exercise in futility.

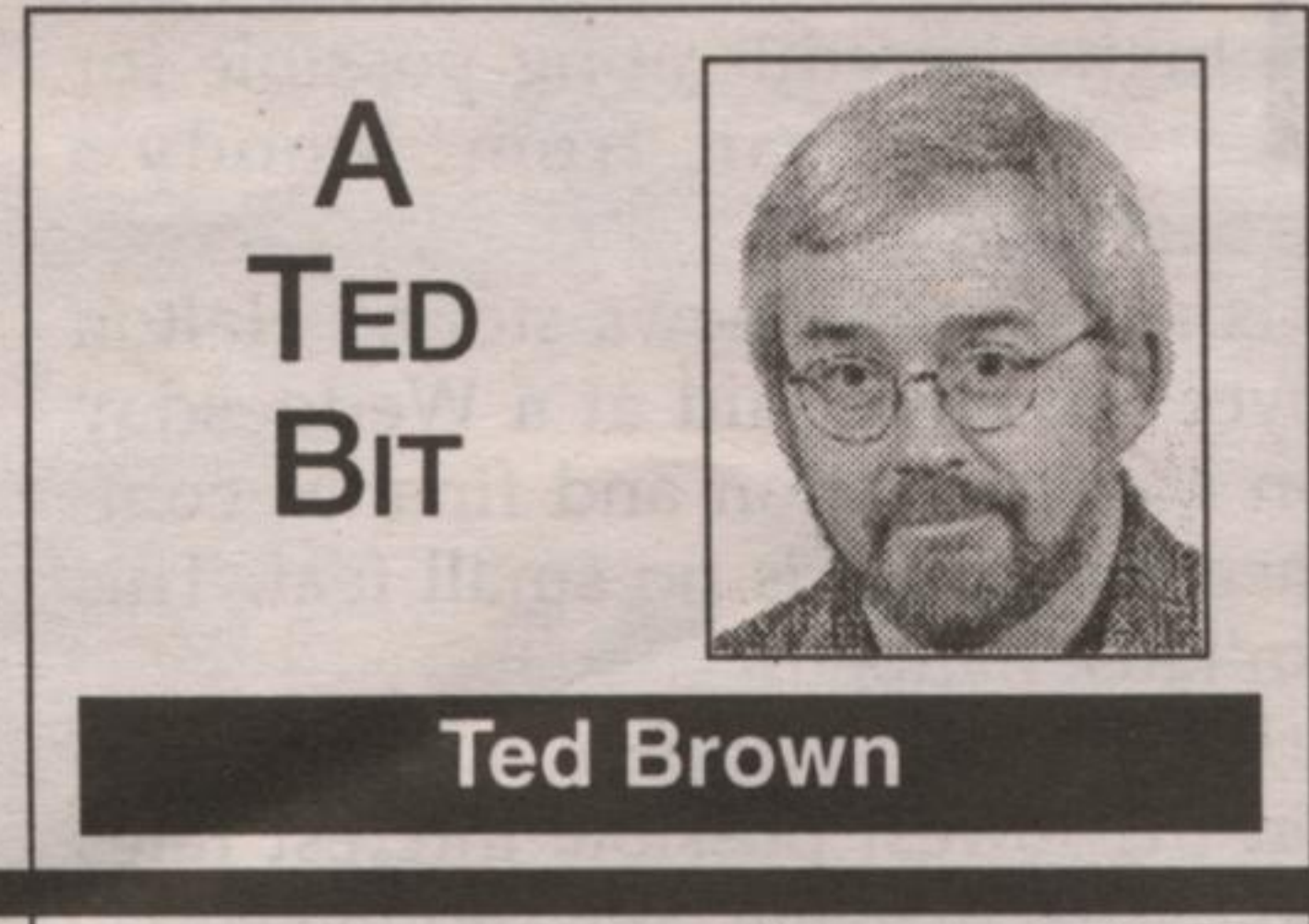
The CCS representatives made up their mind and nothing was about to change it. It was "them" vs. "us".

We asked why local volunteers had been left in the dark about the closing, why none of our local Cancer Society executive members had been asked for input, and most importantly, why the office, which was more than adequately meeting the needs of the community, was being closed to transfer the services to the Oakville office.

The same annoying words kept surfacing in the discussion—"province-wide policy."

Local cancer branch president Diane Penrice and Lorrie Kelly-Quinn, of Patient Services, had trod this path a few times before, attempting to deal with Ontario Division brass, but hadn't had much satisfaction.

Adding the clout of this newspaper did at least force Ontario Division office people



to respond, although they wanted to simply acknowledge the ballots and Penrice and Kelly-Quinn's petitions as a "photo-op" rather than dealing with a news story.

I must admit, for the most part, they were polite, professional and courteous. And condescending as hell.

As I listened to their repeated comments about "no change in services" or having "no affect on donations", I had to tell my own story.

I told how my dad had been diagnosed with early symptoms of cancer in 1992, how he took radiation treatments at Princess Margaret Hospital and had used volunteer drivers from Georgetown for those 35 trips to Toronto.

As a result, Dad has annually made a healthy donation to the CCS—his way of thanking those volunteers.

I explained my mother died in 1996, after being debilitated by numerous strokes. Consequently, Dad has also been a regular supporter of the Heart and Stroke Association, donating the same amount as to the CCS.

But, after the CCS public information meeting this past summer, he came home upset with the arrogance of the CCS representatives at that meeting. Heart and Stoke

would now receive all his donations.

I said Dad isn't unique. Penrice agreed, saying local volunteers and supporters alike had become disillusioned with the CCS's decision to close the office.

They didn't seem to care.

Later, as news editor Cynthia Gamble and I sat in an interview in a third floor office, I explained to Ontario Division Board president Ted Wheatley, and Associate Director of Regional Operations Sylvia Leonard, how some Halton Hills residents would like to see a local support office for cancer patients created, operating outside of the "province-wide policy" of the CCS.

Such a plan would offer the same level of services as the present office—travel to and from treatment centres, provide information pamphlets, and most importantly, offer an ear to listen and a shoulder to lean on.

Wheatley explained how that scenario wasn't new—the CCS faced competing charities all the time.

Leonard's comment was brief.

"That would be most unfortunate."

As she said the words, I wondered who she felt it would be "most unfortunate" for?

Over the years, Georgetown's cancer office has been a beacon for those who need its services, as well as a rallying point for volunteers.

When the CCS finally closes it, and if a new local support charity emerges, I know our dedicated volunteers will still serve the needs, both physical and spiritual, of our cancer patients.

And I'm equally certain the Canadian Cancer Society will have considerably less Halton Hills money to implement their "province-wide policy" decisions with.

Letter to the editor There's no shortage of reckless drivers

Dear editor,

With regards to the letter, Speed demons are putting other drivers at risk. (August 18).

I agree with Mrs. Waite. Not only are there speed demons but there are reckless drivers in general. People who do not obey traffic signals or think a red light means one of two things: (1) step on the gas or (2) three cars advance.

As for speed limits, they disobey them. What about obeying the sign that reads, Reduce speed (through a school zone) to 40 km/h when lights flashing?

I guess they think an amber light also means speed up, and let's not even get into how to merge. Do they know who has the right of way at a four-way stop? Not the kid I encountered, who thought the first one there and exhibits the best rolling stop gets to go first. And how about the black BMW barreling down Mountainview Road/Ninth Line in a 60km/h zone doing 120 km/h. Perhaps you were trying to beat the 1995 Cavalier of the same colour.

Learning to drive is a privilege not a right and it is not just knowing how to turn on the ignition. I say stiffer penalties for reckless driving. Take away their licence for awhile, and have them redo the driving exams.

Noelle Person,
Georgetown

BOYS UNDER NINE CUP CHAMPS

2000

GSC BOYS U9 LEAGUE CHAMPS 2000



Back row, left to right, Daniel Bayley, Scott Timmermans, Dillon Wintjes, Dirk Vansoulen. Middle row, Andrew Fasken, Sam Icton, Kamil Burghardt, Tyler Doran, Mitchel Racinsky. Front row, Brandyn Campbell, Thomas Bayley, Alex Thomson, David Nadeau, Jacob Wintjes. Missing is Daniel Lee

Alcatel had a great summer and not just because they won the finals. They had a great summer because they had fun playing soccer. I think the number one reason kids drop out of sports is because they are not having fun.

The Alcatel players were not just teammates, they were friends. They enjoyed coming to practices and to the games not only to participate, but to see their friends. Because they were so close, it made it a lot easier for them to play as a team. And, that is exactly what they did and that

is exactly why they won - they played as a team!

I want to thank each and every player on the team for making this soccer season so much fun.

I also want to thank all of the parents for their continued support and participation throughout the season and also for attending all those early Saturday morning practices. (ha ha)

Last but not least, I would like to thank Alcatel for their dedication to minor league sports and for sponsoring the team.

Jasper Wintjes

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