

Editorial

# Earth Day 2001

For many people, Earth Day will come and go like any other day. But for those who are dedicated to protecting the environment and preserving it for generations to come, April 22 holds special meaning.

Traditionally, Earth Day has been recognized with tree-planting ceremonies, neighbourhood cleanups, and tree sales like the one set for tomorrow (Saturday) at the town's central works garage, but now it has come to symbolize so much more. Pollution, in all its devastating forms, is of immediate concern to both city and urban dwellers.

While we believe the provincial government has not done enough to fight pollution, we do applaud its latest initiative—a toll-free, 24-hour public hotline for reporting acts of pollution. (The service is available now at 1-866-663-8477.)

The province also promises it will crack down on deliberate and repeat offenders. For example, the maximum fine for a first conviction of a major offence of a corporation has risen from \$1 million to \$6 million per day, and for a subsequent conviction from \$2 million to \$6 million a day.

There are other strict penalties the Ministry of Environment has implemented in its quest to deter and punish polluters. Now, we just hope the ministry follows through on its get-tough stand.



## Letters to the editor....

### Two-season approach better for house league hockey

Dear editor,

As I read the letter to the editor in your April 11 issue, GMHA responds to house league complaint, I found myself reflecting on my own experiences of minor hockey.

My father spent more than 20 years volunteering not only as a coach, but as an executive on a minor hockey board in Mississauga. For that reason I sympathized with Mr. Lefebvre and Mr. Smith. But, even though I didn't read Mr.

Smith's original letter, I knew where he was coming from. He wants his son to see fairness in "the system". Unfortunately, the system, as it exists today, isn't designed to prevent these types of things.

This year my son played Senior Tyke. His coach, Mike Ross, needs to be commended. We were a last-place team that seemed to watch all these other teams' superstars. We won our last game, but that's not what I'd commend Mike for. By season's end our team was one of the few teams that knew what offside was.

Now, that may seem like a little point... but think about how much slower a game gets when a boy is constantly offside. As a parent, I want to see my boy play, I don't pay to watch him line up seven times each shift. Mike's attention to this has already made every boy on our team a better player. They can't shoot or skate faster, but with fewer whistles, they'll be playing more. And if you're playing more you're going to get better.

I believe that if we could just think outside of the box for a moment, we just might find some of the answers that

we're looking for. For example, why do we play one six-month house league schedule? Why not play one season until Christmas and then reformat the teams and start a new season in January?

This year there was a Senior Tyke all-star game. Each game had kids of equal skill levels playing against each other. There were boys in the first game who I know never touched the puck in a league game. The fast kids would just beat them to it. In this game though, the playing field was leveled. It was a great example of balancing the league. Conversely, the higher-skilled players were pushed. They now had to work with the other boys and develop team skills. Balancing was good for all the boys and it would be good in league play.

Obviously a two-season approach would give the coaches and conveners the benefit of three months to evaluate each boy before the second season.

Basically we just need to answer the question... is house league hockey for fun, skills development or winning? Once we figure this out, we'll have clearer picture of what to do.

Jim Rawn, Georgetown

### Guide volunteers thanked

Dear editor,

With Volunteer Week set for this month, I would like to take a moment to recognize a group of very dedicated Guiders who take many hours from their busy schedules to provide opportunities for the girls of this community.

They spend countless hours planning weekly meetings, attend district events, organize camps and countless hours of training to help the girls and young ladies develop the self-confidence and skills required to succeed in today's and tomorrow's world.

The talents, flexibility and capabilities of these wonderful ladies are endless and they provide a great role model who can influence academic and athletic achievement of girls. Their reward is the smile on the face of a girl who has met yet another challenge and is ready for the next one.

On behalf of the girls, I would like to thank the Guiders of Georgetown East District for all their dedication. Guiders of Georgetown East, you are the best.

Lynn Clark, district commissioner,  
Georgetown East District  
Girl Guides of Canada

### Send us your letters

The Independent & Free Press welcomes letters to the editor.

All letters must be signed and include an address and a daytime telephone number. Letters requesting names be withheld will only be published pending a valid reason at the editor's discretion. Letters should be not exceed 300 words and may be edited for content or length.

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