

Editorial

Use your head

The summer months are the worst time of the year for impaired driving—worse than the winter holiday season. At the conclusion of each long weekend of the summer, we are bombarded by the gruesome tally of fatalities caused by car wrecks on the highways and boating-related accidents on cottage country lakes.

Too often alcohol being blamed as a contributing factor is the common denominator in these tragedies.

With cottage weekends, outdoor patios, music festivals and the lure of such outdoor activities as golf, people seem to consume more alcohol in public places in the summer.

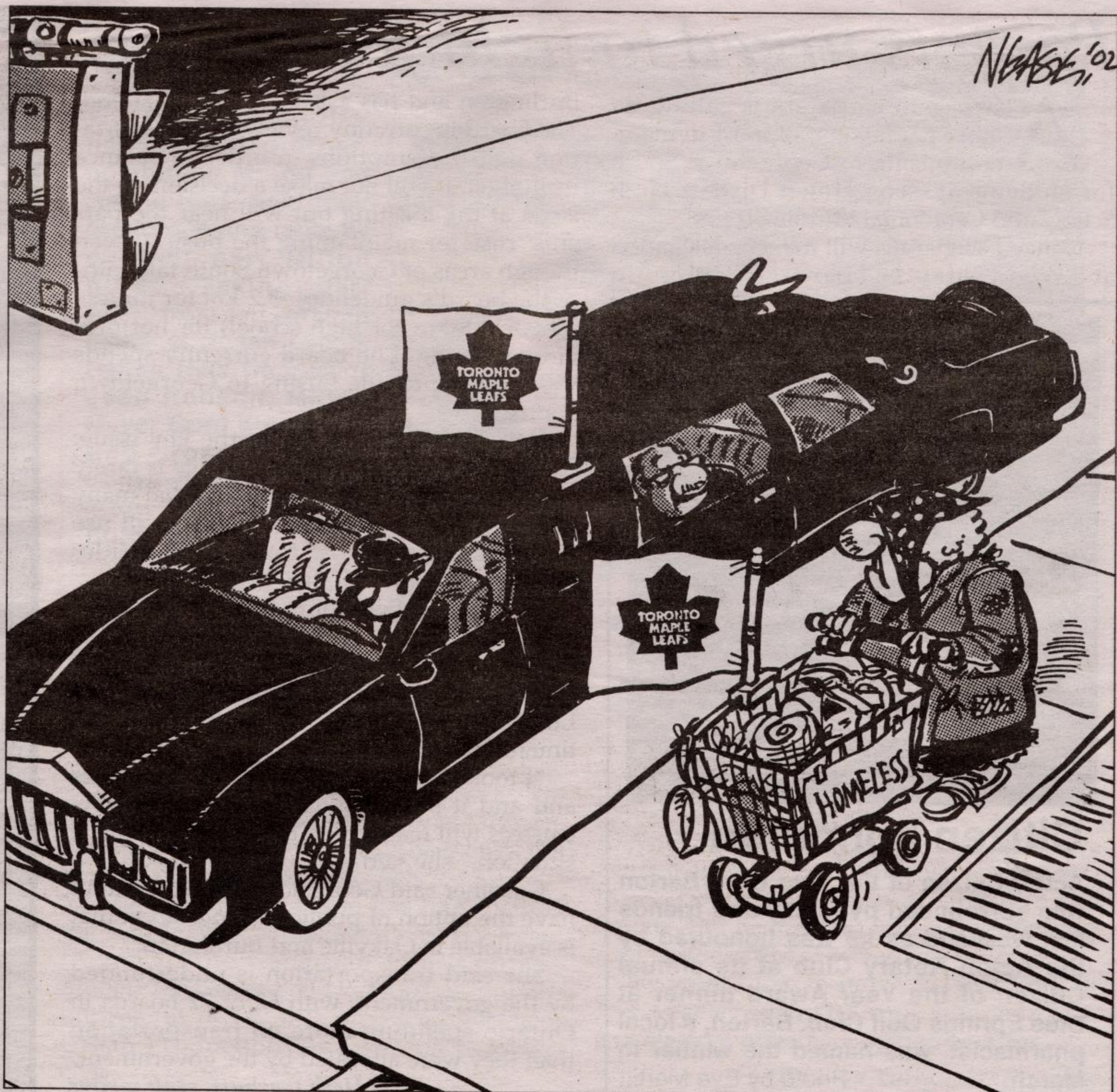
But good weather and good times doesn't give anyone a licence to drink and drive. If concern for the safety of yourself and others doesn't stop you from getting behind the wheel while impaired, consider the consequences if you're caught.

- A criminal record will follow you for the rest of your life.
- Your insurance premiums will skyrocket—that is if your insurance company will still renew your policy.
- You risk losing your freedom. When caught, your driver's licence will be suspended for a minimum of a year. You will likely serve time in prison if it's not your first offence.
- It will cost you a lot. The minimum fine is \$600 for a first offence. It goes up from there. Then add your lawyer's fees, which could easily cost you thousands of dollars depending on the circumstances.

• If you kill or injure someone, the penalties compound—up to life in prison for impaired driving or causing death. You could also find yourself open to a negligence lawsuit.

And don't kid yourself—if you drink and drive, you will be caught.

So you have to ask yourself is it all really worth it?



Letters to the editor...

Funding formula fails school volunteers

Dear editor,

The Harrison School and Community Council received correspondence from the Halton District

School Board pertaining to volunteerism in our schools and the need for background checks, including a police records check, for the often thankless people who give their time in our public schools.

The school board wants police records checks done for anyone coming into contact with children, with few exceptions, by the beginning of September 2002, and, they cannot pay for it. The cost of checking the approximately 10,000 volunteers in Halton, at \$15 each, is \$150,000. Our share of this cost, at Harrison, amounts to a tiny portion of the pie, but we, at the council are forced to pass the cost on to the individual volunteers. The fact that volunteers freely give of their time and now must cough-up dough to do it, however, is almost a side issue.

We recognize the need for safe schools and indeed the long overdue need to systematically approach the idea of volunteerism in our schools. It is absolutely necessary to check people out who are interacting with our children. But, we think that a

board program, implemented in response to provincial legislation (the Safe Schools Act), should be funded by the province and meted out by the board.

This is yet another area that has fallen through the cracks of the provincial funding formula.

Premier Ernie Eves recently said that he will review the funding formula but will it be given due consideration? Public consultation? We think the failure of the funding formula to take into account incidental costs only serves to pit parents against the school board against the ministry.

At Harrison, we are graced by a number of individuals who care enough to fund-raise, read to our juniors, hand out pizza, hot dogs and milk and supervise our trips. I don't think that our volunteers will stop doing that because they have to pay 15 bucks. What's next?

I strongly urge you to voice your opinion, pro or con.

Gary Britton, co-chair Harrison School and Community Council

Road widening necessary

Dear editor,

I wish to respond to the concerns of Anne Hansen and Henry Kock regarding the widening of Highway 7 (March 29).

Being "life members" of the Bruce Trail Association does not mean that you should be venomously opposed to motor vehicles. I was a member of the BTA and have hiked the entire trail. I managed to co-exist with all the vehicular traffic I encountered.

They asked, "what rationale could there possibly be for widening roads...". One simple answer: the increase in traffic volume. The recent fatalities have emphasized the need for a safer route on a major arterial road. Commuting by bicycle is not an option for most people. For our economy to work we also need the commercial vehicles to haul our goods.

While I agree that our public transit can be improved, I fail to see the comparison between Scandinavia and Canada. The population density of Norway and Sweden is between 34 to 49 persons per square mile and Denmark's is 310 per square mile. Canada has a mere seven people per sq. mile.

To paraphrase an old saying, "Have the courage to change the things you can, accept what you cannot change, and have the wisdom to tell the difference." There is danger in reckless change, but greater danger in blind conservatism.

Ron Summers, Georgetown

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited.

Mail or drop off

Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, Ont., L7G 4B1
Georgetown Market Place

Fax

(905) 873-0398

E-mail

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

Editorial e-mail addresses

John McGhie

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

Cynthia Gamble

cgamble@independentfreepress.com

Lisa Tallyn

ltallyn@independentfreepress.com

Herb Garbutt

hgarbutt@independentfreepress.com

Ted Brown

tbrown@independentfreepress.com

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Mailing Address: 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, Ont. L7G 4B1

Telephone: (905) 873-0301 Fax: (905) 873-0398

E-mail: production@independentfreepress.com

Georgetown Market Place

Ken Nugent, Publisher
Steve Foreman, Advertising/Production Manager
John McGhie, Managing Editor
Lorne Drury, Editor-in-Chief
Carol Young, Business Manager
Dave Coleman, Director of Distribution
Nancy Geissler, Circulation Manager

Distribution e-mail: distribution@independentfreepress.com

News Editor: Cynthia Gamble
Staff Writers: Lisa Tallyn, Herb Garbutt
Photography: Ted Brown
Advertising Sales:
Dianne Fascinato, Cindi Kerklaan, Alexandra Stabins,
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