

Letter to the editor

Nabbed shoplifter warns others

In 1997 Halton Regional Police implemented the Halton Youth Justice Program, a Pre-Court Diversion Program for first time young offenders. In order to participate in this program, a youth must admit their behaviour and accept full responsibility for their actions. The premise of this program is to address the underlying social causes of the individual's behaviour and to engage meaningful consequences that provide the most appropriate learning opportunity in order to reduce the likelihood of repeat behaviour patterns.

The following story is based on a real situation. Three youths agreed to participate in a conference after having been involved in a shoplifting incident. The reparatory agreement as an outcome of the conference included writing their story, detailing their actions and the subsequent consequences, so that other youth could benefit from this learning opportunity.

The Independent & Free Press has agreed to run the youth's letter.

On March 17, two friends and I went to Zellers in Georgetown. We went to the lingerie department where two of us took some lingerie items. We all went to the washroom and two of us removed price tags from the items.

We all knew what was happening, but only one of us had any items on. As we walked out of the store, we were met by store security who asked us politely to hand over the items. One of us tried to run from security in order to get rid of the items. We were all being aggressive, rude and disrespectful to store security and we made a scene.

Store security told us our rights and then called the police. The police officer called our parents. Even though only one of us had the merchandise, we were all told that we were being charged because we knew what was going on but didn't do anything to stop it. We were released to our parents.

A few days later, we were called for a meeting with the counselor from the Diversion Program. She told us about a conferencing program where you have to sit in a circle and reach an agreement and solve the problem there in front of everyone who was involved. In the conference we had to explain what happened, and how our actions had affected everyone.

I was scared and I knew my actions had affected a lot of people. My parents had to take time off work both to meet with the lady who was taking care of it and for the conference.

They were really disappointed with me and

shocked that I would do something so stupid. My sibling was really embarrassed by the whole thing. My friend's parents were also shocked and disappointed in me.

Then there were my feelings. I was embarrassed, scared, confused, and afraid that everyone would think I was a bad person. It also affected store security and store management. They were both really shocked that we were so rude and gave them such a hard time.

It could have also affected the whole community because every time someone steals from the stores it makes the prices go up to cover what was taken. After we all discussed what happened and apologized to everyone, store security and management decided that our consequence should be to let the community know what we had done by writing to the newspaper.

I would like to apologize to the community and all the people I have affected by my stupid actions. I am truly sorry and will never try this again. I am a good person and want others to think so too. I can't tell you why I did this because I really don't know but I will tell you this, it was the dumbest thing I ever did and I hope that anyone reading this will not try to shoplift because you will get caught sooner or later.

It's not worth it!

You not only hurt yourself but you hurt other people too. And remember, you might not take anything but if you are with someone who does then you can still be held accountable.

I would like to thank store security who caught me and all the people who were there for me when I needed them most.

Name withheld

Supporters of M&M barbecue thanked

Dear editor,

On behalf of the Halton Chapter of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada (CCFC), I would like to thank everyone who came out to the M&M Meat Shop charity barbecue for the CCFC May 11.

Brian and Louise Northwood at M&M Meats Georgetown put on a fantastic barbecue with the help of their family, staff and volunteers. All proceeds raised go directly to the CCFC in its mission to find a cure. Thank you, Georgetown.

Sarah Coulson, Halton Chapter, CCFC



Community Living North Halton

wishes to thank all of the riders, sponsors and donors who helped make our 12th Annual Bike-a-Thon such a wonderful success. We were able to raise over \$16,000 with net proceeds of over \$13,000 through all of your efforts! All proceeds go towards supports and services to children and adults with developmental disabilities in our leisure programs. A very special thank you to the following sponsors:

- Ollie's Cycle & Ski
- Tim Horton's
- Neilson Dairy
- Shopper's Drug Mart
- Brian's Food Basics
- Solinst
- Young's Pharmacy & Home Care Centre
- J.S. Jones & Sons Funeral Home
- Paul C. Armstrong Insurance Brokers Ltd.
- McEachern Steering
- Hair Headquarters
- Carney Electric
- Georgetown Fruit Market
- Georgeview Restaurant
- Canadian Tire
- Terra Cotta Cookie Company Ltd.
- A&P Georgetown
- Brackys Tap & Grill
- Shoeless Joe's
- Halton Hills Tire Centre Ltd.
- McDonalds
- Grant Royce Trucks
- Emerald Isle
- Firestone
- The Apple Factory
- Little Caesars
- Jumbo Video
- Halton Regional Police & Auxiliary Service
- St. John Ambulance
- Adidas Canada
- Marineland
- Dickie Dee Ice Cream
- Wild Water Kingdom
- Ontario Science Centre
- Dave & Busters
- Pizza Hut
- Curwood Packaging Ltd.
- Carl's Catering
- Die Mold Tool Ltd.
- Town of Halton Hills
- Greenhouse Country Market
- Maple Lodge Farms Ltd.
- The Travel Hut
- McMaster's Meat & Deli
- Foodstuffs
- The Freckled Lion
- Home Hardware
- C&S Printing
- UAP/NAPA Georgetown
- Elliott Custom Brokers
- Extreme Auto Clean
- Zak's Pharmacy
- Loblaws
- Dollarama
- J.V. Clothing
- Boston Pizza
- Asbuilt Mechanical
- J.C. Duff Ltd.
- Bergsma Trucking
- Pizza Delight
- Blockbuster
- Georgetown Agricultural Society
- Halton Amateur Radio Club
- Rotary Club of Georgetown
- Halton Hills Fire Department
- Binny & Smith Ltd.
- Sportsworld
- Toronto Maple Leafs
- African Lion Safari
- Metro Toronto Zoo
- Paramount Canada's Wonderland
- Georgetown District High School Band

12th Annual



Thank You Stewarttown Middle School Staff!

A very special heart-felt thanks to the wonderful staff at Stewarttown Middle School, for the amazing musical production of "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown". Your commitment, dedication & enthusiasm towards this play was amazing! The many staff, volunteers and students all combined to create a true work of art. The memories of being involved from start to finish will be cherished by our children for many years to come. We re all still brimming with pride! Thank you all so much. We are truly grateful to each and everyone involved.

The Very Proud Parents of The Cast

Where Child Abuse Hurts Most



Sometimes the worst scars of child abuse can't be seen. Whether physical or emotional, abuse attacks a child's self-esteem and emotional development, leaving long-term emotional trauma and pain. You can help prevent child abuse by being a nurturing parent or caregiver. By letting children know they are special, competent and loved, you can help them develop positive self-images and happier futures. If you feel overwhelmed, angry or frustrated as a parent, help is out there for you. Look in your area for support groups and services, or talk to a trusted friend, family member, pastor or doctor about what you can do to protect and support your child. If we all do our part to prevent child abuse, we'll get to the heart of the matter.



CFUW CANADIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Scholarships & Bursaries Available

CFUW Georgetown will be awarding a total of \$7500 (approx) to students who are residents of Halton Hills and who meet the criteria for our various scholarships and bursaries.

If you will be attending a University or Community College you may be eligible for one or more of the following:

- Post Secondary University Education Award
- Community College Award
- Post Secondary Bursary
- Mature Student Award
- Sharon James Award

Deadline for submission of Applications is July 10, 2002.

Applications and information are available from:
Guidance Departments at Halton Hills High Schools
Halton Hills Public Library
Independent & Free Press Office, Marketplace Mall

And online at www.aztec-net.com/~cfuw

CFUW Georgetown scholarships are made possible by your generous support of our annual used book and toy sale.