

Editorial

Don't panic yet

The Ontario Medical Association (OMA) is urging Ontario residents to take a calm and reasoned approach to the recent death caused by West Nile Virus (WNV)—and that appears to be just what Halton Region is doing.

While it has retained the services of a mosquito control company, Halton's Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal stressed at a recent health and social services committee meeting "there are no, I emphasize no, plans to spray (mosquitoes) at this time."

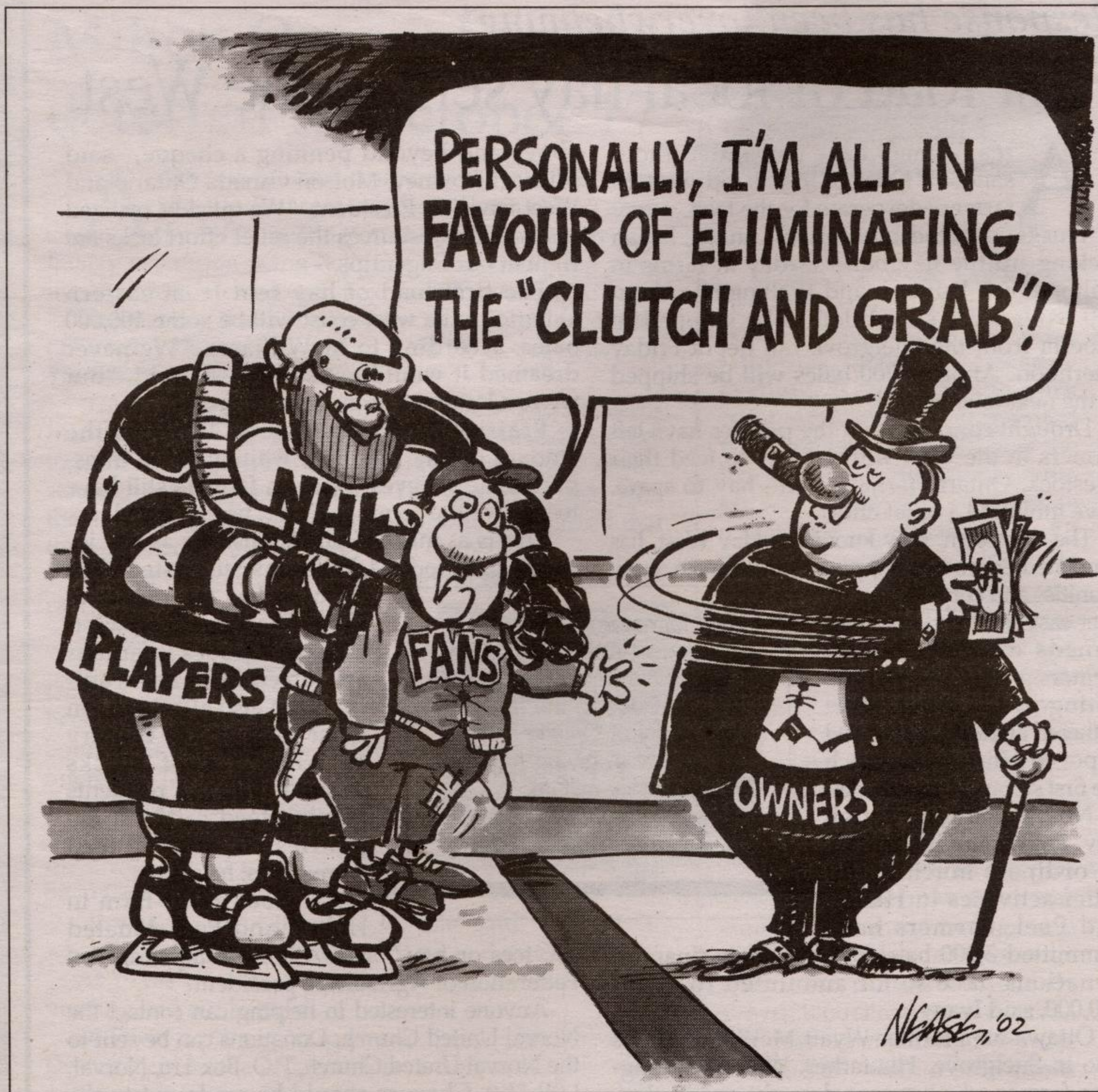
The OMA said the risk of infection from WNV can be significantly reduced by people taking preventative measures, and Halton Region has been publicizing those throughout the summer.

"The current risk to the public is still very slight, and the OMA is concerned that the recent flurry of reports about the disease may cause undue panic," said OMA president and Georgetown physician Dr. Elliot Halparin in a recent press release. "The public and media need to put this issue into perspective."

The OMA believes it's premature for individuals or governments to hastily respond by eradicating mosquitoes without knowing more about the disease and its transmittal patterns.

Both Nosal and Halparin agree there will be "serious discussions" about WNV over the winter about a course of action.

Meanwhile local residents can do their part this fall by eliminating potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes. That will go a long way to putting the bite on the mosquito population before it bites us.



Letters to the editor...

Alberta farmer writes to say 'thanks'

Dear editor,

As a farmer from the heart of the drought area of Alberta, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the farming community of Ontario in their

generosity in giving hay for our livestock's welfare.

Living in Wainwright, I was one of the volunteers who were on hand to help unload the rail cars. The first shipment was on open flat cars—a snap to load and unload. The second shipment was in box-cars. I have to admire the perseverance of our Ontario counterparts, who tucked hay in every nook and cranny. No space was wasted thanks to a lot of Ontario sweat.

The farmers and ranches in Alberta had to register their names for the hay lottery. My daughter and I are two in 12,000 registered and to date have not been lucky enough to have our names drawn. I must say the Ontario hay has been spread throughout Alberta and has been much appreciated.

In our situation, we have carry-over from last year to winter about 50 cows. We presently have 140 cows and will be cutting the herd by 90 head. It seems sad that after building a herd over the last 40 years we are going to have to cull so severely. Some good cows are

slated for the slaughterhouse, but that is life as I am refusing to pay more than \$220/ton for hay.

However, we will persevere and survive—that is the backbone of the rural community. Our hats are off to the people of rural Ontario; every little bit helps.

Alberta was known to have 40 per cent of the beef cows in Canada. The rebuilding of the herds will be a long-term project for our farmers, providing we get moisture. Again, many thanks cannot be said enough.

**Raymond Belanger,
Wainwright, Alberta**

Comments were appalling

Dear editor,

As a parent and taxpayer, I'm appalled and shocked by comments made by Ethel Gardiner and Dusty Papke regarding spending of \$48,000 at a golf retreat for principals and vice-principals. Gardiner is quoted as saying "it was in our budget" while Papke defended the irresponsible spending.

With fiscal responsibility on all of us, it would have been more appropriate to find a less expensive facility to hold the workshops. I've been told over and over again by teachers that certain programs are no longer available, now I know why!

The money could have helped other children or mine, who may require extra help along the way in the education system.

Shame on the both of you. I hope that education minister Elizabeth Witmer will check the school board's books, our children's education depends on it.

Darren Coulter, Georgetown

Community co-operation lacking in council decision

Dear editor,

At a council meeting on August 12, town council voted unanimously to recommend the extension of Hall Road into the ravine to allow access for a new housing development.

We are writing to express our dismay at hearing that day some residents of Chelvin/Fagan Drive thanking council and town staff

for a proposal that puts this extension into a neighbour's backyard.

Whatever happened to our sense of community? In our opinion it would have been preferable for residents surrounding this development to work together for a more mutually satisfying solution, perhaps access through the vacant P&A site. Increased in-

volvement in the process would have generated better acceptance of its outcome.

However, after lying dormant for a few years, this project was suddenly rushed through in a matter of weeks in the middle of the summer with a number of residents away.

**A. Pirbayer,
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.

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