

Editorial

Super sellers

Kudos! Congratulations! A big pat on the back for a job well done! However you want to put it, the folks in Toronto have done an outstanding job luring visitors back to the Big Smoke after the World Health Organization lifted its travel advisory last week.

From cheap gas prices to \$1 tickets for a Blue Jays game to an unbelievable package deal dreamed up by David Mirvish, Toronto has pulled out all the creative stops in its bid to get the economy back on track.

Even beleaguered Air Canada was offering incredibly low air fares to Toronto. The Web site of the airline's discount carrier, Tango, was reportedly swamped with four million hits in the first hour after posting a once-in-a-lifetime deal.

Mirvish announced that he would be extending his rock-bottom priced theatre ticket, hotel and meal deal until July. It seems he had placed ads in weekend newspapers without considering the fact the tickets—some 45,000 of them—would be sold out in less than three days. Now that's a successful promotion.

Of course there were other discounts to be had and Toronto residents and visitors were treated royally just for showing up.

But Toronto knows it is going to take far more than cheap fuel and discounts to recover from the heavy losses caused by the fear of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. This deadly virus lingers more ways than one.

Halton residents need to be reminded that it wasn't only Toronto that took an economic and emotional hit from SARS. Area businesses are also reeling from the effects of this outbreak.

Now it is our turn to shop, entertain and dine locally.

Halton has so much to offer and we need to do everything we can to support the businesses right here, right now.



Letters to the editor...

Criticism of firefighters, council not justified

Dear editor,

I would like to comment on Donna Jockisch's letter regarding the town hiring more full-time fire-

fighters and asking the town council and the taxpayers to wake up in regards to this matter.

She also indirectly criticized the actions of our part-time firefighters by stating they took 20 minutes to respond to a call. Mrs. Jockisch should have all the facts before she starts to publicly criticize the actions and non-actions of our town council, taxpayers and fire department.

I couldn't believe that it would take 20 minutes for our fire department to arrive on scene at a call in town because I was a member of the department for many years and I know through experience that when the pager goes off at 4:45 a.m. for a garage fire these guys would respond extremely quick to the hall to get the trucks rolling.

Our part-time firefighters are the backbone of the department and they are a dedicated, well-trained and committed bunch of guys who provide tremendous service to our community. After further investigation I found out the on-scene time

was half the time she quoted. She also quoted the town does not adequately fund our essential services such as the fire department. This department is growing and is constantly growing with the town's needs. The town council and fire department have approved and made many additions and changes in the last few years such as two new tankers for both stations, new pumpers, new rescue truck, three new rapid intervention mini-pumpers, new support vehicles and a new aerial ladder coming next year. They've hired six full-time firefighters and are planning to hire two more this year and two more firefighters next year.

The fire department, with the backing of the town council, are awake and committed to provide excellent fire protection for our town as it grows and, in my opinion, are doing a great job and will continue to serve the community over and above our expectations.

Steve Terry, Georgetown

Reader hopes Bush's team 'more tolerant' than PM's

Dear editor,

There is no question the American administration is disappointed with the Canadian government's decision not to support the war in Iraq.

The Americans do, however, recognize that Canada is a sovereign country and, as such, have every right to so decide. In reality, this is a minor blip in Canada-U.S. relations.

Spokespeople for the American administration have made it abundantly clear that their main problem is the direct slurs against their president (i.e. "moron", "failed statesman") made by Canadian government representatives with no firm corrective statement or action by our prime minister.

The American reaction is only what could be expected, as noted by Mr. Julian Reed, and I quote, "If there is any intolerance, it should be of those whose egos are satisfied by throwing verbal bricks at the people they disagree with."

We can only hope that George W. Bush and his administration are more tolerant than the Jean Chrétien administration.

Ed Ford, 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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