

Editorial

Cloudy legislation

Ottawa's move this week to introduce legislation decriminalizing possession of as many as 30 joints of marijuana will not please everyone. Such a move is, in fact, guaranteed to anger many, infuriate others and leave many others scratching their heads.

On the one hand, the Liberals are telling Canadians not to use marijuana; that they do not support its use but, with the same breath, are saying it is okay to smoke a few joints, that you will only face a fine now instead of a criminal charge.

How are we to make sense of this legislation?

Many Canadians believe that marijuana should be considered an illegal drug—period. Marijuana, they will argue leads to abuse of other, more powerful and addictive drugs. Loosening the marijuana laws will only tempt youngsters who aren't using it to try it and encourage those who are smoking up to increase their intake.

However, let's be blunt.

The current marijuana laws are not working—and they haven't for the past three or four decades.

Our already clogged courts shouldn't be burdened with hearing thousands of cases each year for simple possession—the time, effort and cost of hearing such cases are simply not worth the end result—a judicial slap on the wrist.

To that end, changing the current legislation makes sense. The Canadian chiefs of police think so, as does the Canadian Medical Journal Association and likely the three million Canadians who use the drug. Toughening penalties for growers from a maximum of seven years to 14 years is a good move and dealers can still face life sentences.

This legislation is both sensible and contradictory at the same time and, as we said earlier, a law that not everyone will like.

But, then again, the federal government(s) have only had four decades to work on it.



Letters to the editor...

Murr golf tournament raises record \$45,000

Dear editor,

The 19th annual Paul Murr Memorial Golf Tournament took place at Blue Springs Golf Course on

Monday May 12.

Golf winners were: First Scramble foursome—Jerome Drexler, Rob Drexler, Ed Scharlach, Larry Taylor 63; Second Scramble Foursome—Steve Harris, Brian Cillis, Gary Powell, Oliver Zeidler 65; First Low Gross—Mike Roy 76; Second Low Gross—Gary Lumbers; First Low Net—Ted Saitz; Second Low Net—Todd McIntyre.

I'm pleased to report that despite the cold, inclement weather and, consequently, reduced participation, we achieved our target of raising \$45,000—which is our best year ever. This amount will be donated in its entirety to the Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society.

Next year will be our 20th anniversary and we will be approaching half a million dollars in cumulative donations. We have booked Monday, May 17, 2004 for this special year and will celebrate these milestones with some added features. Sincere thanks go to our participants, business and in memo-

riam sponsors, prize donors, volunteers and committee members.

Allan Hall,
tournament chairman

Supporters thanked

Dear editor,

Discovery Toys and Norval Presbyterian Church wish to thank the many Georgetown area businesses and individuals for their generous support of the Easter Toy Basket drive.

Twenty-one baskets were handed out at the Easter luncheon April 21. The families had a wonderful time. Special thanks to the ladies who provided the lunch, to Rev. Bruce Clendening, to Robert of Garden Gate Florist and to Blake for his assistance with the children's entertainment.

We could not have done it without you. Thanks again.

Sandy Henderson,
Discovery Toys, consultant
and Elly Van Rijs,
Norval Presbyterian Church officer

Bad decision by council

Dear editor,

Do the voters in Georgetown want more and faster development?

With breathtaking arrogance, Mr. Bert Arnold and the unnamed landowners he represents are attempting to manipulate the Official Plan process. They would like to add 1,000 acres to the urban boundary of Georgetown at the 11th hour.

For two years or longer the town and the region have been working on their Official Plans. During this time I am unaware of this proposal coming forward.

Ordinary people are given 10 minutes to make a presentation to council. Bruce MacLean, director of planning, showed poor judgment when he advised council they should listen to Mr. Arnold with a special 90-minute meeting. He should be more aware than most of the money that has been spent on the Official Plan for staff time and consultants, not to mention the countless hours volunteered by citizens sitting on the committees and attending open houses. Ignoring cautions, council showed poor judgment in permitting this.

Council will meet for 90 minutes June 4 at 6 p.m. Can you be there?

Barbara Halsall, member of Official Plan Steering Committee

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

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

The Independent Weekend Edition & Free Press

Address: 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, Ont. L7G 4B1 (Georgetown Market Place)

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

E-mail: production@independentfreepress.com

Web site: www.independentfreepress.com

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 Campbell, Christina Marshall,
Angela Schurman, Elaine Thomas, Kristen Armstrong
Real Estate: Sue Spizziri
Classifieds: Mary Watson, Kristie Pells
Accounting: Pat Kentner, Rose Marie Gauthier
Production: Mary Lou Foreman, Kevin Powell, Shelli Harrison,
Dolores Black, Debbie MacDougall
Distribution: Kim McClure

The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of the newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd., which includes: Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Bancroft This Week, Barry's Bay This Week, Barrie Advance, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes,

Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Huronia Business Times, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Mississauga Business Times, Napanee Guide, Newmarket/Aurora Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Oldtimers Hockey News, Orillia Today, Oshawa-

Whitby/Clarington Port Perry This Week, Owen Sound Tribune, Peterborough This Week, Picton County Guide, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville/Uxbridge Tribune, Forever Young, City of York Guardian.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature will not be charged for, but the balance

of the advertisement will be paid for at the acceptable rate. In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time. Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited. Price: Store copies 50c each; Subscriptions \$26.00 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130.00 per year in all other countries. Plus G.S.T.

Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Independent & Free Press is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.

