

Editorial

Doctors in the house

With Halton's burgeoning population comes an increased demand for, and on, services. And perhaps no area is feeling the strain more than in our medical community where doctors are in short supply.

According to Halton Region's Physicians Recruitment Task Force, 40 general practitioners were needed this year to service the four municipalities and another 20-25 will be required next year and in 2005.

Here in Halton Hills, which has been classified as an under-served area by the province for the past two years, the need is even greater.

Not having a family physician can be a very frustrating experience—not to mention a burden on the entire health care system. Long waits in a hospital emergency room or local clinic should be the exception and not the norm. And let's not forget the peace of mind one has knowing they have a family doctor close at hand.

However, while the shortage of GPs is still acute in Halton, it appears the task force, which began as a pilot project last year, has made great strides.

In a report to the region's health and social services committee last week, the task force stated that, since November, 20 physicians have set up shop in Halton (seven in Halton Hills) and discussions are under way with five others about locating here.

Clearly the task force's initiatives, such as aggressively marketing Halton, attending trade shows and even establishing a Web site for physicians to peruse is paying off. Provincial programs, such as allowing physicians to receive up to \$40,000 in incentives to locate in under-served areas, also helps.

The collaboration between local hospitals and physicians also aids in attracting doctors to set up shop here.

The task force, which operated with a \$150,000 budget, will need regional council's approval in the spring to survive. So far, it appears to have been money well spent.



Letters to the editor...

HOPE's weed solutions just don't work

Dear editor,

Although I believe the folks at HOPE (Health Options for People and the Environment) have the best

of intentions, their solutions for our weed problems just don't work.

They rightly point out that not enough funds were made available for the alternative processes to be effective and I believe that to be accurate. But what would that cost be and would the public support such costs?

On June 16 a report was presented to council that showed serious deterioration of two sports fields despite the implementation of the new methods and to quote "even with supplementary aerating, top-dressing and fertilizing this fall, these sport fields would likely require supplementary measures." The report goes on to state that without the application of a herbicide the turf will deteriorate to the point where replacement will be required at a cost of \$5-7,000 for each field, verses the herbicide costs of \$350 each. There also appears to be insurance issues for the town if the fields are not maintained to standards.

In recent weeks there have been other comments sent to local news-

papers outlining the deterioration of other parks and public areas.

Like all the chemicals that are used, both in the home and the workplace, we need to exercise common sense and proper caution without resorting to bad science or fear-mongering. It is ironic that since the town has stopped spraying their property next to mine I now have to spray three times a year instead of once every two years and it has nothing to do with dandelions. In fact, the recent decision to now spray these areas is too little, too late, because once the weeds are eliminated there will be next to nothing left—an issue I plan to bring to council.

But more to the point, we need a program that is relatively safe (nothing is 100 per cent effective), the process outlined in the brochure from HOPE while beneficial, is not, nor cost effective. There are neither the funds nor the resources to maintain in a timely manner what we have now.

Doug Pratt, Acton

Driver broke family's heart

Dear editor,

To the coward, who hit and left out precious dog at the side of the road to die alone Sept. 11, Fifth Line, Limehouse:

Emily wasn't just a dog to us; she was a member of our family, an irreplaceable joy, our best friend, our girl. You ended her life in just a blink. You didn't think, you didn't stop, not even a thought.

You broke our hearts and you know who you are. You have left a family scarred. People like you should be behind bars. You should be ashamed of yourself.

The Barber family, Limehouse

Garbage collection lacking in core

Dear editor,

Recently I was walking along Main St. in Georgetown. Garbage receptacles along the street were overflowing. I talked to several merchants on Main who told me this was an ongoing problem.

Apparently the town pickup is erratic and/or not frequent enough. Downtown Georgetown should be an example of how well managed the town is as well as an encouragement to shop and dine in downtown Georgetown.

Garbage on the streets is the antithesis of this example.

C.B. Coolidge, 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

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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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,
 Jennifer Spencer, Angela Schurman, Paul Agius
 Real Estate: Sue Spizziri
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