

Letters to the editor...letters to the editor...letters to the editor...

Alternatives to pesticides needed

Dear editor,

It is incredibly disheartening that even now, more than 40 years after the publication of Rachel Carson's ground-breaking book *Silent Spring*, we still debate the relative merits of using pesticides or employing more expensive (in the short term) and more labour-intensive methods to maintain green spaces that suit our purposes.

Ms. Carson believed that all living things were connected, and this interconnectedness has been demonstrated repeatedly by other scientists. Humans are part of that living web, and we ignore this fact at our peril.

Here in Halton Hills we draw our water from aquifers beneath farmland that is being treated regularly with chemicals intended to kill living organisms. Our children play on lawns and parks that have been similarly treated. Geneticists tell us that we share a large proportion of our DNA with other species, but still we think we can selectively target certain organisms with our toxic brews, and cause few side-effects for humans. We also risk causing serious damage to natural ecosystems, of which we're a part, by altering predator-prey relationships in unforeseen and uncontrollable ways, creating new and perhaps more virulent "pests", and introducing persistent toxins that move through food webs and accumulate in the body fat of

animals (which includes humans).

If you think governments are protecting your health — think again!

An Oct. 8 *Toronto Star* article says the federal Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development is "appalled" by the inadequacies of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, which is charged with protecting public health! Only six out of 400 "older" pesticides have been fully re-evaluated against current safety standards, and those six have all been either banned or had their permitted uses restricted. Similarly, only 3 out of 8 widely used lawn pesticides have been reviewed.

The Commissioner says, "Many Canadians continue to use those pesticides, even though they don't know if the risks are acceptable."

Given the information (or lack thereof) that is available about the toxicity of pesticides, shouldn't we be doing everything possible to find alternatives, even if it means spending a bit more money in the short term? How much is our health, and the health of our children and their children, worth to us? I would be interested to hear what some of our candidates for municipal office have to say on this issue.

Judy Scannell, Limehouse

Smoking ban is undemocratic

Dear editor,

Re: The controversial 'smoking' bylaw. Anyone who cannot see that a total ban is unfair and undemocratic is badly in need of a reality check.

This issue is not just about smoking. It is about choices—the choice of a business owner whether to operate a smoking or non-smoking establishment, the choice of patrons what businesses to patronize, the choice of employees in what establishments to work.

There are enough non-smoking businesses in operation by choice to ensure that non-smoking patrons and employees have places to go. Whether one is for or against, it seems only fair to allow for smokers to have places where they can congregate and socialize as well.

Governments have been chipping away at our choices little by little for far too long. While the large majority of citizens are content with the way things are, governments move to create new restrictive laws to mollify a small number of complainers.

It needs to stop.

There are ways for conflicting groups to live together amicably without creating laws. People can negotiate with one

another; stay away from those who annoy them, even learn to be tolerant of those whose lifestyles and beliefs differ from their own. Even a politician should be able to understand that!

"The less government we have, the better—the fewer laws, and the less confided power."—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Eileen Hutcheson,
Acton

Election brochure critic missed the candidate's message

Dear editor,

Re: Voter finds material funny, (Oct. 24 letter to the editor).

I find it odd that someone who lives in Georgetown has the time to criticize a citizen who is running for councillor in Ward 3 over his use of a few apostrophes and two spelling errors in a brochure Gerald Parker produced with his own money.

The message in his brochure is very clear...this town has been poorly run, poorly managed and has no accountability of money spent.

If Stephanie Lakin would like to criticize the spelling of a brochure rather than the "substance of material" and the "true issues at hand" please do.

If not, take a look at yourself in the mirror and ask yourself, "What really matters here, the misuse of apostrophes or the misuse of town funds and the people's tax dollars?"

Wayne Harrison,
Georgetown

'Wise and great' council has saved us from Mother Nature

Dear editor,

WEEDS versus POISONS. Thank goodness for the focused and clearheaded thinking and actions of our great mayor and council!

They have once again protected the citizens and our potential Olympic athletes from the ravages of the evil Mother Nature and her weeds. No longer will our future sports heroes have to endure the indignities of a playing field with a weed in sight.

If only we had this wisdom and far-sightedness when I was young and made to endure the disgusting likes of boot-grabbing dandelions and chickweed and their kind. If only I had realized what evil

was underfoot.

We have been saved by the ingenuity of mankind. Poisons 1, Mother Nature and her evil ways 0.

Who cares if a few animals, chipmunks, squirrels, etc. and birds get hurt—we've got lots of them anyway, and besides, they make a lot of annoying sounds.

Now, there's a new target for our wise leaders to focus on—stop this annoying chirping and squeaking!

We have been truly blessed by a wise council, our lives will be extended by their wise decision and future hospital beds freed up because of them.

What need for the upcoming elections?

We don't need to change a thing.

William Pomeroy, Norval

Grads offer their thanks

Dear editor,

We would like to express our appreciation for the contributions of the community to the commencements at Georgetown District High School.

Many of the graduates of this year's historic "double cohort" received recognition from individuals, organizations and businesses.

This year the community offered double the number of awards. Double thanks.

GDHS commencement committee

Mayor, CIB rep thanked

Dear editor,

Just a quick note to tell of our success. In August we appreciated you printing the letter from our Newman Place community.

As a result of the letter, concerning our weed-infested ravine and the lack of help from the Town of Halton Hills, Communities in Bloom or Credit Valley Conservation, help did arrive.

Mayor Kathy Gastle and Dawn Falls, a judge with Communities in Bloom, contacted myself one day after the letter was printed. After a couple of meetings Mayor Gastle and Ms. Falls had investigated our concerns.

With great joy the residents of Newman Place agreed to supply the labour. We were supplied with approximately 200 plants and trees, all of which were planted recently.

On behalf of the residents, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the paper for printing our letter, and a sincere great big thank you to our mayor for coordinating with the Communities in Bloom and the Credit Valley Conservation representative.

Steve Gilmour,
Georgetown

Candidate critic should research Hazel

Dear editor,

This letter is in response to the woman who wrote, Candidate's ads 'distasteful and laughable' (Oct. 24).

Before you attack John Day for making a statement of 'don't vote for career politicians', I think you should do some research on the City of Mississauga and Mayor Hazel McCallion.

There is so much more to Mayor McCallion than your average "Career politician". Mayor McCallion became the first mayor of a major municipality to submit the annual operating budget to residents for their input and scrutiny. She is also among the first mayors of major municipalities to be openly committed to a pay-as-you-go philosophy. The city has not had to borrow money since 1978 and is currently debt-free.

In February 2002, Mayor McCallion was appointed Chair of the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel by the Hon. Chris Hodgson, Minister of Municipal Affairs. The panel, made up of 22 local government officials and business leaders, will advise the provincial government on how to plan for growth for the central region in both the short and long term.

John Day might go on to praise his working relationship with Mayor McCallion, (but) its because he's worked with the best. He's had 17 years experience working with Mayor McCallion and the City of Mississauga. If John Day can do a third of the job that Mayor Hazel McCallion is doing, he'll certainly get my vote.

Maria Trinca, Georgetown

Town requires a 'responsible' mayor, says Acton resident

Dear editor,

I am offended by the ads Mr. John Day has been publishing in the local papers in his bid to become the mayor of Halton Hills. He claims to be the "People's Mayor" with the commitment to "protect and safeguard what's important for the communities of Halton Hills."

Few seem to recall that his licence is still under suspension for impaired driving. Are we to assume that this totally irresponsible act is not an important issue for the campaign?

The mayor's position is very demanding, and totally time consuming all day, evenings and even weekends. It is probably the most stressful job in Halton Hills. We need a mayor who can act responsibly while coping with the exhausting pace and all the pressures that go with this high profile job.

Three other candidates are running for the mayor's seat. Make a wise choice and do get out and vote on November 10.

Joyce Rennie,
Acton