

Editorial

Good numbers; goodbye

In his annual "state of the union" address to Halton Hills council last week, Halton Police Chief Ean Algar delivered some very encouraging news.

According to the chief, the crime rate in Halton is at its lowest level in 30 years with 228 fewer crimes (a drop of 13.3 per cent) committed than the previous year.

As well, Halton experienced a 3.1 per cent region-wide decline in automobile collisions and the number of fatal collisions had decreased by 45 per cent. While the number of fatal collisions remained the same in Halton Hills (two), the number of overall smash-ups fell by 5.7 per cent.

Obviously, it is too early to tell if these decreases are a result of better driving, more police presence or just luck. Such statistics, while encouraging, must be measured over several years. As well, Algar admitted the number of marijuana grow operations in the region (and locally) is troubling as officers are "losing ground" in trying to curb this activity.

Still, the chief's report this year is encouraging. However, only time will tell if this is a positive trend.

For the past 31 years, Bob Austin has played either a minor or major role in almost all the major building projects in Halton Hills. From roads to arenas to the 401 Corridor, the longtime town engineer (and CAO for the past two years), has helped shape this town.

To be sure, Austin has had his share of critics, but he has worked diligently for this community and has left his imprint on this town since first joining town staff in 1974.

He often found himself in the unenviable (and impossible) position of trying to please people who held opposing viewpoints, whether it be about money for roads, development or services.

Good luck in your retirement, Bob. You've earned the rest.



Letters to the editor....

Councillor draws wrath of taxpayer

Dear editor,

Re: September 23 issue of *The Independent and Free Press*—Davis suggests walking, cab fare be eligi-

ble for expense claims.

I would like to ask councillor Mike Davis if he were physically unable to bike or walk to event meetings, what would his cab fare expenses be? I can assure him that cab fares to and from events would cost more than the \$45 that councillor Moya Johnson recorded, and probably more than the \$1,500 that he claimed for expenses.

In fact, I would ask his opinion as to what the criteria were when we elected our council in the first place? Was it because they walked and biked to meetings? No, Mr. Davis, we elected our council based on their commitment to improving the Town of Halton Hills, and ensuring we, the taxpayers, are getting the most value for our hard-earned tax dollars.

Mr. Davis' suggestion that the Town's Corporate Affairs Committee launch an investigation into other forms of transportation makes me wonder how much this investigation would cost. Probably

more than \$1,500 of taxpayers' money.

Councillor Davis, the next time you get caught with your hand in the cookie jar, please do not try to exonerate yourself by using the environment as your personal soap box.

Kevin Duggan, Georgetown

Why pay councillors?

Dear editor,

Re: Councillor Davis claiming mileage for cycling to meetings.

Reading all the letters I got an idea to calm the sea, or to put fuel on the fire—whatever way we look at it.

Councillor Moya Johnson called it "a part-time job". I would say "part-time volunteer". Hundreds, if not thousands of people here in Georgetown, do daily volunteer work and don't ask for pay!

Why should councillors get any compensation for serving their community? It should be an honor!

So let's cut out all compensations.
Hank J. van Goch, Georgetown

Councillor exploited policy loophole

Dear editor,

T. Bullock's recent letter to the editor (Sept. 23) regarding Mike Davis' \$1,500 mileage claims for using his bike to get to work misses the point.

Bullock's praise of Davis as somebody who is environmentally conscientious is fair. However, he bemoans the fact that in this world we focus on the dollar and loopholes.

It is quite ironic that Bullock can't see that his 'hero' Davis is the one who, in fact, is focusing on dollars and loopholes.

If Davis wants to ride his bike to work, more power to him. However, if he thinks he should be compensated for this choice, he's unfit for office. Charging \$1,500 in expenses for new bike wheels! Give me a break! This guy simply found a loophole and exploited it for personal, financial gain.

Finally, I don't usually vote in municipal elections, but I will certainly remember to do so the next time so as to cast a vote for anybody who runs against Davis.

Dave Morrissey, Georgetown

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must 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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