

*Editorial*

# Talk it over

It's been said you can't fight city hall but a group of Halton Hills retailers dispelled that notion earlier this week when they got a town committee to rethink its new policy of charging retail establishments an annual licence fee.

The town passed the bylaw last June which saw retail businesses charged an annual fee ranging from \$82.50 to \$220. The idea behind the bylaw was that a licence fee would set a community standard that all businesses would operate on a level playing field and the public would be protected from health and safety risks or unfair business practices.

A noble idea, but one that requires a lot of input from retailers and planning about how best to implement it (i.e. Should the fee be based on the size of operation? Hours of operation? Should home-based businesses be charged?)

However, it wasn't until the first bills went out late last year that local retailers realized they were being hit with what one called "a money grab".

The new bylaw shouldn't have come as a shock to retailers as the town held two public meetings (both poorly attended) and details of the draft bylaw were reported in this newspaper and other local media last February. Then-Chamber of Commerce president Norm Paget even said at the time the bylaw "puts in some common sense and cuts out the paper work" but he questioned why the drafters of the bylaw didn't consult with the business community first.

Good point.

This entire matter boils down to a question of communication—or lack of— between town bureaucrats and local business operators.

A one-time registration fee, as suggested by one retailer, at first blush, makes sense. However, it is incumbent for the town to discuss any such fees with local retailers and retailers to pay more attention to town policies which affect them.



## Letters to the editor...

### St. Alban dinner an 'awesome' affair

Dear editor,  
Thank you for all your help in getting the word out that St. Alban in the Glen was having a Christmas

dinner for those that might be alone for Christmas. It was awesome. We had 52 people come and celebrate with us. The food was fantastic, the laughter and joy that filled our parish hall was wonderful.

It made us realize that this event must be held every year and that 2005 has now become St. Alban's First Annual Christmas Dinner. God willing, next Dec. 25 we will be celebrating with those who would like to be part of the fellowship and fun that we experienced Christmas Day 2005.

We would also like to thank the people of our community who gave so generously of their time, talent, and treasury to help make the day so successful. We would like to extend a big thank you to the McGibbon Hotel for cooking the turkeys and providing the stuffing and gravy; to Ares Restaurant for providing the salad; and to the Glen Oven Bakery for providing the rolls and bread. Without you we could not have provided the great feast

that was enjoyed by all.  
May God bless you all in 2006.  
**Rev. Grahame Stap,**  
St. Alban the Martyr  
Anglican Church

### Rudolph R.I.P.

Dear editor,  
As a follow-up to my recent letter about the theft of my wooden reindeer at Christmas, I did get part of Rudolph back thanks to considerate employees at Sun Beach Tanning.

Elise and Brennie read my letter and returned his head on the stake. The body had been broken away from the post and the remains tossed on one of their yards.

I hope, as parents, we monitor what is going on with our children before and after school.

Thank you girls for caring when you returned the remains of Rudolph. Also a big thank you to Fred Howse for putting up Santa and his reindeer at Christmas.

Dianne Hassell, Georgetown

### Santa Calls a success

Dear editor,  
All of us at the Recreation and Parks Department would like to extend a very special thank you to everyone who contributed to the annual "Santa Calls" Program.

A great big heart felt thank-you to the members of the Optimist Club of Georgetown whose efforts are inspirational and have made a lasting impression on many little people in Halton Hills. In this busy world, it's wonderful to know that there are individuals like the Optimist members who take the time to bring joy to children.

To Halton Hills parents, principals, and Kindergarten teachers thank you for participating in this year's program and helping make it such an incredible success.

Final thanks goes to Georgetown Subway, Topper's Pizza, and the McGibbon Hotel for providing Santa with the fuel he needed to call so many children.

Due to everyone's hard work Santa was able to wish more than 1,400 Kindergarten children and their families in Halton Hills a very Merry Christmas.

All the best in the new year.

**Aaron Matthews,**  
Recreation Supervisor

### 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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