

OPINION

www.independentfreepress.com

Phone: 905-873-0301
Fax: 905-873-0398

Officer's punishment doesn't fit 'crime'

Recent revelations that Halton Regional Police Deputy Chief Mike Kingston lied about having a university degree on four occasions since 1999 makes us question whether the punishment fit his 'crimes'.

The Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services (OCCPS) had this to say about Kingston's actions: "The first misrepresentation in 1999 set the stage for a series of deceptions. Each instance of deceit built on the previous one. Each was an ethical breach that, over time, became more difficult to undo without considerable risk."

We still believe Chief Ean Algar and the police board's assessment of Mike Kingston as a good police officer; we just aren't sure if we can trust the 29-year veteran after he perpetrated the same lie four times in less than six years. That's an enormous indiscretion to overlook.

We find it disturbing the only thing preventing Kingston from a demotion or suspension is that the police service is in the midst of replacing the retiring chief and can't afford to be without two of its most senior officers simultaneously.

Equally disturbing is the slap on the wrist of lost vacation time Kingston received for his lies. We doubt an entry level constable would have survived the same investigation with his career intact.

In a profession built on public trust, perception is reality. Kingston's light sentence gives the appearance of a police service afraid to do the right thing— demote a senior officer found to have repeatedly made a mockery of the service and dishonoured the uniform.

No matter how good a police officer. Kingston's 'crime' was not the unwise decision of an inexperienced and immature new recruit, but the conscious decision of a veteran police officer.

What message does the deputy chief's actions and the almost negligible penalty send to Halton's lower ranking police officers? What message does it send to the public?

Kingston does the police service's reputation further harm by admitting that he will seek financial reimbursement for the courses he is taking in order to complete the degree he lied about.

Had it not been for the mysterious letter that exposed his exaggerations last year, the deputy chief said he might have applied for the chief's job.

To that end, Kingston doesn't sound remorseful for what he did; he just sounds sorry he was caught.

Steve Nease



STAFF DIRECTORY

Publisher

Ken Nugent

Advertising director

Steve Foreman

(sforeman@independentfreepress.com)

Retail advertising manager

Cindi Campbell

(ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)

Managing editor

John McGhie

(jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)

Business manager

Carol Young

(cyoung@independentfreepress.com)

Distribution manager

Nancy Geissler

(distribution@independentfreepress.com)

ADVERTISING

Retail Sales:

Jennifer Spencer (jspencer@independentfreepress.com)

Adam Spinney (aspinney@independentfreepress.com)

Brendan Louth (blouth@independentfreepress.com)

Michelle Wan (features@independentfreepress.com)

Real estate:

Sue Spizziri (realestate@independentfreepress.com)

Classifieds:

Kristie Pells (classified@independentfreepress.com)

ACCOUNTING:

Rose Marie Gauthier, Jennifer Christie, Michelle Wimmer

EDITORIAL

Cynthia Gamble: News editor

(cgamble@independentfreepress.com)

Ted Brown: Photography

(tbrown@independentfreepress.com)

Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer

(ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)

Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports

emaher@independentfreepress.com)

PRODUCTION:

Mary Lou Foreman, Kevin Powell,

Shelli Harrison, Dolores Black, Debbie MacDougall

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Delrex joggers set a poor safety example

Dear editor,
Yes, something is bugging me— the joggers on Delrex Blvd.

Delrex Blvd., between Sargent Rd. and Mountainview Rd., is a busy street. Drivers, like me, must be on the alert for kids playing, kids on bikes, parked

cars, and traffic activity around the plaza and Centennial Middle School.

Now we must also deal with irresponsible adult joggers who run on the street, sometimes two, or even three, abreast and don't stay close to the curb.

A recent incident caused me great

concern. I was driving west along Delrex and as I rounded the bend, approached a car parked by the curb. As I swung to the left to drive around that car, three joggers, running on the street, suddenly appeared. They didn't even break their stride, but continued running, three abreast, around that car towards me. The entire right hand lane was totally blocked. Shocked, I was forced to swerve into the eastbound lane to avoid hitting them.

Don't you realize the danger you put me in? Maybe you were too busy chatting with each other to notice.

If joggers choose to run on the road, then be responsible and be alert. You're adults. You should know better and you're setting a poor safety example for our children. Better still, stay on the sidewalk or jog in Cedarvale Park.

Your healthy activity won't matter if you end up in a hospital bed.

Debbie Stiel, Georgetown

Reader finds disgraced cop story hard to believe

Dear editor,
Your "April Fool's" story (March 31) re: Halton Deputy Police Chief Mike Kingston's lying on his resumé and getting to keep his job was hilarious.

As if this could really happen, we all know if a person in an upper management position ever committed a perjury of this magnitude they would immediately be fired.

Laurie Norrie,
Georgetown

Cancer canvassing in full gear

Dear editor,
The Acton Branch of The Canadian Cancer Society's annual April door-to-door campaign is in full gear.

Our biggest challenge this year will be to make sure that the residents in the new subdivisions get the opportunity to donate to this very worthy cause.

As I read the daily newspaper, I find myself spending some time looking at the death announcements because of the pictures that now accompany the notices. The number of young people in these pictures is very eye-catching. It is very sobering to read about the many premature deaths due to "the loss of a very courageous battle with cancer".

I know we have all been touched by this insidious disease in some way or another and most of us want to help in the journey of finding a cure.

Acton residents have always been exceptionally generous in their donations to the Cancer Society and we are most fortunate to have a very dedicated group of more than 150 volunteer canvassers who make our

campaign successful every year.

Last year we raised a total of almost \$34,000 in our residential campaign and we still rank high in the per capita donors for Ontario. Not bad for a little town!

Last year, the Honeyfield subdivision was canvassed by high school students and they did an excellent job. Unfortunately, most of the residents in the area behind Sobeys weren't canvassed at all so we will be working hard to rectify that.

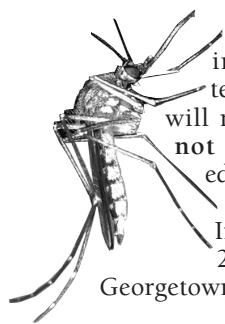
Canvassing can be a very rewarding experience. It can be a way of supporting someone who is still struggling to survive. It can be a way of honouring those who have lost the battle. Please say 'yes' when someone calls to ask for your help or, better still, call now to volunteer. Please call Cathy at 519-853-1214 or Liz at 519-853-0585.

Thank you once again Acton for your continuing support— we do make a difference!

Liz Bailey,
Campaign Chair for the
Acton Branch of the
Canadian Cancer Society

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



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 for content and/or length.

Mail or drop off:

Independent & Free Press,
280 Guelph St., Unit 29,

Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of several newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd.

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 50¢ 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.

