

OPINION

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Salute to volunteers

Today we honour the volunteers in our community who have contributed so much. They are the invisible golden thread of support that weaves through the fabric of our town.

Yes, we're getting a headstart on National Volunteer Week, which is not slated until April 23-29, but we reason every week is a good week to honour volunteers in our community.

Do you have children that play sports? — Thank the coach, the manager, the trainer, the board executive, the fundraisers ... they're all volunteers and they're the ones that make it happen.

Do you have cancer or any other illness?— Thank the canvassers who raise funds to find a cure, the support volunteers who pick up the phone and provide a sympathetic ear or informative voice, the board members who make sure things run smoothly. They're the ones who are helping to find a cure to our society's ills.

Volunteers are found in every aspect of our community— schools, churches, community associations, sports groups, music groups. The list is endless.

In our Salute to Volunteers section we put the focus this year on Ron Stitt, a three-year veteran of the United Way of Halton Hills' board of directors.

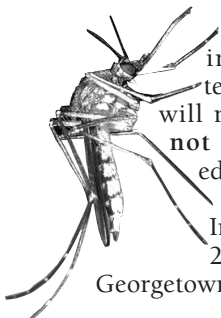
"I want to give back to my community," he said. "After almost three years of volunteering with the organization (United Way) I recognize that giving is more than signing a cheque. It is taking the time to examine the cause and think of those in need. And the need does exist in Halton Hills."

There is a huge challenge to recruit new volunteers, says Stitt, but he encourages everyone to consider this small act of kindness that has made him— a husband and father of two— a better person.

Take the time to peruse our Volunteer section, learn more and give one of the many agencies needing help a call.

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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.

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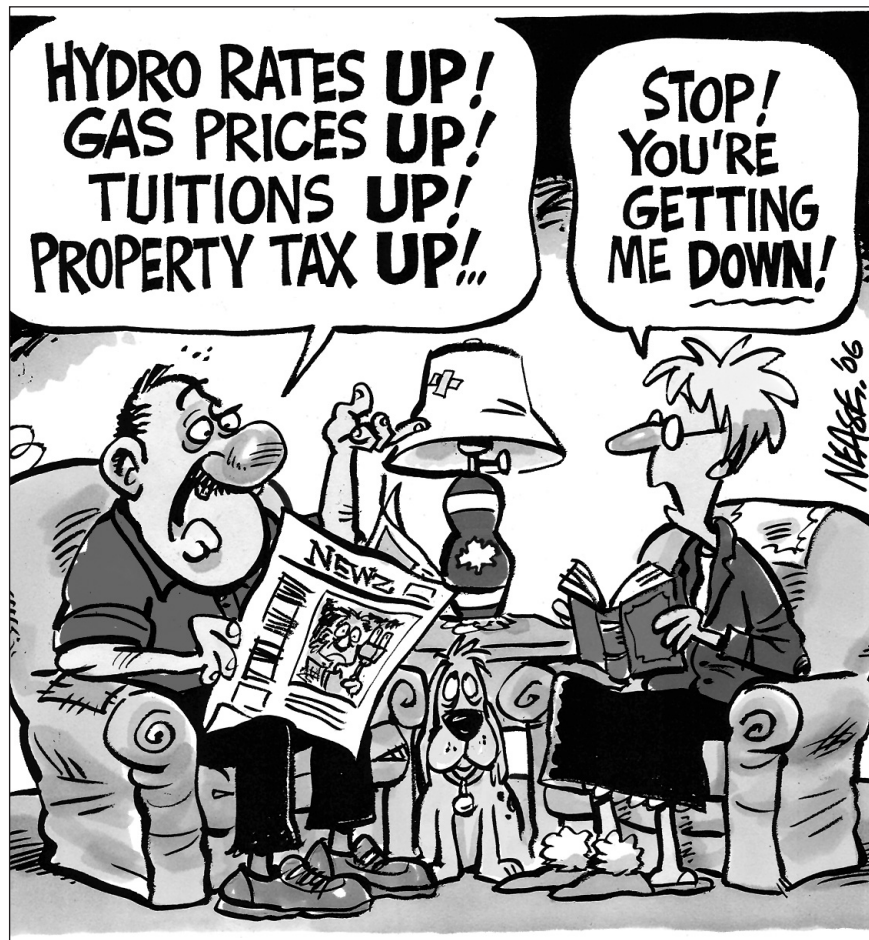
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CAS-hh pamphlet offends reader

Dear editor,
I was dismayed and, frankly, offended when I read the text of a pamphlet, which I found in my mailbox this week. It was produced by CAS-hh (Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills), and the implication was that they are the only organization to be supported in the current cancer campaign.

For the information of newcomers to Acton, and any others who may not be aware of it, Acton has a very active branch of the Canadian Cancer Society, which offers all patient services, including free transportation, and depends on our financial support to continue these services. This branch has never used valuable resources to rent an office, with its

further expenses, but, as many Acton and area residents will tell you, the volunteers who operate from their homes are easily accessible and eager to help in any way they can.

Please respond as generously as you can when a canvasser from the Acton Cancer Society comes to your door.

Irene Watson, Acton

CAS-hh also receives resident's praise

Dear editor,
Re: Marsha Vettese's Jan. 27 letter (Cancer patient praises CAS-hh).

After reading Marsha's letter I was compelled to also write in praise, and with deepest gratitude, to everyone associated with Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills (CAS-hh).

As a new resident (Sept. 2005) I learned I had cancer in November 2005. Sheer terror gripped me, not only with the diagnosis, but the fact my doctors were in Toronto and therefore I knew I would be referred to hospitals there. In a panic I checked out the Halton Hills Yellow Pages looking for anyone— organizations, groups, etc.— because I sure needed help in a big way.

The best call I ever could have made was to CAS-hh. Through this one call I learned of their many services. I then met and spoke to other cancer survivors and received phone numbers so I had contacts when I needed to talk about my fears and anxiety. I had a

support system at my fingertips.

I cannot express strongly enough my gratitude for the wonderful volunteer drivers (especially Louise) at CAS-hh. They drove me back and forth to the different hospitals for numerous procedures and appointments and were always on time, cheerful and kept the conversation light to try and help

keep my mind from dwelling on what was otherwise a terrifying experience.

Hopefully you will never need to make the call I had to, but should you, rest assured you could not be in better hands. You will never meet a more caring and compassionate group of people.

Eveleyn Watson, Georgetown

Why was flag at half-mast? No one knows

Dear editor,
Last week, one of the most prominent— that is large and proximal — of flags in Georgetown was at "half-mast" for a period of several days.

This rather large flag is flown at the Superstore premises on a height of land in town (near the water tower) making it visible throughout a large section of town, as well as to through traffic on the adjacent King's Highway.

I inquired, out of genuine concern and indeed ignorance, as to the reason of the mourning. Unfortunately, no

one was able to elucidate, and I do not know the reason to this day.

This is a sign of respect to those in honoured positions. I do not intend any disrespect to anyone dearly departed, but in such instances, the company flag rather than the national flag is half-masted (vexillology). Some flags were recently flown at half-mast on the day of the deaths of our soldiers in Afghanistan, and I can appreciate that action, but respect is diminished when there is no apparent significance.

James Colter, Georgetown