

OPINION

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Having fun raising funds

We have known for a long time that Halton Hills is a very caring community, but the generosity of this Town's citizens has been showcased more than usual as of late.

For the past several weeks numerous fundraising events have been held locally benefitting a wide array of causes.

We've had folks pushing outhouses down Main Street in Georgetown in aid of Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills and others walking or running for the developmentally challenged Community Living North Halton cares for.

Late last month there was the Mito March for Kirkland Kilbride to aid in mitochondrial disease research, stroke victim Lauren Boyce staged a 28 km walk to Mississauga (actually 56 km as she made a return trip) to raise funds for Erinoak Children's Treatment Centre and Acton High School students held their annual Relay For Life for the Canadian Cancer Society.

The first local Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion event was also staged Sunday in part to aid local youngster Bethany Winter.

By all accounts these events were rousing successes.

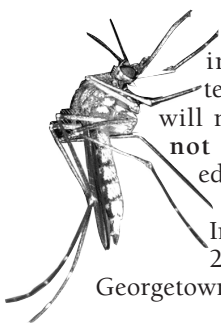
On Friday, Georgetown held its first Relay For Life event, of which the *Independent & Free Press* is both a sponsor and participant. To say it was a success would be an understatement as Cancer Society organizers raised \$45,000— \$15,000 more than was expected. A total of 29 teams and more than 300 participants took part, Christ the King custodial staff were more than helpful and nary a complaint was heard from nearby neighbours as the event stretched into dawn Saturday.

We haven't even mentioned the dozens of other events held recently (or are upcoming) that require the dedication and hard work of volunteers to raise money for all these worthwhile causes.

If you have participated in, or helped out in any way, with any of these or other events, give yourself a hearty pat on the back. And, if you haven't, ask yourself, why you haven't. You're obviously missing out on something good.

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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:

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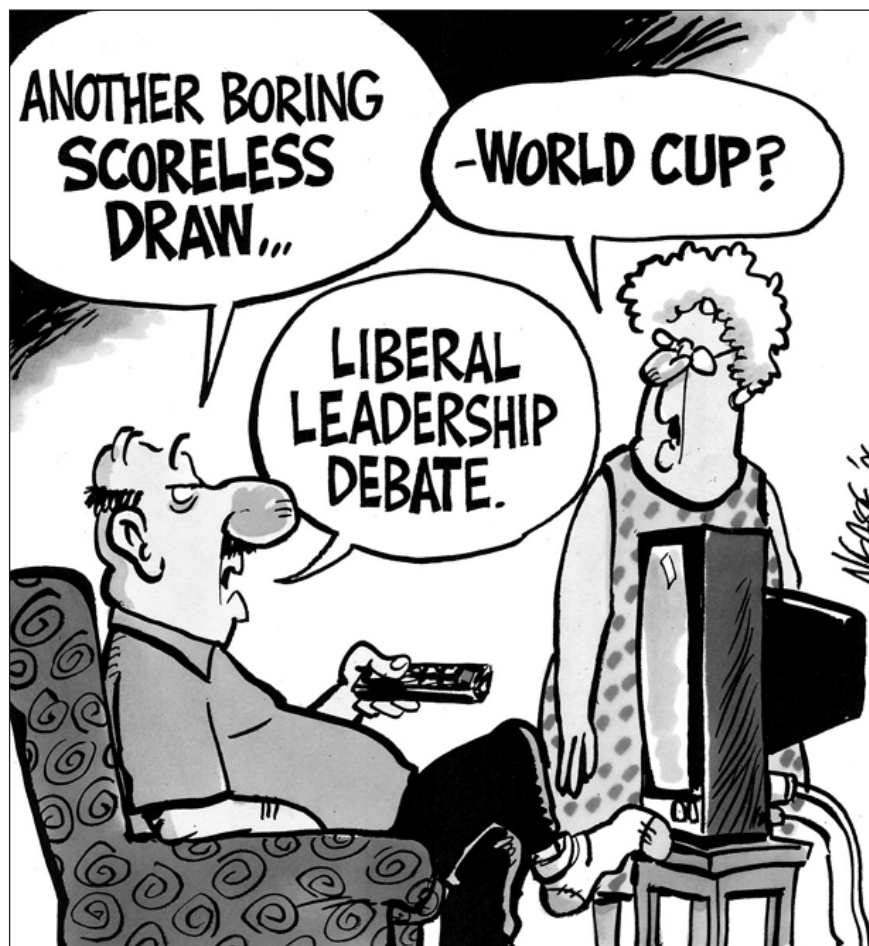
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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mayor rebuts local sports field critic

(This letter was written in response to a letter from Mr. Clayton Browning which appeared in the June 9 *Independent & Free Press*. A copy was made available for publication.)

Dear Mr. Browning,

Thank you for your correspondence expressing your pleasure with respect to living in this great community, and your specific concerns about sport facilities.

While I understand that you may be frustrated with the size of some of our older softball facilities in Town, these are the same facilities that have served the residents of this community (young and old) for decades. As player development and technology in the sport of softball has resulted in the need for bigger softball diamonds, the Town has responded to this need in the construction of our newer facilities such as Gellert.

You make reference to "out of town" facilities such as Limehouse, Hornby, and Glen Williams. As Mayor, I can tell you that this council is responsible for the overall activities of one town—the Town of Halton Hills. The investments we make in sport facilities are done in a strategic manner and in the best interest of the taxpayer. We view the equitable location of facilities and maximizing the use of such facilities as being the fiscally responsible way of serving our constituents. To construct costly facilities in one location while nearby facilities are underutilized simply does not make sense. Turning away residents who are

interested in sport is never an outcome this council is satisfied with. In speaking with our Recreation and Parks staff, they have assured me that all requests made by your organization for diamonds in 2006 has been accommodated, and there is some capacity remaining.

Lastly and most importantly, your correspondence makes reference to a "lack of planning" and viewing "recreation as something other than a nuisance".

Firstly, the Town has, and continues to do, a formidable job of planning for sport facilities. In 1999, council purchased a 98-acre parcel of land in order to accommodate the growth of soccer and softball/baseball. In consultation with sport groups (of which GSL was represented) the Town developed a master plan for the Trafalgar Sport Park which included four full-sized diamonds. I am happy to share these plans with you at your convenience.

Let me clarify for you that the planning of sport facilities (which has been completed long ago) is an entirely different issue than financing sport facilities. At the present rate of taxation, council allocates \$2.2 million towards the Town's overall capital program. In a recent public survey, council was informed that road construction and maintenance is the greatest priority among residents. Accordingly, council allocates the greatest portion of these capital dollars towards roads. Similarly, recreation facilities were ranked high among public interest, and subse-

quently receive the second largest portion of the Town's capital budget. Notwithstanding this, at a cost of well over \$10 million to construct the Trafalgar Sport Park, there remains a significant discrepancy between what residents would need to pay in taxes, versus what they wish to pay in taxes.

It is for this reason that council and staff continue to work with groups such as yours, to look at creative ways to advance our mutual interest in sport facility construction. You may wish to know that we have begun such discussions with your own organization, and I encourage you to speak with your president.

Mayor Rick Bonnette

Call Halton Region to arrange pickup date

Dear editor,

Please remind all residents in Georgetown and surrounding areas that they need to make a phone call to Halton Region to get a pickup date for metal items.

They can find the 1-800-number in the region's recycling calendar.

Dianne Theoret-Major, Georgetown

Samaritans thanked

Dear editor,

I wish to thank the lady and gentleman who helped me when I fell on Duncan Drive recently. Also thanks to Mrs. Hubett for taking me home.

Jai Unterleiter, Georgetown