

OPINION

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Thank you, Ethel

Parents, students and teachers in Halton Hills— dare we say in all of Halton— will lose an invaluable voice this November with the announcement Wednesday that incumbent Halton District School Board Trustee Ethel Gardiner will not seek re-election.

Gardiner has spent a lifetime in the education field— first as a teacher for 39 years and then as a trustee for the past 11.

The Halton board has been a cauldron of infighting, political game-playing and one-upmanship for the better part of the past dozen years. In the past term alone there was a clear 6-5 split on many issues from the turfing of education director Dusty Papke to the departure of superintendents and senior personnel. The back-biting that occurred during these past three years even overshadowed the north-south Halton division on the board that was so evident in the early '90s.

Gardiner didn't shy from the fights during this past term as she fought for causes she believed in and thought were critical for a better education system.

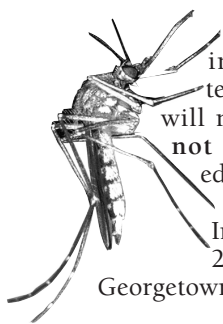
It was no coincidence that the only period of relative calm the board enjoyed in recent memory came while Gardiner occupied the chair's seat from 1997-2003. We suspect she often played the role of referee at many a meeting.

Perhaps Gardiner's success stemmed from her unflinching belief that the board should— no must— always do what was in the best interests of Halton's students. It was this principle that guided her and ensured Halton Hills issues weren't ignored or overshadowed by the larger board representation of south Halton municipalities.

We wish her well as she now embarks on a more personal fight and thank her for her tireless efforts in giving Halton Hills residents and students a voice of reason— and one that was heard— at the school board table.

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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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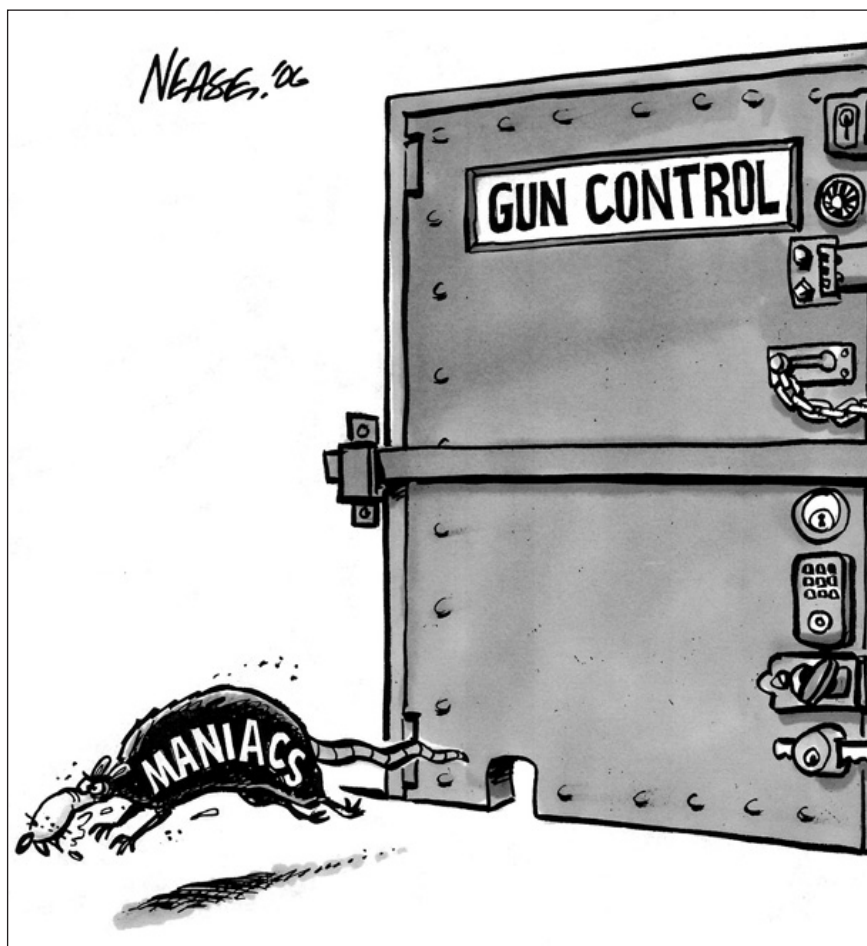
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Garden vandalism saddens reader

Dear editor,

It was with disappointment and sadness that I read the Sept. 6 *Independent & Free Press* article regarding the vandalism at The Old Seed House Garden (or as I know it as Dominion Seed House).

The Dominion Seed House goes back some 60 years (or more). As a child I lived in Quebec. My father was an avid gardener and every spring the Dominion Seed House catalogue would come out and hours would be spent reading it from cover to cover. I

never knew that one day I would live within walking distance of this seed house.

While babysitting by two youngest granddaughters a couple weeks ago we visited the Garden. I was thankful that I brought a tablecloth to cover up the graffiti on the picnic table. The children questioned me about the broken spindles in the railing of the gazebo but I did not have an answer for them. We followed the paths and read the plaques of all the donations of trees and bushes by friends and

businesses.

It is so disturbing to me to see this area being destroyed by vandals and very disappointing that some individuals have nothing else to do but find time to destroy it. It is a wonderful area that has been put together and managed by committee members and volunteers.

I hope this letter acts as a reminder to those vandals that many people not only remember the Dominion Seed House as it once was but also that people wish to continue to enjoy this wonderful historical area.

Beverly Wilson,

Lacrosse team earned better welcome home

Dear editor,

Re: Canadian national field lacrosse champions.

I was glad to be a part of such a fine, outstanding group of young athletes who recently represented the Town of Halton Hills and the Halton Hills Bulldogs Lacrosse Association at the national championships in Victoria, British Columbia. The boys displayed a lot of pride and class in representing both.

I was really shocked to find out that not one member of either the Town or the minor lacrosse association was there to greet these fine young men when they got off the bus after their great accomplishment.

Wake up, Georgetown.

Wayne Reid, Wasaga Beach

Bethany and family thank supporters

Dear editor,

We would like to thank the community of Halton Hills for your selfless generosity in helping us raise monies for the purpose of building a living space in our home to accommodate our daughter's disabilities.

Bethany suffers from a congenital neurological disorder. She is globally developmentally delayed and physically challenged.

Through the generous gift of a hot tub, which was raffled off for this purpose, together we raised \$18,000.

It is with deepest gratitude that we recognize the many organizations and individuals for their contribution in making this fundraiser a success:

Sunrise Spas, HST Spa Covers, Optimist Club of Georgetown, Bert and Ruth Wilson and the staff of Emerald Isle, Herminia Henderson

and the Georgetown Market Place staff, Georgetown Rental, Halton Commercial Printers, TP Communications, The Sign Shoppe and those who provided food and beverages for the community barbecue. A special thanks to Mike Holmes, from the HGTV Program *Holmes on Homes*.

Thanks to the many organizations and individuals who participated in selling tickets and congratulations to Leona Arnold of Georgetown, the winner of the hot tub.

Our endeavours in providing this haven for Bethany seemed somewhat overwhelming but because of the goodness in the people of our community, our vision is coming to fruition.

We appreciate your support.

Bill and Carla Winter and family,
Georgetown