

OPINION

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Housing crisis exists

Look up. Do you have a roof over your head? If so, consider yourself among Halton's fortunate. Despite what you might believe, there are many in the region who do not have access to shelter that's within their financial means.

Today (Nov. 22) is National Housing Day, a day when those who work to make housing accessible to all ask us to spend a moment to consider what it would be like to be without basic shelter.

Think homelessness is not a Halton problem? Think again. While among the wealthier GTA regions, Halton is in dire need of hundreds of additional units of affordable housing.

How desperate is the need? Halton Region's Annual Housing Report identifies a shortage 300-600 units of affordable housing and 400-800 units of assisted housing in the region in 2004.

As a direct result of the shortage, many low-income residents— including students, young families and fixed-income seniors— have been forced to leave Halton to find more affordable/accessible places to live.

Halton has a Comprehensive Housing Strategy that addresses this issue from now until 2015. The strategy includes a continuum of housing types for all incomes and stages of life— from emergency shelters and government-assisted housing to private sector affordable housing.

A huge roadblock to the region's plan is a basic level of ignorance about the housing crisis among residents.

To mark National Housing Day and to help put a human face on the region's very real housing needs, a panel of community members is sharing personal stories about the housing crisis with residents. Called Voices for Housing Choices, the panel is sharing its stories at public events, through written words and photography.

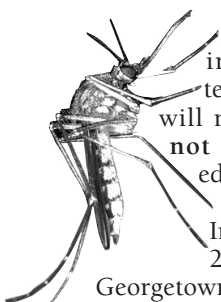
This week (Nov. 20-25), Voices for Housing Choices are on display in every Halton town/city hall.

We encourage anyone who doesn't believe homelessness is an issue here to visit to one of the displays to see the real struggles of actual residents in our community.

Anyone interested in acting as an ambassador for Halton's housing issue, can call Jen Lenard-Benson at 1-866-442-5866, ext. 4432, for more information.

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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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Heaton's loss was due to lack of credibility

Dear editor,
Re: *Independent & Free Press*,
Nov. 15, article: "Mayor: Bonnette earns second term with ease."

When misinformation is given, it needs to be corrected. Challenger Rob Heaton, in giving reasons for his failure to get elected, is quoted as saying: "I don't have all the developers funding my campaign and paying for all my signs and all my literature." which, by implication, claims that Mayor Bonnette did.

I acted as the mayor's financial officer for the campaign and can

Local kids show spirit of sharing

Dear editor,
We are all familiar with the phrase "it's the thought that counts", but the actions of five local kids on Halloween night spoke volumes.

Sam, Robert and Beth Wight, Katey Karmazyn and Dana Delaney took their Halloween candy to the Georgetown Hospital to share with the kids who couldn't go trick or treating.

Some of these kids have been doing this for several years and I couldn't be prouder of them. We as adults still have a lot to learn from the kids.

Lauren Karmazyn,
Georgetown

attest that no monies were accepted for the mayor's campaign from developers. All donations were from individual friends and local business people unconnected to the development industry. Anyone wishing to verify this can examine the mayor's audited financial state-

ments at the Clerk's Office after April 2, 2007.

The real reason Mr. Heaton lost the election was because, in the words of the editors of *Toronto Star* on Nov. 11, he was "devoid of credibility".

Gerald Rennie, Acton

Protest was a 'display of love'

Dear editor,
Re: The Oct. 18 letter from S. Harris (Resident appalled by right to life protest) who was "appalled" by the quiet, peaceful stand for the "Life Network" on October 1 at the corner of Guelph Street and Maple Avenue.

We were only a small fraction of the hundreds of thousands across the continent who also displayed their love of life— all life from the moment of conception to natural death. It was a display of love and

concern for the innocent victims of abortion.

As for rape, we love both mother and child and try to help both. We do not wish to punish the innocent victim of a terrible crime by destroying their life.

Adoption is the loving option, and there are thousands of good couples awaiting their adoption of these innocents.

Marge Willis,
Caledon

Town wrong to ban 'passionate' resident

Dear editor,
This letter is in response to Mr. Derrick Williams who is banned from town-owned property (Town bars vocal critic from town facilities, Nov. 1 *Independent & Free Press*).

Mr. Williams is someone you would always want on your side. He isn't afraid to speak and speaks from his heart. He is a committed community member and his actions are due

to the passion he has for Halton Hills/Georgetown.

Unfortunately due to the fact that Halton Hills is such a small community, a "strong voice" is being construed as malicious. That is wrong! Last time I checked it was called "freedom of speech".

Mr. Williams, we support you!
Cindy Leibel and family,
Georgetown

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