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the week:
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TUESDAY...

The Georgetown Rebels are in Edmonton this weekend for a top-calibre senior boys' basketball tournament. See details in the special Tuesday edition.

For breaking news go to:
www.independentfreepress.com



Putting some fun in the run

Charles Hayward, 54, of Georgetown donned some nifty headgear to participate in Sunday's annual Egg Nog Jog hosted by the Georgetown Runners at the Terra Cotta Conservation Area. For run details see page S/L 1. Photo by Sean Carsley

Area MPPs defend 25 per cent salary hike

LISA TALLYN
Staff Writer

A 25 per cent pay increase for Ontario MPPs introduced in the legislature this week will help to draw the "best and the brightest" to run in the next provincial election, says Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh.

"I think it will hold some good talent in Ontario and allow us to attract the calibre of individual to the next election that the people of Ontario want," said Chudleigh.

If the proposed bill passes, it would see MPPs' base salaries soar from \$88,771 to \$110,775. The bill passed first reading 78-4 with only New Democrats dissenting.

Waterloo-Wellington MPP Ted Arnott, who will be running as the Conservative candidate in the Wellington-Halton Hills riding in the next election, also supports the hike.

"Since the province has important responsibilities like health, education and the environment, the Ontario Legislature needs the best and the brightest," said Arnott.

Chudleigh said since 2003, three Ontario MPPs have gone to the federal government because MPs get twice the pay MPPs do. He said he has also seen one MP (Cam Jackson) go into municipal politics (recently elected Burlington's mayor). That job also pays double what MPPs make, said Chudleigh.

Arnott said there is a "huge disparity" between what Ontario MPPs vs. federal MPs are paid.

"I agree that if the disparity between the pay of MPs and MPPs becomes too great, the Ontario legislature will become a second-rate parliamentary institution and the people of Ontario will not have the quality of government leadership they deserve," said Arnott.



TED CHUDLEIGH

SEE 'PAY', pg. 4

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