

OPINION

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Phone: 905-873-0301
Fax: 905-873-0398

Hell no, we can't grow

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, his mayoral counterparts in Oakville, Burlington and Milton, along with the Regional Chair Gary Carr, are hoping there is strength in numbers.

They are also acutely aware an Ontario election campaign is only months away and nothing gets a politician— especially a premier's— attention better than a potential firestorm of bad press and voter outrage.

That is why they have chosen now to challenge Dalton McGuinty's government's *Places to Grow* plan and to vow the Province will meet stiff resistance from Halton on the plan— unless the Province comes through with cash, and lots of it.

To be sure, the main numbers in the plan are staggering— 312,000 more people for Halton by 2031. More frightening is the fact that Burlington and Oakville will be built out by 2021 leaving between 100,000-150,000 people to be accommodated in Halton Hills and Milton alone.

To put that growth in perspective, over the past 25 years Halton Hills has grown by 20,000 people— a rate many residents feel was too fast. Potentially, depending on Milton's growth rate, Halton Hills could grow by a rate five times as fast as it did over the past 25 years.

Imagine, for a moment Halton Hills with a 100,000-plus population. The small-town atmosphere found here, which so many apparently crave (see letters opposite), would quickly be nothing but a fond memory.

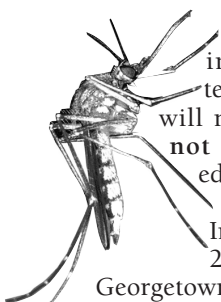
How the Province expects Halton municipalities to pay for this influx of people, and therefore the needed schools, hospital beds, infrastructure, roads, transit etc. is murky, at best. What is for certain is that the estimated cost (by Halton officials) to implement *Places to Grow* would be \$8.6 billion— and we're willing to bet that's not taking in inflation.

The Province hasn't even met the current funding requirements of Halton and admits it is playing "catch-up". We're certain McGuinty and company don't have the extra \$8.6 billion needed for Halton or the money that Durham, York and other municipalities would require.

Halton municipalities are right to send the province a "Hell no, we won't grow" message at this time. We hope other regions join this fight.

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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Independent & Free Press,
280 Guelph St., Unit 29,
Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

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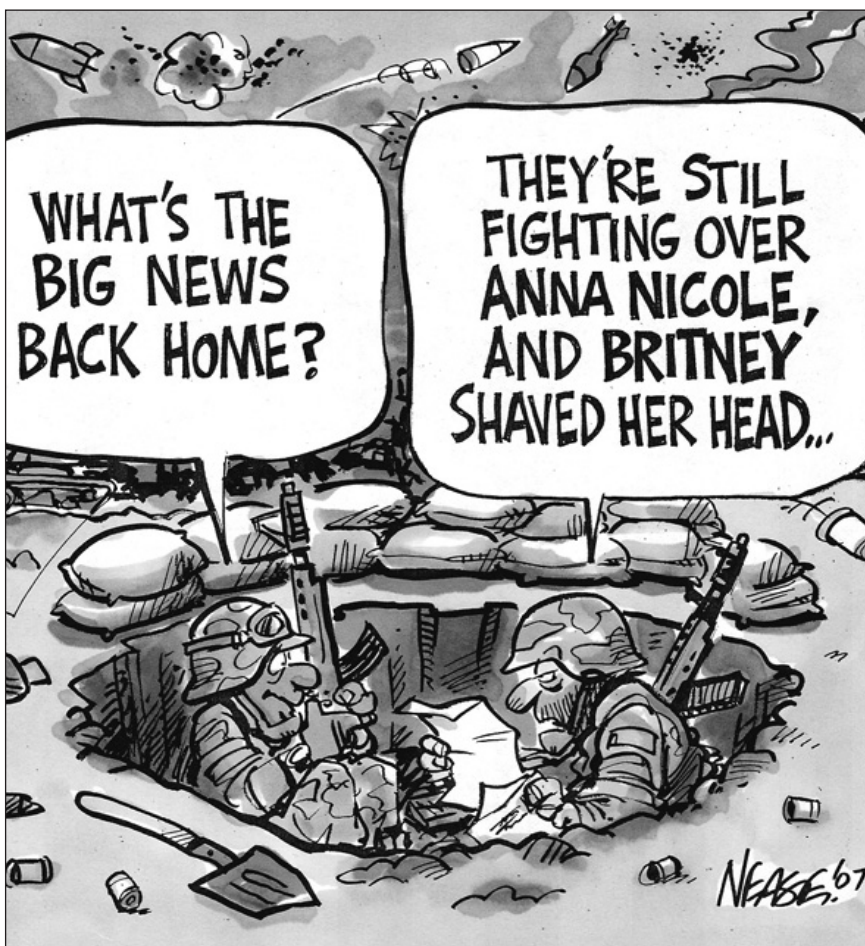
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Steve Nease



STAFF DIRECTORY

Publisher
Ken Nugent

Advertising director
Steve Foreman
(sforeman@independentfreepress.com)
Retail advertising manager
Cindi Campbell
(ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)
Managing editor
John McGhie
(jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)
Distribution manager
Nancy Geissler
(distribution@independentfreepress.com)

ADVERTISING

Advertising co-ordinator
Jennifer Christie (jchristie@independentfreepress.com)
Retail Sales:
Jennifer Spencer (jspencer@independentfreepress.com)
Adam Spinney (aspinney@independentfreepress.com)
Andrew Key (akey@independentfreepress.com)
Real estate:
Sue Spizziri (realestate@independentfreepress.com)
Classifieds:
Kristie Pells (classified@independentfreepress.com)

ACCOUNTING

Rose Marie Gauthier, Michelle Wimmer

EDITORIAL

Cynthia Gamble: News editor
(cgamble@independentfreepress.com)
Ted Brown: Photography
(tbrown@independentfreepress.com)
Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer
(ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)
Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports
(emaher@independentfreepress.com)

PRODUCTION:

Mary Lou Foreman, Kevin Powell,
Shelli Harrison, Dolores Black, Debbie MacDougall

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Call for new theatre brings many responses

Dear editor,

This is in response to Jack Scolieri's letter, *Parent echoes call for new movie theatre here* (Feb. 2) .

If you would like to have a brand new theatre and a Home Depot, I would recommend you move to (or back to) Mississauga or Brampton. This is coming from a parent of a child.

I think most residents will agree that the pain of driving their kids to Brampton or Mississauga to see a movie is a small price to pay to have a safe and close-knit community.

Heidi Noyes, Georgetown

A theatre? Get out of town

Dear editor,

In response to Mr. Scolieri's request for a new theatre in Georgetown.

Mr. Scolieri, perhaps when you take your daughters to Brampton or Mississauga to see a movie, you could stop and shop at the Home Depot there. And while you're at it take all of your belongings with you!

We have a theatre. Actually HAD is the correct term.

I guess a good old-fashioned theatre in a good old-fashioned small town did not fit your taste, or perhaps it may not have closed.

Funny how we forget the reasons why we cherish the small-town atmosphere that we have here, when we are inconvenienced.

Unfortunately, the larger urban areas such as Brampton and Mississauga (where many of us origi-

nate from) have all of the bells and whistles, along with higher costs, traffic and things we strive to get away from.

Support the small businesses we have here, appreciate the quaintness we have here, and the disturbing things we do NOT have here.

Russell Foster, Georgetown

Bigger is not better

Dear editor,

With the recent closing of Georgetown Cinema, your editorial space would be better utilized to appeal to the public to support local businesses and not inane requests for the things that are bigger and modern.

Bigger and modern does not necessarily mean better. I, for one, will be disappointed if it does not reopen.

Sadly, due to attitudes such as the ones recently published, Georgetown will soon go the way of our larger neighbours and the small-town appeal that brought many to this town will be lost. The day Home Depot moves in is the day that I move out.

Chris Gougeon, Georgetown

Box stores not wanted

Dear editor,

It was with sadness that I read that the Georgetown movie theatre closed.

I enjoyed going to the cinema and loved the fact that I could "pop in" on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon for a couple of hours, eat some popcorn and enjoy a movie. I then turned the

page of your paper, and, to my surprise, read a letter from Mr. Scolieri complaining about the lack of a "modern" movie theatre in town!

What does he mean by a modern movie theatre? A big box building with a glittering entrance way, high-priced tickets, with noisy flashy games and fast-food concessions? I was wondering: why does Mr. Scolieri want to live in Georgetown, when he wants big box stores and the conveniences that a larger community offers?

Georgetown will lose another piece of small-town life if the doors are closing on the cinema. My daughter and her friends think nothing of going to a movie in Georgetown— it's convenient for them to get to and they can walk home when the show is over. In order for a town like Georgetown to maintain its small-town charm, people who live here must use the services that local business people like Mr. Edwards offer to the community.

And yes, Mr. Scolieri, a Home Depot in Georgetown is pushing it. We have a number of great stores in town, owned and operated by local people, and we do not need another big box store here.

You should move to Mississauga or Brampton if that is what you and your family are looking for. You cannot enjoy "small-town life" and expect to have "big-city conveniences" at the same time.

Belinda Quinlan, Georgetown