

OPINION

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Duncan running on empty

While Ontario Energy Minister Dwight Duncan may not be losing any sleep over the province's temporary gasoline shortage, a cavalier remark he made during a recent television interview likely did little to satisfy consumers on the verge of panic.

During a Tuesday news report on the shortage of gasoline at some Ontario gas stations, Duncan responded to a question about the seriousness of the shortage by saying: "So? So? Did everyone get gas? So what?"

So what?

If the energy minister can't get his head around how the image of closed gas stations might raise concern among consumers, perhaps Premier Dalton McGuinty needs to ask himself if Duncan offers the right approach for the job. If the province's energy minister feels it's no big deal for consumers to live with the uncertainty of the availability of gasoline—in some smaller Ontario communities the local supply has reportedly run dry—he needs to get his head out of the oil sands.

So what?

Until alternate 'green' fuel sources become more universally viable or provincial and federal governments commit funding for a seamless GTA public transit system, gasoline remains the lifeblood of Ontario's economy. Without it people can't get to work, consumer products can't get to market and Ontario's economic engine would simply grind to a halt.

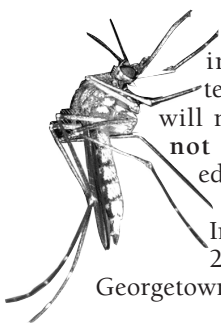
While the premier has taken the right approach by requesting that Ontarians remain calm, the energy minister's flippant remark gives the impression he is either unaware or dismissive of an even greater fuel crisis on the horizon.

The recent shortage shines a light on a North American oil refining industry that is losing the struggle to meet demand. One industry spokesperson noted construction of new refineries has not been able to keep pace with an ever-growing demand, not to mention the fact they are nearly impossible to get built in Canada due to changing environmental attitudes.

While Dwight Duncan offers a so what?, we would respectfully offer a question back to him—What is he and the Liberal government doing to lessen Ontario's dependency on gasoline?

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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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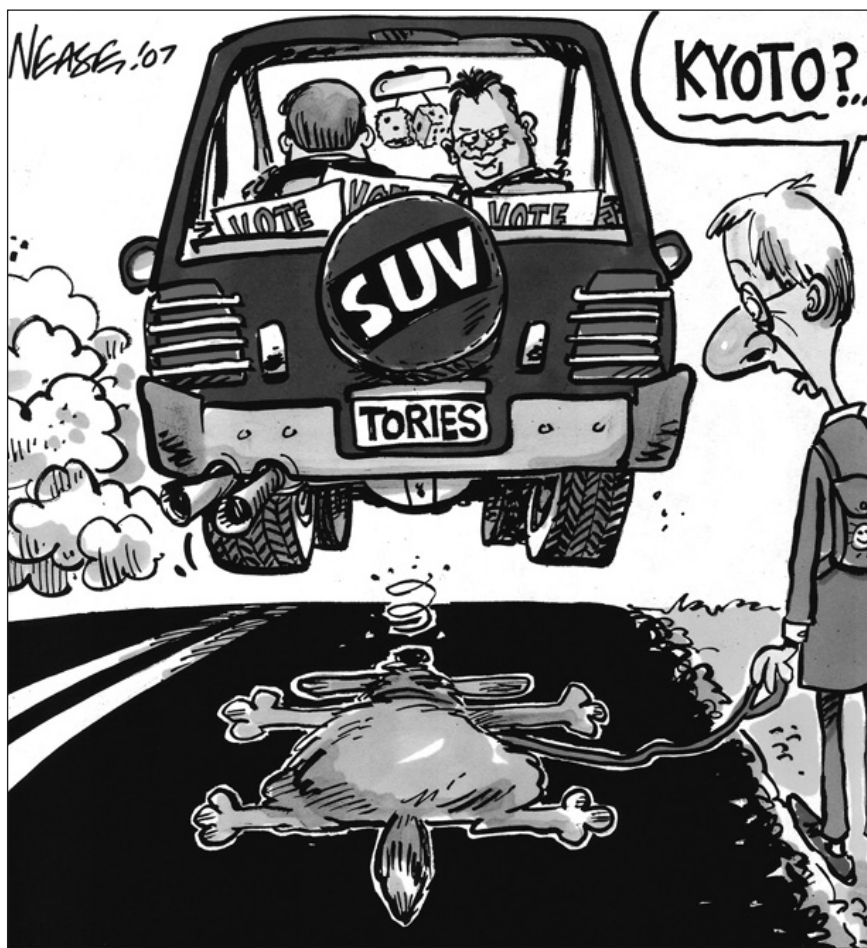
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Older 'kid' appreciates icemaker's efforts

Dear editor,

I've been reading and listening to all the negativity about the perils of winter recently but would like to say my friends and I look at winter differently, particularly if you are retired and lucky enough to live in this community.

There is adult skating for anyone lucky enough to be able to give it a shot and is available five days a week at Mold-Masters SportsPlex.

Recently I have seen the Jr. A Raiders in action playing an exciting brand of hockey. Between periods I caught a rep hockey game and the day before some figure skating. I tip my hat to the late Bob Lane and many of his friends (and my friends)

every time I go through the arena door. We owe them a lot.

However, I must express my appreciation to Seth Patriquin. With a kick-start from the Town, Seth maintains the open-air rink near George Kennedy Public School and has been doing so for four years.

I've seen him plowing and flooding the rink at midnight. On one recent PD day about 20 teenagers were honing their skills for hours. Another day, with the temperature at -18C I saw an eight-year-old and his 13-year-old brother, both good players, out showing their passion for the "good old game". They were at it again the next day when conditions were even more severe.

Two years ago I saw a parent with a five-year-old boy and a six-year-old girl giving it a try. The boy could barely stand up.

However, two months later, because of the efforts of a parent and Seth, they put on a clinic. I was lucky enough to watch this from my kitchen window.

I understand there are rinks in other parts of town maintained by people concerned about the well-being of the children and the love of the game.

Many kids appreciate their efforts and I am one of them. Keep your stick on the ice.

Eric Mitchell,
Georgetown

Is human activity to blame for climate change?

Dear editor,

Re: It's too late to avoid damage to our planet.

Is climate change happening? Of course. No debate required since the planet's climate has changed dramatically in the past and will continue to change. The real debate is whether human activity is a factor in this naturally occurring cycle.

Conveniently calling this debate closed due to a scientific "consensus" is not truthful. Developing economic policies under this falsehood, based on a wealth distribution scheme designed by the United Nations, is political gamesmanship.

Be careful what the media tells us we care about most. This is a politi-

cally-charged issue that a year ago was not even on the radar during the federal election. Unfortunately, as with all politically-motivated debates, the climate change indoctrination involves labeling those with a dissenting view to carbon dioxide being the root cause as crazy, trouble-making, oil-loving zealots. This argument is akin to calling a person who disagrees with same-sex marriage a homophobe.

Clearly humans cannot stop or reverse climate change. What we can do is recognize opportunities and create benefits from adapting to climate change.

Gary Cannon,
Georgetown

'Geese' have returned

Dear editor,

We would just like to let everyone now that a new flock of "geese" has arrived and will be out in the spring as usual.

Thanks to everyone who has come by, phoned or left messages in the mailbox. Thanks also to Acton Home Hardware, Bill and Val Maines and staff.

We had no idea that so many people were keeping track of what the geese were up to. We're glad we're not the only ones who enjoy them.

Georgina and David Beerman,
Rockwood

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