

# OPINION

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

## Wheels event opens eyes

Fortunately, most of you reading this will never have to use a wheelchair.

But, what if by some cruel chance of fate, you suddenly found yourself wheelchair-bound? Could you cope?

Unfortunately, there is a segment of our population for whom life in a wheelchair is a reality. But have you ever stopped for a moment and wondered how difficult it is for someone in a wheelchair to do simple, everyday tasks such as grocery shopping, going for a coffee or going to work?

Recently five able-bodied people—Georgetown District High School students Brett Reynolds and Joanna Meltzer along with Mayor Rick Bonnette, Georgetown Scotiabank branch manager Sandra Shulthies and *Independent & Free Press* writer/photographer Ted Brown—each spent a day using a wheelchair as part of an awareness campaign organized by the Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee.

As Schulthies said, “It was an eye-opener.”

All five of the “test subjects” in this experiment found there were some places a wheelchair just can’t go and others where it was a struggle to navigate.

Meltzer found herself catching her fingers on doorframes, Schulthies discovered wheeling while toting a cup of coffee was impossible, Bonnette and Brown both found washrooms a challenge and Reynolds said the simplest tasks were “some of the hardest while in a wheelchair.”

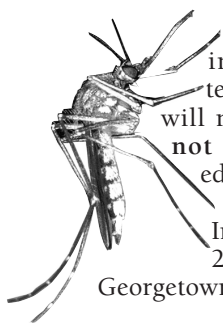
The Wheels for a Day event was designed to help bring awareness to the upcoming Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion event, planned for June 10 at the Gellert Community Centre. Sponsored by Scotiabank, the event will feature a pledged wheel and walk event to raise funds for spinal cord injury research and help those living with spinal cord injuries have a better lifestyle. See page 1 for registration details.

It has been 20 years since Hansen staged his around the world tour to draw attention to those forced to live life in wheelchair and, while major advances have been made to ensure buildings are more wheelchair-accessible, one fact remains.

Too many of us take our mobility for granted.

## 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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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.

Mail or drop off:

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

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

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Steve Nease



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Enjoy Homecoming 2007, says mayor

Dear editor,  
Homecoming 2007 is coming to Georgetown this July 27, 28 and 29. I encourage everyone to not only come out and enjoy the festivities but to show your support and con-

tribute to this wonderful event. I invite everyone with the financial means to help make this weekend a success by making a financial contribution. Proceeds of the event directly benefit the community and

will go towards our local library. As mayor of Halton Hills, I am humbled by the sense of “community” I see from local businesses and residents daily. Georgetown is rich in history and in culture. With “deep roots” in Halton Hills, and your support, we can ensure that the spirit of this event becomes a time that is remembered by our community for years to come.

I look forward to seeing you all at Homecoming 2007. It is going to be a fun weekend that promises to bring back old memories and create new stories that can be looked back on for years to come.

Rick Bonnette,  
Halton Hills Mayor

### Remember the hungry on June 5

Dear editor,  
National Hunger Awareness Day, June 5, is a day set aside for the direction of our thoughts toward the health and well being of hungry Canadians.

Low wages workers, many with children, Canadians with disabilities, and new Canadians often turn to the food banks to feed their families. The Georgetown Bread Basket, in 2007, will serve more than 169 families with 130,200 pounds of food. We urge our citizens, all agencies and

organizations, in meeting the needs of hungry people, to unite on June 5 in observance of such exercises as to support the work of the food bank in meeting food security needs of hungry children, and youth and families in the Georgetown area.

This life-saving service will be accomplished by our continued work as a team.

Marian Viant,  
director media co-ordinator  
Georgetown Bread Basket

### ‘Obituary’ for Winston touched reader

Dear editor,  
Having been out of town, I was catching up on my reading and was touched to read about the passing of Winston the dog.

I didn’t know him but I’m sure many people, that even the Fraser family wasn’t aware of, did.

I think of my grandfather’s dog who used to sit outside the shops of Scotland waiting patiently for his master and the countless strangers (to me) who would stop to pet him and say hello to him by name. I am sure there are people out there who

are grateful that you took the time to have his life mentioned in the paper, giving us a few chuckles and his picture to boot!

I am currently the owner of a cat or shall I say Gidget is the proud owner of me. She is much a member of my family as any other member so I can empathize with your loss at this time.

My condolences to the Fraser family and to Winston, may you find a bone on every cloud.

Pauline Webster,  
Georgetown

### Pair will be missed

Dear editor,  
Georgetown has lost two more long-serving and well-respected business owners.

Mario and Karen Morra ran the Petro-Canada gas stations located at 189 and 259 Guelph Street in Georgetown for the last 23 years. Their final day of business was on Tuesday May 15. On behalf of all their friends and customers over the years I would like to wish them and their family all the best for the future.

Good luck Mario and Karen—you will be missed.

Ian Williamson,  
Acton