

OPINION

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

Be aware that heat can kill

Leaving any vulnerable family member—including infants, the elderly or a family pet—exposed to summer's extreme heat for a prolonged period of time is not only cruel and stupid—it's also criminal.

Too often at this time of year we hear of tragedies involving people or animals being left behind in sweltering heat, without water or the ability to seek relief from temperatures that can kill.

Last week the Hamilton/ Burlington SPCA reported that a three-month-old dog had died after having been tied to a post outside—without shelter, shade or water—on one of the hottest days of 2007.

While the SPCA anticipated charges—which can carry a maximum six-month jail sentence, a \$2,000 fine or both—would be laid against the dead animal's Hamilton owner, our justice system's track record is that it rarely throws the book at those responsible for such inhumane acts of cruelty.

Even worse, every summer there are reports of children being left in vehicles on stifling hot days. Last year, a local senior was left in a car in a case that resulted in criminal charges.

According to Safe Kids Canada, the temperature inside a parked car can exceed a stifling 50C (122 F) within 10-20 minutes on a typical sunny day.

Anyone left inside a hot vehicle can suffer from heat stress, dehydration, shock or even death over a very short period of time.

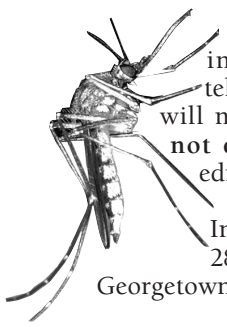
Opening a window slightly is not enough to keep the temperature inside a car at a safe level.

One Halton fire official encouraged people never to hesitate about calling 911 should they notice someone—or an animal—in distress in a locked vehicle.

While there's always a chance you might be subjected to a less than cordial exchange with the vehicle's returning owner, you may also save a life.

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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



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)
Amy Sykes (features@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

GreenCart program will help save landfill

Dear editor,
Everyone who is hoping for a long-term, sustainable waste solution was glad to hear that Halton Region has followed many other municipalities in choosing the GreenCart.

While some in the rural area are still not sure that it is needed where they have lots of room to compost, the urban and hamlet areas certainly need it. We must keep organic material out of the landfill. Carbon is held in the composted material rather than released to the atmosphere to accelerate climate change.

With the Town of Markham using kitchen waste separation to reach 75 per cent waste diversion, surely Halton can do as well and with a little sweat even reach 85 per cent.

After much criticism, from a Milton resident, of the current composting facility that Halton has been using, three members of Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (P.O.W.E.R.) visited the well-run GreenCart demonstration project in Arthur. Compost is arranged in windrows on a concrete pad ventilated through the bottom by air pumped in. The windrows are covered with Gore-Tex, speeding the composting process and controlling odours. Compost is bagged and sold.

The GreenCart is also one step in avoiding an incinerator in the centre of our region at the Milton landfill. The huge cost, the small amount of energy produced, and the pollution from deadly dioxin and nano parti-

cles that threaten our lungs and ultimately the brain, should be reasons enough for our Region to stop the plans that have been moving steadily toward an incinerator.

Regarding the "yuck factor of separating one's garbage". Frankly, I must say—get a grip! Ten minutes earlier it was on your dinner plate. Now instead of scraping the plate

Callousness of drivers shocked reader

Dear editor,
Recently while driving home from work after a storm, I was involved in an accident.

At 5:45 p.m., sitting behind a very long line of cars along Highway 7, I inched my way from Heritage Road to Winston Churchill Blvd. to find that the storm had knocked out the traffic lights at the intersection.

The delay was due to the caution the drivers were taking going through the intersection. The backup was not only westbound but eastbound as well. There was traffic backed up right up the hill into Georgetown. As I reached the "front of the line" at Winston Churchill and Guelph, I too proceeded with caution into the intersection. I breathed a sigh of relief thinking "I'm almost home", when a truck traveling down Winston Churchill, barreled through the intersection and hit me. My car did a "180" and I sat

into the garbage, you scrape it into the GreenCart. This should be fairly easy. I'll bet that a 10 year old could handle it. The GreenCart will be picked up weekly.

Next we need to focus on reduction of the waste produced. We can solve this problem.

Barbara Halsall,
Past President of P.O.W.E.R.

there in shock.
During this entire episode, not one person got out of their car to offer any assistance. Not one person asked if I was okay. Not one person offered the use of their cell phone. Not one person came forward as a witness.

I have always enjoyed reading the editorials about the kindness and generosity of the residents of Georgetown—returning wallets, giving cookies to small children, rides for people in crisis. I just hope that all the people in those cars traveling east that sat there and watched me do not live in Georgetown. I have difficulty believing people could be that callous.

To all of you out there who saw this accident, just believe in one thing—what goes around comes around. By the grace of God it could have been you!

S. Hollings,
Georgetown