

Food banks, legal aid clinic deserve praise

In all of the years I've been privileged to serve in the Ontario Legislature, I've always believed that our province needs to embrace a philosophy of conservatism that is caring— not narrow, but expansive; not harsh, but kind; not divisive, but inclusive.

From this perspective, it follows that our communities must respond to meet the genuine and real needs of people who, through no fault of their own, are unable to provide for themselves.

One way to fulfill this obligation is to support the Georgetown Bread Basket (as well as Acton FoodShare). The food banks exist to ensure that no one goes hungry. I recently had the chance to meet one of the Bread Basket's compassionate and dedicated volunteers, and I want to express my sincere thanks to everyone who has supported the food bank by donating food, or their time and talent— especially in the lead-up to Christmas.

Another organization worthy of recognition for its advocacy and service to needy clients is Halton Community Legal Services, our local legal aid clinic. On Jan. 9, I had the chance to visit its office in downtown Georgetown, and learn more about their important work supported by the Province of Ontario.

Some of the services provided by community legal clinics include help with disability benefits, Ontario Works, housing issues, and employment insurance. If you qualify, they can tell you what the law says about your problem, what you can do about it legally, and in some cases represent you at hearings.

For more information, call Halton Community Legal Services at 905-875-2069.

These are but two of our local organizations who give a "hand up" to those in need. Thanks to all who share in this vital responsibility.

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My wife Lisa and I hosted a very well-attended New Year social for our Wellington-Halton Hills constituents on Jan. 13. It was scheduled for 2 -4

Ted Arnott



p.m., but in reality went from 1:20-5 p.m.! I want to extend a special word of thanks to everyone from the Halton Hills half of our riding who joined us. It was wonderful to see you there.

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Even though Premier Dalton McGuinty has not yet announced the date when he plans to recall the Ontario Legislature, I remain very busy working in our riding office and around Wellington-Halton Hills.

As well, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, an All-Party Committee of the Legislature, began pre-budget public consultations on January 21. As a member of this committee, I plan to participate in these hearings in Toronto, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Thunder Bay, Guelph and London. After the hearings conclude, our PC caucus will be pushing the government to respond in key areas like the economy and jobs, health, agriculture, the environment, public infrastructure, tourism, and education.

If you have any suggestions for this year's provincial budget, please let me know and send me an e-mail at ted.arnott@pc.ola.org. I will ensure your ideas are passed along to the committee and the minister of finance.

I can be reached at 1-800-265-2366, or by e-mail at ted.arnott@pc.ola.org. My website is www.tedarnottmpp.com.

—Ted Arnott is the MPP for Wellington-Halton Hills

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