

## Gotta go green

Kermit the frog once sang that "it's not easy being green" but that's not quite the case today.

Everyone, it seems, is talking "green".

While concern for the environment, global warming, the ozone layer, climate change, etc. was often reserved to a fringe group others derisively referred to a "tree-huggers" or "activists", "thinking green" has now become part of today's lexicon and more and more individuals and groups are looking at ways to help the environment.

The Town of Halton Hills is intending to jump on the green bandwagon this year with its Green Plan, which recently received approval from council.

"The interest has started at the grassroots level," said Wards 3&4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal. "It's really the community that has been pushing this agenda. People understand that we have very serious issues... and are frustrated that the upper levels of government are not reacting nearly quickly enough."

To that end the Town's plan has 58 recommendations based on the PAREE approach—Practical, Affordable, Realistic, Enforceable and Educational.

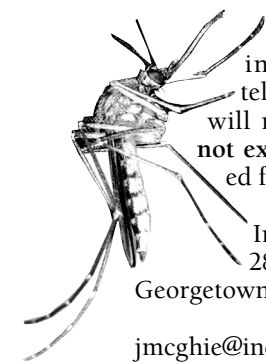
While some of the ideas in the plan will likely prove unworkable, others could leave us wondering why no one thought of the idea before.

For example, one of the recommendation calls for establishing local depots for hazardous waste or gardening materials. Such a depot would not only be more convenient for Halton Hills residents it would save local homeowners from driving all the way to the Hwy. 25 landfill site in Milton. Imagine the gas savings and the reduction of carbon monoxide alone. As well, a convenient local depot might spur more recycling of hazardous material.

Perhaps this Halton Hills initiative will make other municipalities "green" with envy.

## 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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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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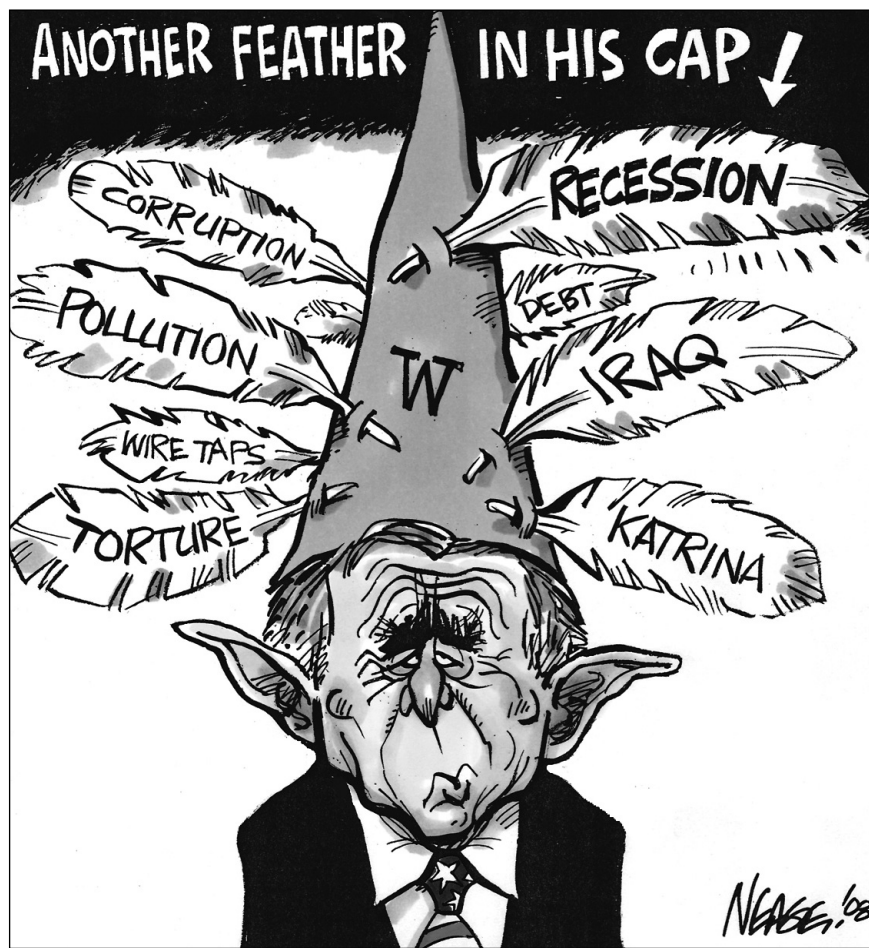
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Steve Nease



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Town tax hikes running double that of CPI

Dear editor,  
Thank you for your very enlightening editorial Jan. 11. We need more like it.

What really stood out for me was the list of past tax hikes. Over the last 10 years, including the estimated hike for this year, the average increase is 5.37 per cent. Now, as a retired federal civil servant, my umbrella organization, the Federal Superannuates National Association, in one of their newsletters, pegged our cost of living increases to our pension over the past 10 years, as 23 per cent. That is 2.3 per cent per year. This increase is calculated on the official Government of Canada Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Hello... my property tax increases are running at way more than double the CPI! Assuming that an honest

calculation by Halton Hills pegs their cost increases at 5.37 per cent, then there is something wrong with the CPI.

I wonder if anyone else noticed this dichotomy? Is someone not telling the truth or am I missing something here?

I am assuming that Halton Hills taxes reflect the increases in the cost of wages, electricity, fuel, etc., etc.

I am curious, since I am sure there are lots of pensioners out there whose pensions do not reflect the official CPI increases.

How about a follow up on this story: does your pension cover CPI increases, are the increases really going to reflect the 'real' cost of living to pensioners? Let's look at hydro increases, water increases, fuel (auto, natural gas and heating),

increases, food increases, rent increases etc.

John O'Reilly, Georgetown

### Intersection a mess

Dear editor,  
For a town that consistently displays plenty of community pride, Georgetown's main intersection is looking pretty rough.

Anyone stopping for the traffic lights at Mountainview Road and Guelph Street must look around and wonder what happened to this normally well-kept area.

The car dealership on the north-east corner seems to have halted renovations and the unoccupied pool hall on the opposite corner will soon be overgrown once again by weeds and unlicensed vendors peddling their wares from the back seat of a car.

While legitimate reasons may exist for these admittedly minor Georgetown property standards situations, it must be awkward for neighbouring business owners who clearly take pride in landscaping, maintenance and overall curb appeal.

There are designated zoned areas for industrial-looking facades, street vendors and derelict buildings. Mountainview and Guelph should not fall into this category.

R. Paterson, Georgetown

### Residents should clear the sidewalks

Dear editor,  
Kudos to Jeremy Malanchuk for opening the discussion related to winter sidewalk safety.

As a nurse with an interest in fall prevention for seniors, and a fellow dog walker, I can further attest to the poor conditions of the sidewalks in my community this past December. I was particularly disappointed to see that residents and schools were able to clear their driveways of snow and ice but left the sidewalk completely unsafe for pedestrians.

I do not necessarily believe that

the Town should shoulder full responsibility for snow removal on Town sidewalks, but as members of the community and responsible homeowners/businesses we all need to participate to ensure sidewalk safety.

Falls are a leading cause of hospitalization and functional decline leading to admission to nursing homes in our seniors. Come on citizens of Halton Hills, step up and support a safe environment.

Catherine Harrison,  
Georgetown.

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