

Olympic lament

This summer's 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing is shaping up to be the most closely watched in history for all the wrong reasons.

With just 119 days to go before the most populous nation on the planet— at 1.3 billion— welcomes the rest of the world, there is growing uneasiness that China's suspect human rights record is coming back to haunt it.

Can decades of China's heavy-handed rule of Tibet and memories of 1989's armed takedown of pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square be simply swept under the rug for 17 days this August? As Canadians, we hope not.

Recent attempts by protesters to literally snuff out the Olympic flame as it makes its symbolic journey from Athens to Beijing— via five of the world's seven continents— are both unprecedented and, we fear, an ominous sign of what may come as each day draws us closer to Beijing's Aug. 8 opening ceremony.

The protests also raise the question of whether a country still so deeply mired in unconscionable human rights practices— such as torture of prisoners and wrongful imprisonment— should have been allowed to host a sporting spectacle founded "to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practised without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit ..."

The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) contention in 2000 that awarding Beijing the Games would pressure China to clean up its act where human rights violations and social and economic reform are concerned was either naive, or a brilliantly-concocted marketing ploy intended to calm those who recognized the hypocrisy of it all.

While some human rights supporters have floated the idea of boycotting Beijing, or at least the Games' opening ceremonies, that effort should have been put in motion eight years ago when the IOC was forcefeeding us the notion that its awarding of the Olympics would ultimately cause China to change its ways.

What do you think?

Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

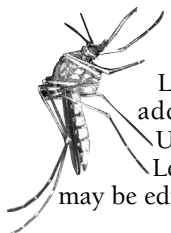
Halton Police are planning a crackdown on speeders. Do you think speeding is a problem in Halton Hills?

Yes (80%)

No (20%)

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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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CAShh, Cancer Society campaigns differ

Dear editor,
Spring weather, the robins and early spring flowers are late this year.

However, one sign of spring that is on time is the eighth annual door-to-door campaign for Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills (CAShh).

In Halton Hills we have a choice when it comes to deciding who should be the recipient of charitable monies.

We can donate to the Canadian Cancer Society in the name of research, or we can donate to Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills, a local group that specializes in providing much-needed practical sup-

port to cancer patients and their families in Halton Hills. Since starting up eight years ago, CAShh has assisted more than 800 families in Halton Hills, providing guaranteed transportation to and from treatments, use of equipment such as wheelchairs and walkers, dietary supplements, wigs and turbans, home and child care plus a long list of other services at no charge.

Sadly, the number of cancer patients in Halton Hills is growing every year. Donation dollars are very important, and it's imperative to make an educated decision when canvassers start knocking on doors.

Both charities are worthy— and they're both different. Our name is

built on service. The choice is yours; please do make it an informed one.

Anna Mae Moore,
CAShh Campaign Manager

'Gardiner P.S.' is the ONLY name for school

Dear editor
This is a rebuttal to P.O.W.E.R. and its president, Leslie Adams (re: March letter (P.O.W.E.R. against naming school after trustee).

I really don't care to which standards the new Georgetown South school is created if it will educate the children of Halton Hills. After all, a school is constructed for the basic purpose of education. I doubt very much if any of the persons or organizations named in L. Adams' letter are residents in Halton or Halton Hills where the school is to be located, nor have any of them contributed to the specific education of OUR children.

While I agree that P.O.W.E.R. and others are doing good things for the environment I don't think they gave much to the specific education of the children of Halton Hills. Ethel Gardiner did just that and did it for a number of years!

I, for one, (as a contributor to Halton Hills via taxes for 40-plus yrs) feel very strongly that Gardiner Public School is the correct and perhaps ONLY name for this new school.

Doug Brownlee, Georgetown

Headline undermined P.O.W.E.R. letter on school

Dear editor,
I was very disappointed by the heading that you gave Leslie Adams' letter published March 12 in *The Independent & Free Press*, concerning the naming of the new school.

The negative sounding "P.O.W.E.R. against naming school after trustee", was inflammatory and inaccurate as anyone would notice if they took the time to read the first paragraph, in which Leslie clearly stated that there should indeed be a school named after Ethel Gardiner.

Your thoughtless headline did not reflect the balanced argument that P.O.W.E.R. put forward, i.e.

that this particular new LEED school should have a name that puts the environment front and centre in the minds of its students, teachers and parents and that Ethel Gardiner should also be honoured.

A community newspaper should be giving groups like P.O.W.E.R. support, not undermining them.

Ann Geh,
Georgetown

(Editor's note: The exact quote from Leslie Adams letter read: "A school should be named after Ethel Gardiner but not THIS school." *The Independent & Free Press* stands by the headline.)

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