

Mixed results

The annual provincial seatbelt campaign, operated by police services across Ontario between April 16 and 27, revealed both good news and bad news this year.

The Ontario Provincial Police stopped more than 1.24 million vehicles during this spring's campaign and laid 10,753 charges against drivers, 4,481 charges against passengers and charged 274 drivers for not having a properly installed child restraint. Four people were also killed on roads patrolled by the OPP during the campaign who were not wearing seatbelts.

On the positive side, 92 per cent of Ontario drivers were found to have been using their seatbelts.

"Ontario has one of the highest compliance rates for seatbelt use of any jurisdiction in North America," OPP Commissioner Julian Fantino said. "But there are still drivers out there who don't seem to get it. We had four people die during the campaign because they weren't buckled up. The few seconds it takes to buckle up could be the difference between living and dying if you are involved in a serious collision."

So far in 2008, 27 people not wearing seatbelts have died on OPP-patrolled roads, which is a 28.9 per cent decrease over the same time last year, when 38 people had been killed.

In Halton the good news is that 95 per cent of local motorists were buckled up—slightly higher than the provincial average.

A total of 23,900 vehicles were observed and 1,350 people were found not to have been using their seatbelt.

However, that didn't prevent 863 people from receiving tickets from Halton officers for not using their seatbelt.

Young people, however, seem to understand the importance of seatbelt use. Halton Educational Services officers working with students, conducted seatbelt checks at local schools and of the 1,475 cars checked only six tickets and eight warnings were issued.

Seatbelts save lives. That is no longer open for debate. The sooner all drivers and passengers realize this, the better.

What do you think?

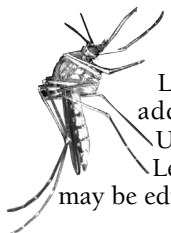
Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

The owners of The Carpet Palace in Norval want to demolish their existing store, claiming it is not salvageable. Many Norval residents want the building, which is not a recognized historic site, saved. Who do you side with?

- The owners. It is their building and they have the right to do what they want with it as long as they follow Town regulations. (82%)
- The residents. Replacing this building changes the landscape of Norval. (18%)

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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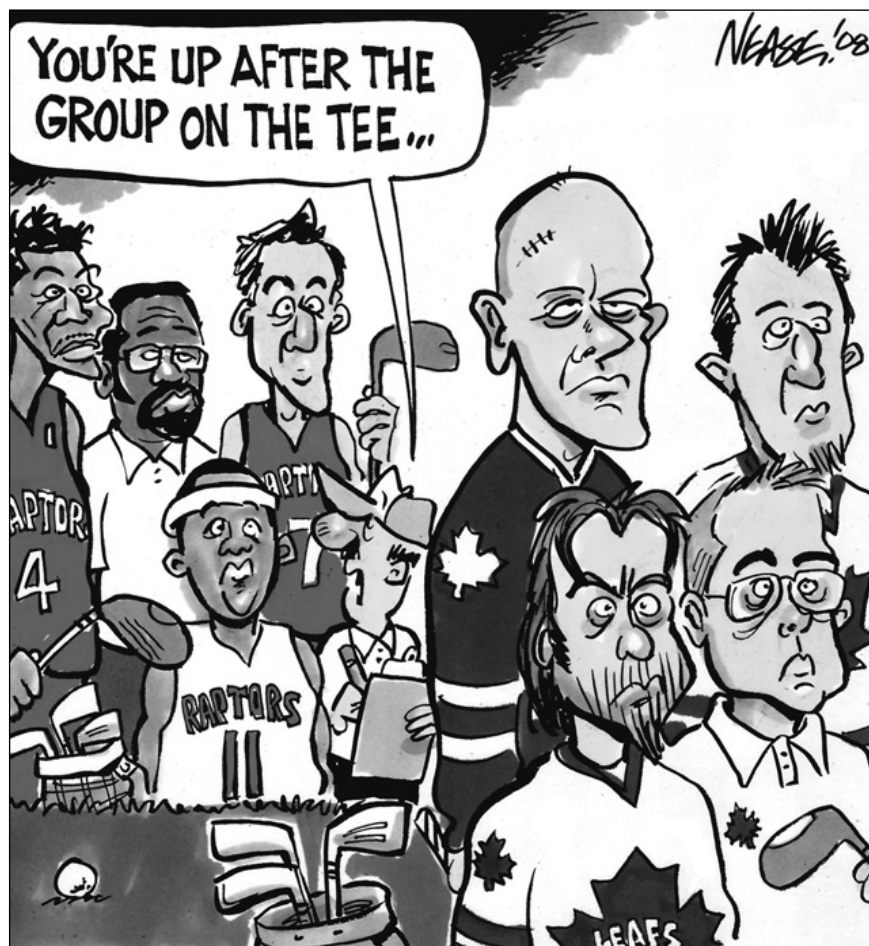
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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Road change was the real issue behind protest

Dear editor,
I think your editorial (April 30, Palace retreat in order) missed the point.

The protesters were out there, not so much to prevent the destruction of a dilapidated century building, but to prevent the widening of and subsequent left turn lane on Winston Churchill Blvd. that the Town wants to create.

I live on Hwy. 7 and more than 10,000 cars pass my house twice a day. I'm also unfortunate enough to be on the corner of another street that Georgetown residents use as a bypass to beat the light at Winston Churchill Blvd. They hit that corner at speeds well in excess of the posted

25 km-h and drive on my lawn, terrify my animals and destroy my property.

I've long suspected more than 500 cars were using that shortcut twice a day and over a year ago asked the Town for some relief.

Town traffic co-ordinator Bob Butrym spent two days parked in front of my house with his car surrounded by orange traffic cones. I was promised a report and some action, but to date all I've received are reasons why the Town can't act. Lately the double-decker gravel trucks have been using my road and they've destroyed it. I've got potholes large enough to swallow a small car. I hope the Town doesn't repair them.

They're the only thing that slows the traffic down.

Back to the Carpet Palace. It makes sense for owner George Kanichis to move his building. I've seen the destruction that occurs when a big truck runs into the side of it.

According to your article last Friday, the Town "might be convinced" to take a little property off his hands and "improve the road". What does that mean exactly? Does that mean George is not being coerced into giving away a piece of his property? Does that mean George could say no? I wonder. By all means let's let George build a proper structure for his store. I think we'd agree that the current building simply isn't safe. But why do we need to make it even easier for trucks to turn from Winston Churchill? Trucks aren't even supposed to be on Winston Churchill at Hwy 7!

I've been told that a turn lane would ease the traffic situation on King Street. Baloney. A turn lane means more trucks and more cars, more noise, more bad drivers driving too fast and endangering the residents of Norval. I'm up for anything that improves the quality of my life. A left turn lane doesn't begin to fall into that category. So will I be at the Committee of Adjustment meeting on May 7? Absolutely.

Stephanie Crammond, Norval

Foundation is also part of the fight against cancer

Dear editor,
Re: CASHh, Cancer Society campaigns differ (April 11 letter).

I would like to add a thought to the excellent letter shared by Anna-Mae Moore.

Ms. Moore wrote that we have a choice about our charitable donations, "we can donate to the Canadian Cancer Society... or to Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills." In fact, Halton Hills offers a number of choices for charitable donations to help fight cancer.

At Georgetown Hospital, for example, we perform breast cancer surgery including use of leading-edge sentinel node biopsy techniques. We are a designated Ontario Breast

Screening Site, we complete hundreds of advanced screening procedures every year for early detection of colo-rectal, breast, and numerous other forms of cancer, we have two busy operating suites with 3,000 procedures each year, and we provide compassionate palliative care close to home for residents of Halton Hills.

CASHh and the Cancer Society do important, invaluable work and they deserve all the support we can give them. At the same time, The Georgetown Hospital Foundation is also a strong partner in the fight against cancer, right here in Halton Hills.

K.C. Carruthers, Executive Director
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