

OPINION

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Erasing bad drivers

It's the Friday before that first (supposedly) warm, long weekend. It might not yet be summer, but nothing spells the end of cold weather like Victoria Day.

For thousands of Ontario residents it is also the chance to load up the car and head north to cottage country. It's a party weekend for family and friends—a time to enjoy the great outdoors.

However, traffic accidents where lives are lost thanks to, among other things, excessive speed and impaired or careless driving, usually mars this particular weekend.

How much more can our police service do to reverse this deadly trend?

Officers already stage seatbelt blitzes, haul unsafe vehicles off the road and even confiscate cars when motorists drive at high rates of speed. Despite these measures, people will die on the roads this weekend.

Earlier this week in Markham, Halton Regional Police joined York Regional Police, other police organizations, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transportation to kick off the 2008 Project Eliminate Racing Activities on Streets Everywhere (E.R.A.S.E.).

Project E.R.A.S.E. was developed in response to fatal and serious personal injury collisions caused by drivers racing or driving aggressively with absolutely no regard for public safety or traffic laws.

Debbie Virgoe, widow of Innisfil truck driver David Virgoe, bravely spoke at the program's launch.

Virgoe, 48, was driving a transport truck on Hwy. 400 last June, when three vehicles began weaving in and out of traffic. Virgoe swerved to avoid them and was killed when his truck rolled into a ditch.

"Speed, accompanied by careless and reckless actions, kill far too many innocent people on our highways," his widow said, adding those two factors killed her husband and changed not only her life but the lives of her children and grandchildren forever.

In this case, a 20-year-old Etobicoke man and a 21-year-old Mississauga man face charges of criminal negligence by way of street racing.

We can only hope that Debbie Virgoe's sad words get through to those drivers who believe they are invincible.

What do you think?

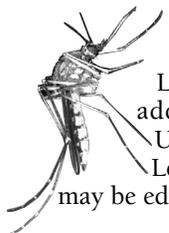
Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

The Victoria Day weekend marks the start of the camping and cottage season in Ontario. Where do you fit in:

- I love the cottage and go every chance I get (33%)
- Cottage life does nothing for me (67%)

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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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mayor had no role in fate of cinemas

Dear editor,
Re: May 14 letters to the editor
re: cinemas closing

Well, I am really confused as to why people would threaten not to vote for Mayor Rick Bonnette if he can't keep the cinema from closing.

Since when is a mayor or anyone on council, able to tell any business to either stay open or close? Is there something I missed when I learned about governments in high school?

I would have thought that most people would know there is no way for a mayor to do this whether he is the mayor of Halton Hills,

Mississauga or anywhere else. That is not within their power.

I am very sad to see the cinema close also, because my husband and I have enjoyed going there on Friday or Saturday nights. But I can understand that it is hard to make a go of a business if not enough people are buying your product. Blaming the mayor will not do anything to save this.

If they had wanted the cinema to stay open maybe they should have gone more often and not just on Toonie Tuesdays. It costs a lot for an owner of a theatre to rent those first-

run movies, pay staff and rent. Trying to earn it all on Toonie Tuesday will not do it.

Debra Hayes, Georgetown

Trash program 'great'

Dear editor,
I read with interest the letters that were sent to *The Independent & Free Press* with regards to the problems with the new garbage collection program Halton Region implemented.

The first week of the program, I was kidding with the neighbours when the garbage was still sitting on the curb, that the new garbage collection system worked, but there was no anger in any of our comments. As most know, when a new program is implemented there will always be kinks that need to be worked out. Personally, I was surprised that the Region would have arranged for the bulk pickup to be on the same day as all other pickups, but I'm sure they had their reasons. Finally the last of our garbage, the GreenCart, was collected Saturday.

Since that time, our garbage, all of it, has been collected on our collection day. The kinks have been worked out, and I personally think its a great program.

Oh, and Mr. Mayor.....I know it wasn't your fault. You're doing a great job.

Fran Fryters, Acton

Works yard's Earth Day a day of fun

Dear editor,
On April 26, the Town of Halton Hills hosted an Earth Week Celebration at the R.C. Austin Public Works Yard on Trafalgar Road. Well, we just would like to thank you for such a great day this turned out to be.

Not only was this a great way to get rid of our old tires and a broken-down TV we had stored in the garage, but we also got to pick up all the mulch and compost our pickup could hold.

What was meant to be a "quick" drop off and pick up turned out to be more than two hours of fun. The kids had a blast helping with the mulch and dirt (and climbing to the top)— but best of all was then going to one of the buildings where they

had the people from the wildlife department with wild birds of prey— talking and explaining all about these beautiful birds. The kids were just amazed and seeing and hearing about them.

They also had various displays and information booths on all sorts of environmental issues— free hand-outs, colouring, hotdogs and hamburgs (for cheap) free coffee and juice.

The employees of the works department did a wonderful job. The gardens thank you for fresh compost and we thank you for a great, unexpected surprise of a day. We are all looking forward to it next year.

The Collier family,
Georgetown

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