

OPINION

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Phone: 905-873-0301
Fax: 905-873-0398

Make it a safe prom

It's the end of another school year and excited children and thankful teens will be looking ahead to a summer filled with fun.

However, as a cautionary note to parents, make sure you know where your teen is headed when they leave the house for an end-of-year party. If necessary, give that all-important lecture to your son or daughter about the need to play safe when attending a grad or prom party.

All too often, great parties are marred by great tragedy. Someone drank too much and got behind the wheel of a car. Someone got angry and a fight ensued. Someone decided it would be humorous to trash a house. Someone doesn't make it home alive.

Halton Regional Police is taking part in a province-wide Safe Prom Campaign that focuses on drivers and their passengers getting home safely after celebrating.

Throughout this week, Halton will have officers running RIDE spotchecks across the region.

Don't think for one minute that you can 'dodge' the police by taking backroads. Spotchecks will be located in both rural and high-traffic areas.

Halton schools have been notified in advance of the campaign and the police are hoping that getting the message out will provide the greatest amount of deterrence.

Parents or guardians might want to ask their teen who the designated driver is for the group and make sure their child has enough money for a cab ride home—if not, get them to call you, no matter the time of night.

Halton Police is also reminding everyone that impaired driving is a crime in progress. Use your cell-phone to call 911 if you know or suspect a driver is impaired. By doing so you might be saving a life.

Graduation and prom parties are all about celebrating the past, present and future. We hope, as members of the media, that we do not have to write about a bright teen with a promising future who never made it home.

What do you think?

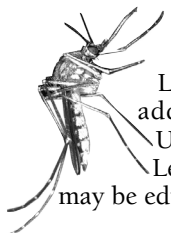
Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

When it comes to providing overall public services, how would you rate the Town of Halton Hills' performance?

- Excellent (17%)
- Adequate (50%)
- Poor (33%)

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.

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

Mail or drop off:

Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1

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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Council's decision on school raises questions

Dear editor,
We are puzzled by regional council's recent rejection of the Keswick Sutherland School proposal.

Why is the majority of council opposing an application which has been thoroughly studied by experts and thoroughly reviewed and recommended by the Region's own staff, when no objective studies have been presented to justify that opposition? As Councillor John Taylor pointed out, council had not received a "coherent,

logical, professional planning opinion supporting the residents who are opposed".

Why is council willing to put itself and its staff in an expensive and embarrassing position at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)? Not only will the Region need to hire planners and lawyers to fight the recommendations of their own staff, but they will also have to pay their staff salaries while that staff testifies against the Region's decision. They will need to hire their

own independent experts to prepare another set of studies that refute the findings supported by their own staff. When the Region loses at the OMB, they may also have to pay the applicant's costs.

Why has council not sought solutions to resolve differences between the applicant and objectors? For example, if there continues to be concerns about well water, the Region could reconcile those differences by requiring the applicant to post a letter of credit to guarantee the water.

Why is council turning down a proposal that is better than the current permitted use? We believe that a private school will enhance our community and increase municipal tax revenues.

Regrettably, however, we will not be puzzled when the Region again increases our taxes.

Kent and Lois McClure, Georgetown

Replace worn flags

Dear editor,
Canada Day is almost upon us again and I would like to remind everyone who flies a Canadian flag to check on its condition.

Too often I see torn and faded flags on homes, businesses, and government buildings. A flag exposed to the elements does not look good for very long and needs to be repaired or replaced frequently. It should look crisp and clean with deep vibrant colour.

Philip Taylor, Acton

Mayor showed 'desperation' in school vote

Dear editor,
Re: Keswick Sutherland proposal.

In regards to the school, I have been disappointed with councils' decisions, but especially during the region meeting. I am in favour of the school and feel councillors have been unfair with their decisions. But aside from that, I feel that Mayor Rick Bonnette, whom I voted for, spoke out of desperation to support his previous votes.

I am confused with his comment he is concerned the applicants would possibly come back to the Town for expansion to add a cafeteria because "where are the kids going to keep their lunches?" and "where are 150 kids going to eat their lunch?". Well, where do kids at public schools keep their lunches and where do they eat? I know our sons keep their lunch in their backpacks and eat lunch at their desk as I presume is the practice at most schools. Why would he think this school would be any different?

Another comment raised was (to justify voting against planning staff) "if that's the case, why bother having councillors, just let the staff do it all". I wish, in this case, we could, as I am not impressed with the rationale used by the councillors. The staff, however, have logically approved the proposal as ALL requirements have been met.

What it appears to have come down to is personal opinion. The neighbours around us sure give enough of that; both negative and positive. Our council should not be biased.

I applaud the councillors, specifically John Taylor, who supported and saw the merit of this application, and although it is a private school, it will benefit the community. I would prefer my kids to have 15 in a class rather than 31. I didn't hear any of those opposed talk about that issue. But I guess that's just my opinion and yes, I am biased to my children's education.

K. Parsons, Ballinafad