

## Icy conundrum

Imagine for a moment you are the owner of a late model car with say, 300,000 kilometres on it. The car has been costing you a small fortune in repairs in recent years but you don't have the means to afford a new vehicle.

What do you do? Take out a loan you can't afford? Continue to pay the costly repair bills in order to keep the car, which you desperately need, on the road?

Well, the same situation is facing the Town when it comes to the future of Memorial Arena— an 86-year-old ice rink which has surpassed its normal life expectancy by a whopping 35 years.

The rink is desperately needed to meet the demands for ice time for local youth programs (a participation rate indicates the town is currently short 1.5 ice surfaces) however, the cost to keep the building in operation has skyrocketed in recent years. Building a new facility is out of the question as there is no money available in the Town coffers for a project that undoubtedly would cost \$15 million or more.

At Monday's council meeting, members backed a staff report recommending allocating money for minimum building repairs to keep the rink operating for the next 10 years. A total of \$1 million will be built into the 2009 budget and forecast to ensure repairs for the next four years— with the hope no major emergency repairs are required in that time period.

"I have a real genuine concern, not only in regard to the lifespan of this building but also in the planning for a building to replace it," said Councillor Bryan Lewis, somewhat knowledgeable when it comes to ice rinks, considering his past career as a professional referee.

How outdated is Memorial? Lewis, in pointing to a report that has studied the life expectancy of each component of the building from its structure to its mechanical systems, notes that it is no longer even possible to get replacement parts for the aging seats (circa 1964).

A private-public sector partnership is one possible route to a new facility, but in these uncertain economic conditions that possibility seems remote at best. In hindsight perhaps this is an avenue that should have been explored years ago?

Now, with little alternative, the Town may simply be throwing good money after bad to keep the kids on the ice.

### What do you think?

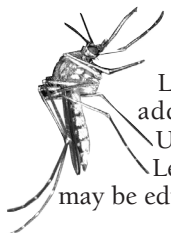
Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to [www.independentfreepress.com](http://www.independentfreepress.com)

The City of London, Ontario is considering a ban on the sale of water bottles at city-owned facilities in an effort to get residents to drink local water and reduce littering. Would you support a similar ban in Halton Hills?

- Yes (37%)
- No (63%)

## 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

### Proposed school would exacerbate problems

Dear editor,  
I'd like to commend Town and Regional councillors for taking a stand and recently voting against planning staff regarding the Keswick Sutherland School and Equestrian Centre proposal.

I live on 27 Sideroad, which is not anywhere near where the proposed school and equestrian centre would be, so the NIMBY (Not in My Backyard) factor does not apply in

my case.  
I walk my dog daily on our road, and I am extremely concerned about the extra traffic there would be if the school and equestrian centre were to open, not only on weekdays but also on weekends. Once a week I bring along a grocery bag on our walk to pick up the garbage that people throw out of their car as they're driving by (usually at a much higher rate of speed than the

posted limit). If traffic increases, I will have to upgrade to a green garbage bag.

There is a deer corridor that crosses 27 Sideroad and often I see deer crossing the road. If a deer is hit by a car, not only is it a bad outcome for the deer, but the car driver could be killed or kill others while swerving to avoid the deer.

As well, there are two Environmentally Sensitive Areas, which are provincially and federally delegated, in my immediate area, and I believe the pollution from the extra cars will have a negative impact on these areas.

A traffic consultant indicated that the number of accidents on the Eighth Line each year was extremely low. Those figures are based on accidents that are reported, but I'd like to know how many accidents are NOT reported to the authorities. I see pieces of car bumpers and door trim lying at the side of the road all the time.

Yes, it will cost money for the Region to take this to the Ontario Municipal Board but how much do you think it will cost the taxpayers when the Town has to (eventually) remove the hydro poles, which were just put in a few months ago on 27 Sideroad and the Eighth Line, in order to widen the two roads, put in sidewalks and remove the knolls to improve road safety on these roads?

### Resident wants Norval's history preserved

Dear editor,  
I would like to respond to several of the comments made regarding The Carpet Palace from two Georgetown residents in recent letters to the editor.

Mr. Heal thinks the new design for The Carpet Palace is "architecturally designed to fit well with the town". What town? Maybe Georgetown, but how does a 31-foot high building, three feet from the neighbour's property fit well with the village? Our village has been here for more than 150 years, homes have been lovingly restored and maintained and we are proud of our little village and do not want to see it destroyed. We wish to see our heritage preserved and this building is part of it.

Ms. Thompson's comments, "Why have other heritage buildings around this same intersection been torn down without issue?" In the 30 years I have owned my home I can't recall

any building at the four corners being torn down. Also, the comment "Current residents were under no illusions of traffic when they purchased." For your information current residents consist of many families whose roots in the village go back more than 100 years. Many of those people grew up here and now live in ancestral homes or homes they purchased years ago. My ancestors used horse and buggy as their mode of transportation. How bad do you think the traffic was then?

The poor traffic flow through Halton is a result of many years of bad planning and as the new areas south of Georgetown are being built up the problem will only get worse.

There has been talk of a bypass for more than 50 years and now is the time for this to be taken seriously before any more homes are built and any available land is gone forever.

B. Porter,  
Norval

Leslie LaFontaine,  
Georgetown