

OPINION

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Fair's fair

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May should never have been forced to cry foul or threaten legal action recently after being told by Canadian networks she would be excluded from the Oct. 1-2 nationally-televised leaders' debate because some of her opponents didn't want her there.

We thought the people who run Canada's television networks were made of sterner stuff. Turns out they are panty-waists when it comes to standing up to Canada's established political parties.

While it might have made strategic sense for the other parties to exclude May from the national spotlight, it didn't for the public.

So, we must ask, who are the broadcasters supposed to be serving—the politicians or the public?

It is a fact the Green Party has never actually had a member elected as a Green member but the Greens' membership has been growing with each election and they anticipate fielding candidates in every riding. Contrast that with the Bloc Quebecois, which only runs candidates in Quebec and it doesn't seem fair to keep May out.

We can understand why NDP leader Jack Layton is afraid to debate May, since the Greens pose the biggest threat to his party.

Same goes for the Liberals and Stephane Dion since much of their Green Shift appears to have been lifted from the Greens.

As for Stephen Harper's accusation that the Greens are too cosy with the Liberals, all we can say is, "How quickly they forget."

How different were the Reform Party and the Progressive Conservatives in 1993 when Reform Party leader Preston Manning joined the leaders' debates?

Actually, it's all about fairness and whether stronger, longer-established parties should be permitted to abuse their influence with the media to exclude a national party, which represents the beliefs of many Canadians.

Fortunately, in the end, a sense of what's fair and what's right prevailed.

As for the TV broadcasters, we suggest they should have showed some backbone and called the other parties' bluff or, better yet, not even sought out their blessings in the first place.

What do you think?

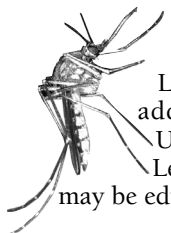
Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

Is it likely the federal election campaign will affect the way you will vote?

- No, my mind is usually made up in advance (67%)
- Yes, the campaign could cause me to change how I originally intended to vote (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.

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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Habitat is in need of local crew leaders

Dear editor,
Habitat for Humanity Halton (HFHH) is a community-based and non-profit organization that is building three homes in

'Woody' is happy his trees are saved

Dear editor,
Woody Woodpecker (a.k.a. the pileated woodpecker) is alive and working as a tree surgeon in the woods between the old Georgetown Armoury and Park School.

This magnificent bird, all 17 inches of him, has been seen working on trees that are infested with insects. Make no mistake, he is only interested in trees that need his help.

If he were able to read the August 22 issue of your paper about the old Hoddinott property next to the Fairgrounds, he would be celebrating as his forest will be saved a bit longer. He was in danger of becoming homeless as the Ontario Municipal Board had given approval for eight large houses on small lots running off an elevated condominium road. This change in ground level and tight sitting of the houses would have doomed the gorgeous old trees on the property.

If you walk through the woods and hear a hammering sound you may be lucky enough to see him in action.

Barbara Halsall, Georgetown

Georgetown.

Our mission is to break the poverty cycle by giving a hand up to residents by providing a means to affordable housing. This is accomplished through generous donations from sponsors and the hard work of volunteers. There is an acute need for more volunteers to act as crew leaders. HFHH will provide the training. All we need is your time and enthusiasm.

Crew leaders are asked to direct and organize a small group of volunteers to complete specific tasks. Building experience, although an asset, isn't mandatory. Up to now, most of the volunteers either work

and or live in Oakville and Burlington. Very few are from Halton Hills yet these homes will be benefiting our neighbours and our community.

I have seen a lot of public spirit and involvement from this community in the past and would love to see more "locals" come out and support this effort.

Please visit www.habitathalton.ca to meet the three build families and to volunteer your precious but desperately needed time.

Dan Poirier,
Acton

Local woman's honesty was greatly appreciated

Dear editor,

Visiting Georgetown recently I lost my wallet on Main Street.

I promptly reported the loss at the police station and to my delight, within a few hours I had a call from the police, saying that the wallet had been turned in at the station. Its contents were all there— credit cards, driver's licence, health card, and numerous other things that could have formed the basis of "identity theft", and whose loss would have occasioned much inconvenience for me.

The lady who found the wallet on the street and returned it declined to leave the police more than her name. She clearly wasn't

seeking any reward. (She told the police she'd once been the beneficiary of a similar good deed, and just wanted to pass it on.) I'd have liked to thank her, and at least offer to make a modest donation to a local charity of her choice, but I've been unable to trace her. So instead, I'll make the donation anyway to a worthy Halton charity familiar to me.

Congratulations to the folks who reside in Georgetown and environs. They are fortunate to live in a community where this lady's sort of neighbourliness and selfless honesty may be found.

Ian H. Mitchell,
Kleinburg

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