

OPINION

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Growing culture

The benefits of living in Halton Hills are many, but if this community is especially rich in any one area it is the arts.

Be it award-winning community theatre, internationally recognized artists and artisans, brilliant musical talent—you name it and this town has it.

Therefore it isn't surprising that a group of artists, performers, heritage advocates and others have formed an advocacy group asking the Town to formulate a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the arts, culture and heritage.

The group evolved from recent public consultation over the Town's SAP for recreation, which was recently approved by council. That report suggested that, while cultural activities may be mostly recreational, they should be addressed in a separate plan.

Group spokesperson Laurent Thibeault admits that while the term "culture" may be "amorphous" it is also "very, very critical."

According to Thibeault, there are likely more than 250 groups in Halton Hills involved in cultural activities and those groups stage hundreds of events each year in this community.

Put simply, they are a vital part of Halton Hills—every bit as vital as the sports organizations—and therefore deserve the same consideration.

Among the recommendations the group has made:

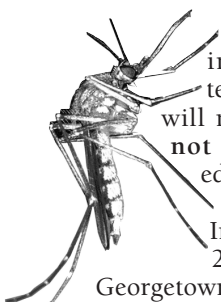
- targeting a percentage within the budget for cultural matters
- integrating arts and heritage dimension into the thinking of all Town departments and recognition of the arts as a valuable economic sector along with the more traditional industries.
- developing a strategy to avoid being swallowed by the GTA. Perhaps creating a 'brand' to make Halton Hills distinct.
- and the formulation of an official Town cultural advisory committee and a designated Town staff liaison.

Council has agreed to send the group's request for a Arts, Culture and Heritage Action Plan to staff for future review.

Culture is a vital part of this community and it is only fitting the Town acknowledges that fact.

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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

Dog licence bylaw a cash cow for Town

Dear editor,
I have two bichons and I recently saw an ad in *The Independent & Free Press* in which the Upper Credit

Humane Society was holding a rabies and micro-chipping clinic in Ospringe at the John Deere dealership.

I had both dogs done Oct 13.

I received a letter from the Town prior to that regarding one of my dog's rabies shots and licensing. On Oct. 15 I went to the Town offices with all the papers in hand to show them my dogs had the rabies shots as well as micro-chipping.

I was told that dogs that had been microchipped before January 2007 did not require a licence.

Why is the older micro-chipping as of January 2007 better than the one I just got? Both do the same thing as a licence—it identifies our dogs with contact information in case they are lost or stolen.

As a dog owner, I want to know why I had to purchase two dog licences for \$50 when the number on the micro-chipping can identify who this dog is as well as who the owner is and the number to call if the dog is lost or stolen?

It is ridiculous that we have to have both a licence and a microchip. It is unfair that I have to have the same thing as my fellow dog owners but I must pay for a licence because my dog was purchased after January 2007.

To me this is a cash cow for the Town. I think they need to look at this bylaw again. So let us have our pets to enjoy instead of costing us an arm and a leg... like everything else in this world.

Lorne Scots thank community

Dear editor,
I would like to thank the people of Georgetown for their generous support during the 676 Lorne Scots Army Cadets tagging days.

From Sept. 27-30 anyone out and about would have seen our fine cadets dressed in green around area businesses. The money we raised during our fall tagging days is used to support our programs, developing leadership and new skills in young people between 12 and 18 years of age.

It supports camping trips, physical training and other events that can be offered at no cost to all members of the cadet corps.

Thank you again to all those who took the time and made the effort to donate to the 676 Lorne Scots Army cadets.

Capt. Scott Teeter,
Commanding officer
676 Lorne Scots
RC (Army) CC
Georgetown

We should all support local entertainment

Dear editor,
There seems to be a current unofficial drive on to get Halton Hills residents to shop locally and support local retailers.

This should also extend to the Halton Hills entertainment sector. With our own John Elliott Theatre bringing such first rate entertainment as the Second City Comedy Tour, Pavlo and Valdy to our town in the near future, as well as numerous other live performances and plays, and with the long-established Georgetown Cinemas now under

new management and offering current films at reasonable rates, there is really no reason for local families and individuals to travel farther afield to spend their entertainment dollar.

It's time to support all the venues in Halton Hills that make the effort to provide quality entertainment for everyone's enjoyment.

It's time to get out there and "Shop locally.....be entertained locally."

Ken Baker,
Halton Hills

Rosemary Wysocki,
Georgetown