

SIU not serving its purpose

In theory it seems like a good idea— a civilian body with investigative powers that keeps a watchful eye over this province's police forces.

When police are accused of overstepping their bounds while conducting their duties, it's the SIU's job to ensure that police officers didn't criminally abuse the power they wield.

However, in light of Ombudsman André Marin's report released last week, it appears to us the SIU is nothing more than a toothless tiger.

Marin announced a full-scale probe into the civilian agency on June 7, 2007 after receiving 20 complaints about the SIU.

An investigation body must remain at arm's-length from the agency which it is probing.

However, Marin's report uncovered a culture within the unit where police basically tell SIU investigators what to do.

Marin also determined that the SIU and the police are too chummy and went as far as calling the organization "impotent". In fact, many SIU investigators are retired police officers.

"There's no doubt in my mind that an SIU investigation is one which is currently done through blue-coloured glasses. There is no doubt that there is a police bias in their approach to investigations," Marin said at Queen's Park.

Clearly, this agency has failed in doing the task for which it was created— ensuring police officers and services operate within the law in which they're sworn to uphold.

But the problem is not the fault of the province's police services.

In 18 years and a caseload of thousands, the SIU has only laid 73 charges.

Huh?

It's time to change the ethos at the SIU, maybe even in the Ministry of the Attorney General.

What do you think?

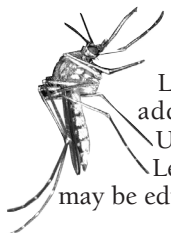
Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

Seatbelt safety blitzes will be held across the province this month. How often do you use your seatbelt?

- All the time (89%)
- Most of the time (9%)
- Rarely or never (2%)

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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

Local food banks can use your donations

Dear editor,
I am a volunteer at the Georgetown Bread Basket (food bank).

Resident is appalled by spraying of parks

Dear editor,
I am both amazed and appalled as I walked my dog around and through the Georgetown South community this past week (he gets two walks a day and I have a variety of routes that I take).

I found that every field and park in the area had warning signs indicating that the grass had been sprayed with pesticides and to "Keep off!"

First of all, didn't the Town decide to abandon this archaic and hazardous practice? Secondly, if it has not been abandoned— help!

Must every field and park in the area be sprayed at the same time so that there is nowhere safe to walk, for dogs to run and children to play?

To the Town and all of those people in the community who continue to expose the rest of us to these hazardous chemicals by selfishly and ignorantly spraying their lawns: WAKE UP and get your priorities straight!

Would you rather have your health and a less-than-perfect lawn or an immaculate lawn and cancer. Because that's what it boils down to.

Jodi Boleychuk,
Georgetown

While I was there recently contributing my time I was very saddened to see the number of food items that are missing from the shelves. Many shelves were totally empty of items.

There are many reasons that someone has to visit the food bank to supplement their own pantry and it was hard and disheartening to restrict mothers/fathers for items that they count on getting for their children when the supply is low, such as canned pasta.

I know that with rising gas prices, interest rate increases and just day-to-day expenses we all have a hard time making ends meet sometimes, but, if you are able to, please think about adding a few items to your grocery basket and place it in the food bank bins that are set up at every grocery store in

Georgetown and Acton.

Saturday, November 1 is the yearly food drive the Scouts put on in Georgetown. However, on this day there was not one, or a very limited number of, the following items available at the Georgetown Bread Basket: canned pasta, canned pasta sauce, canned meat, canned tomatoes, canned corn, canned vegetables, canned fruit, cookies, cold cereal, crackers, condiments, large canned juices, instant coffee, flour, salt and pepper.

November 1 is still a few weeks away and the problem is now.

The food banks are great organizations run by volunteers but the supplies are required to satisfy their purpose. Please be aware and help out when you can.

Monica Donaldson,
Georgetown

Town should tackle problems today, not tomorrow

Dear editor,
Re: Sept. 10 letter Dirt, ragweed make park an absolute mess.

I am extremely happy that you have printed this letter to the editor.

To me it just illustrates once again how 'reactive' rather than 'proactive' our Town council can be. In addition, the six-figure bureaucrats who have little or no accountability are also to blame.

While they stress the 'future' they can barely look after the pre-

sent or recent past and this Dominion Garden Park shamble is a perfect centering point of disgrace.

Include this with the number of illegal apartments in town and buildings they are located in which are not up to code, or safe, and are just plain eyesores in general.

I challenge the council, the overpaid bureaucrats, and the mayor to solve these issues today rather than tomorrow.

Paul Madonia, Georgetown