

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## Four years too long

Before Guelph-Eramosa Township Councillor Teresa Gibson Smye expressed her opposition to a four year term for municipal councillors in the letters to the editor columns in the April 27 edition of The New Tanner we thought it was a trial balloon blown up for puncturing. Only then did we realize the Ontario government tacked this provision on to their budget bill and is rushing it through the Legislature with what appears to be "minimal debate" for it to be a fact in the 2006 November elections.

According to The Toronto Star's Ian Urquhart, the legislation to extend the municipal term of office from three to four years is a sop to municipal leaders to compensate for the decision to enrich the pension plans of certain municipal employees – a move that's going to cost municipalities tens of millions of dollars – and which most councils vigorously opposed.

The government in its haste to have the four year term legislation passed invoked closure to cut off second reading debate and has left only one day for third reading debate before final reading, probably this week. The measure has been vigorously opposed by both right and left personalities in the political spectrum.

It's not surprising that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) backs the extension but we're concerned here with the haste with which the legislation was promoted, opposed to the spirit if not the democratic tradition, and which Premier McGuinty accused the former Conservative government of ignoring when he was in opposition.

Ms. Gibson Smye had a number of points against the legislation, including the observation that projects which people say they need more time to finish projects usually expands to fill the time available, the old peter principle. Three years, she notes, is a greater incentive than four to complete work in progress.

Looking back we can recall when agitation took place for a two year term when municipal councils averred they didn't have time to finish projects. When two year terms were legalized it wasn't long before it took three years to get things done. Now it's going to take four years. As Gibson Smye notes there is already significant apathy in the municipal process as voter turnout indicates. "Four years further distances the public from the process."

There are other points to entertain as well including the difficulty in removing someone from office who fails to measure up to expectations. Four years can be a mighty long time. The only positive thing we can say about expansion of the term is that voters should think long and hard about whom they vote for in this fall's election because it's obvious the measure is going to go through.

## Smoke-free Ontario

According to a new Ipsos Reid survey conducted on behalf of the Canadian Council for Tobacco Control (CCTC) and Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, Ontarians (94 per cent) overwhelming support measures that promote smoke-free environments. Although Canada is a world leader in tobacco control legislation, there are still 45,000 smoking-related deaths per year in this country.

Sixty-seven per cent of Ontario adults acknowledge that laws to restrict smoking put pressure on smokers to quit. This pressure may account for the fact that one-third (36 per cent) of Ontario smokers who are currently trying to quit say they feel totally alone in their efforts. However, almost all Ontarians (93 per cent) say they would support a smoker in their attempt to stop smoking.

Most provinces have already implemented smoking bans in enclosed public places and workplaces, and Ontario will be implementing a province-wide ban effective May 31.

It's going to be hard for some smokers to quit the habit. Those who rely on will power only to stop smoking have a high relapse rate. About 25 per cent who quit cold turkey relapse after 48 hours. The rate rises to 60 per cent within two weeks after the quit date.

It's estimated only 2.5 to 5 per cent who quit on their own will remain smoke-free for a year.

There is help out there in the form of nicotine replacements as well as more health professionals. A combination of both is the most effective, say the professional.

There's no doubt that quitting smoking is one of the most important ways to improve overall health. Ontario's ban, effective May 31, gives smokers who want to quit, another reason to give up the habit and improve their health.



**CADETS SOAR:** As Acton Cadets Rebecca Burtney and Christopher Gallinger each received their Private Pilot and Glider Pilot training respectively. Burtney, now at university, is an Air Force CIC officer in the Air Cadet Program and Gallinger is in his second year at Royal Military College, training as an Air Force Pilot. – Submitted photo

## Air Cadets a well kept secret

By **FRANCES NIBLOCK**  
The New Tanner

What a deal – a program with no fees, dues or uniform costs that builds leaders, teaches teamwork, leadership, citizenship, self-confidence and physical fitness. No wonder officials with the Canadian Cadet Program think it's possibly the best-kept secret in Canada.

Cadets is a federally sponsored program for 12 to 19-year-olds with three elements including Air, Army and Sea. Acton is served by the 197 Royal Canadian Air Cadets Typhoon Squadron, based for the last 25 years at the Acton Legion.

Cadets are not part of the Canadian Forces and there's no expectation for Cadets to join the military.

Acton has between 40 and 45 Cadets in Acton, half girls and half boys who attend a weekly parade at the Legion. The Cadet band meets weekly on Mondays at the Legion.

Along with a lot of fun, the program provides discipline, teaches self-reliance, survival skills and the opportunity to learn how to fly – all on an annual operating budget between \$5,000 and \$8,000 – most of that for a flight scholarship program and a program that enables Cadets to earn their pilot's licence.

Cadets offers 28 cadet summer training centres across Canada including music, leadership, aviation, physical education, survival training.

Acton Air Cadets have earned scholarships sponsored by the Air Cadet League to both Glider and Power Pilot courses which result in the Cadets earning their wings as licenced private and glider pilots.

All of the programming – on the parade square, during a familiarization flight, while teaching younger Cadets or participating in a sporting event – is done with a commitment

to the core values of loyalty, professionalism, mutual respect and integrity.

Acton Cadets show they are responsible and caring citizens with their on-going involvement in Poppy Day, the Remembrance Day Parade, Santa Claus Parade, Veteran's Day and Cadets Caring for Canada activities.

They also attend "Prop Wash" at CFB Borden's Blackdown Cadet Training Centre every Victoria Day weekend, numerous inter-squadron sporting competitions, gliding and power flying and an optional March Break trip.

Details of this year's March Break trip to the Canadian Ecology Centre will be on display when the Squadron wraps up its year on Sunday, June 18.

The public is invited to help the Royal Canadian Air Cadet Typhoon Squadron celebrate at its 22nd annual review on Sunday June 18, at 1:30 p.m. at the Acton arena/community centre.



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