

EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

Exercise your vote

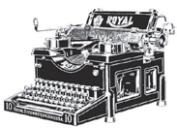
Like jury duty and paying taxes, voting in elections should be compulsory – a civic duty, not a civic right. The traditionally low turnouts at the polls – municipally, provincially and federally – indicate the current system is not working as it should in a democracy. In the 2006 municipal vote, less than 40 per cent of eligible voters in Halton Hills cast ballots.

People who see voting as a civic right, not a duty, may not vote, possibly allowing special interest groups to get into power. Thirty-two countries have some form of compulsory voting – 14 of them enforce it – and some have minimal fines for not voting.

With acclamations of the three Acton councillors and the mayor, there has not been a lot of interest in the election in Acton, although all of those acclaimed have worked during the campaign to ensure people cast their ballots for both public and Catholic school board trustees.

=[Those who do not vote should lose the right to comment, question or complain about political issues. The average taxpayer in Halton Hills paid Regional, Town and education taxes of just under \$1,000 per \$100,000 of assessment last year. They should want to have a say in who spends that money, and the way to do that is to vote on Monday between 10 and 8 p.m.

Looking Back



Ten years Ago

• The retirement of veteran Acton councillor Norm Elliott has resulted in a five-way race for the two local Acton seats on Halton Hills Council in the municipal election.

• Despite a promise from the federal transport minister, barrier gates will not be installed before Christmas at the Fourth Line level rail crossing where four people died in 10 months, because of design delays.

• The Acton branch of the Canadian Cancer Society joined the Wellington County Unit instead of aligning with Oakville or Burlington following a head office restructuring that saw the Georgetown office close.

Five Years Ago

• Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette said it would be “absolutely criminal” if Halton had to accept waste from Toronto which does not have its own landfill site.

• Acton business owners Al and Lois Fraser donated \$5,000 to the Acton skateboard project and challenge other business owners to get out their cheque books.

• Crews with heavy machinery placed a final layer of dirt on the former Beardmore Tannery property as rehabilitation work continued at the site, contaminated with by-products of the tannery operation that closed in the mid 1980s.



MUSIC & PRAYER:

Folk harpist, Eduard Klassen played his Christian based instrumental music at Knox Presbyterian Church on Sunday afternoon treating the congregation to interesting stories about his life since leaving his native Paraguay. Fifty people filled the pews to enjoy the freewill offering concert.

– Denise Paulsen photo

Looking for that downtown dining experience

About once a month or so the Dude and I send Little J to one of her grandparent’s homes and head out for date night with friends.

Being that I was the stay-at-home mom/housewife, I have the title of being social conveyor, which I took on whole hog. In the past, I’ve tried to keep dinners local and other outings fun. We’ve dined at almost every local establishment and we’ve bowled, gone to movies and there is talk of a historic train ride in the future.

A few weeks back, the Dude, Little J and I, after the Trunk Sale and area garage sales finished for the season, headed down to the Milton Farmers Market. I have always really enjoyed that market and I’m really looking forward to our market being like that one day. It was the perfect fall day. The weather was great, the Market was packed with vendors and consumers and our little family was having a great outing.

A week or so before that I was in Milton again getting my license plate sticker and parking meant Little J and I had to walk a bit. I had always liked their downtown, yet this time, instead of just driving through and admiring, we were able to also



By
Angela Tyler

check out some of the shopping. We had the same experience in Erin recently as well. That Saturday though, while walking around I really started looking at the stores and restaurants.

Their downtown is really nice. The stores are a variety of retail options and the restaurants are numerous and really catchy looking. I’ve always liked our downtown and shop as much as I can in-town, even though I have been accused of not promoting “shop local” enough by our economic development officer in the past. I often heard and agreed the reason our downtown doesn’t have as much is because we are too close to the big retail like malls and box stores. Yet, here is Milton with box stores and a mall and their downtown still has it all. Most impressive was that for the majority the store fronts were stores and not services or government offices.

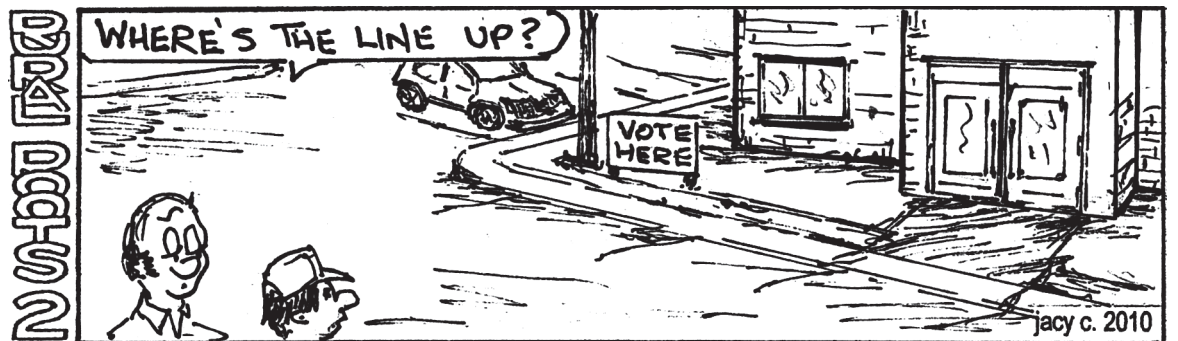
Last week the social conveyor scheduled date night for dinner in downtown Milton. I gave the gang two options. The down-

town was lit with Christmas lights in all the trees, and even on a miserable rainy night, the downtown looked welcoming.

We ended up going into a small restaurant that, well, just looked cool from the outside. Inside we were welcomed with amazing service, excellent food and it was a fair price. Overall, I think it was the service and the small restaurant atmosphere that made the evening.

Throughout dinner, it was hard not to talk about what our town is lacking and that is food options. Sure, we have fast foods, coffee shops and let’s not forget pizza establishments, but what we are really missing is a restaurant downtown that is more than fast food and more than a bar atmosphere. We need some place where we can re-create the Milton experience last week here in Acton. I’ve also heard this from many others, so there must be a demand, so what’s the issue?

I do think our downtown has improved greatly over the sad period it experienced about a decade ago. It’s clean, the stores we have are nice and the BIA does try, however, we’re missing some stuff. I think there is still room for improvement and hoping we do get it.



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