



COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Another sad footnote

In the latest turn surrounding the board-teacher dispute within the Catholic educational system, a Burlington man has opted to sue the two quarreling parties.

He wants approximately \$1,000 as compensation for the expenses he has incurred to hire a private math tutor for his son, now that teachers have withdrawn that service.

It's just the latest sad footnote in a battle that has lingered far too long, and mostly at the expense of students.

This week the two factions are scheduled to meet again, and hopefully significant progress will take place.

While we have no doubt the seemingly interminable dispute weighs heavily on both teachers and board members, the unfortunate fallout of it has a genuinely detrimental effect on parents, as well as students.

Students see the potential enrichment of their education taken away as extra-curricular activities and instruction disappear.

Parents feel an additional financial burden if their children require academic assistance that was formerly offered by instructors.

The board is probably in a position to wait out the teachers in that the core educational requirements are being fulfilled, so kids will graduate without too much if any compromise on that front.

However, relative to other boards where such disputes have been settled, taxpaying parents are being short-changed.



OUR READERS WRITE

Citizen stuck in home during storm urges town councillors to improve snow service

Dear Editor:

I am writing in reference to your recent article, 'Snow crews deserve thanks'.

I placed a call to operations manager Jim Finn's home on Sunday, Jan. 3 and was told by a female that he was not at home and that I was talking to the wrong person.

My question is how come Mr. Finn now has so much to say when he was the wrong person to be talking to about the snow removal performed this day when most of us were held hostage in our homes and obviously he was not?

I was needed for a family tragedy and

couldn't get out. I am not criticizing the workers as they did the best they could. I'm questioning the procedures set down by councillors and the roads department.

Everybody knew of the storm at least 24 to 48 hours in advance and our people were obviously not prepared and thus created dangerous situations for anybody living on side streets who may have needed emergency services.

There must be a solution and I urge our councillors and roads department to find it.

Greg Snow
Birch Avenue

Association criticism wasn't personal: Challinor

Dear Editor:

The purpose of my writing is to respond to information that appeared in a front-page article entitled 'Group credibility questioned, councillor, Kelly trade barbs', in the December 18 edition of The Champion.

In the article, local resident Paul Scherer is quoted by reporter Karen Smith as saying that my motivation in questioning the ability of the so-called Milton Ratepayers Association to fairly, accurately, objectively and honestly deal with municipal matters is "...a personal thing between John Challinor and Pat Kelly for whatever reason." Mr. Scherer's attempt to minimize my concerns by boiling them down to simple human conflict flies in the face of some harsh realities about the "association's" conduct, some aspects of which he admitted to Ms Smith when she wrote that "he believes some of Mr. Challinor's criticism is fair in that it's been a long time

since the organization held a formal meeting."

My motivation was simple. How could an "association" that purports to represent the interest of Milton taxpayers file a legal appeal with the Ontario Municipal Board without properly consulting its members — especially when those same members, like all Milton taxpayers, would have borne the potentially expensive brunt of that appeal because the Town of Milton would have been a party to it?

And, of more concern, how could this same "association" not properly survey its members for their views on the appropriateness of an appeal in light of the fact that they, as members, would be liable to pay all legal fees if the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) were to award costs?

In that regard, Mr. Kelly told Ms Smith he consulted a lawyer and was advised that such a situation would be unlikely as it's unprecedented. On December 22, 1998, I

consulted the OMB, which advised that the board has the authority to award costs and if Mr. Kelly or his unnamed lawyer believe doing so is unprecedented, they should read some recent OMB decisions in Carswell's and other legal journals.

For those few who are still active members on the three-year-old membership list trotted out by Mr. Kelly for Ms. Smith, don't worry about the "association's" frivolous appeal. It was set aside as part of a Ministerial Order on December 18 by Al Leach, Ontario minister of municipal affairs and housing.

Proceeds from the slot machines will be used to support charitable works in our community as well as pay for any additional policing costs, road maintenance, or any community fundraising shortfalls that accrue at the bingo hall because of slot machines. I fully intend to ensure that happens.

In closing, while the article did not cover all the questions I posed

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Pud

by Steve Nease

