



# OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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## Astute move by chair

Joyce Savoline is making an astute political move by pushing a Halton-wide vote for regional chair.

Until now, the regional chair has been basically appointed through a straw poll of two dozen regional councillors early in each council term. That meant that the position carried no popular mandate whatsoever.

It also meant that the regional chair served largely at the discretion of his or her council colleagues, since they could make or break the chair at the beginning of each term.

Now Ms Savoline is working on giving the job more cachet, but not primarily for the above-stated reason, although it is important that she become truly a peer with Halton's four popularly-elected mayors.

No, Ms Savoline's real motivation is likely to give the chair and regional government much added credibility to fend off the potential dismantling of regional government.

Milton-area MPP Ted Chudleigh, for example, has made no secret of the fact he would like to see regional government evaporate.

Ms Savoline wants no part of that, and does not want to be usurped by a GTA services board either, as could easily happen.

If she has a popular mandate, it will be much harder to dismiss her.

People don't like it if they vote someone into an office and then that office disappears through fiat of some distant body, say in Queen's Park.

Rob Kelly

## Nasty little virus has been terrorizing town

There are some seriously virulent little virus things out there lately. Actually, you're probably not supposed to say "virulent virus" because it's like saying "rosy rose." Whatever. Hope I don't get sued.

Many people, including me, have been stricken with a singularly persistent, obnoxious bug that cruises the bloodstream on a stolen, chopped Harley Davidson.

It stops at virus bars throughout the body, drinks too much, starts fights with other bugs, cleans a few clocks belonging to cowering antibodies hiding under tables, then rages on to rape, loot and pillage elsewhere.

This virus mutates, disguises itself, disappears, lays low, then comes back in a few weeks to rampage law-abiding body parts all over again.

I won't bore you with the details. Sore throat, blah, blah, turns into a bunch of other stuff. You know anyway, since if it hasn't happened to you it likely has to somebody you know.

I rarely go to the doctor or take medicine, clinging to the forlorn hope that riding out an illness actually makes you stronger in the long run since you develop some measure of immunity to it naturally.

But this thing was such a pain, especially when it stormed back after a three-week hiatus, that I went to a local physician on Tuesday.

Everyone is invariably nice when you visit a

doctor. The nurses are more than pleasant and the MD usually forthcoming and cheerful. The main problem I have with physicians is the waiting around thing.

When you see a doctor, usually about 90 per cent of the time involved with the visit is sitting in a waiting room (or waiting in a sitting room). Only about 10 per cent is getting to see the medic, and half of that is spent twiddling your thumbs in that little booth before the doc shows up from down the hall.

But this day wasn't bad at all, and they had a good golf magazine in the coffee table pile. It was a welcome diversion from Oprah Winfrey, who was holding court and everybody else in the room's attention thanks to her scintillating theme of 'Family Black Sheep People', which was replete with tearful confessions and lots of other time-wasting nonsense, more even than in this column.

Having attained the inner sanctum, and in thumb twiddling mode, I saw an ominous poster on the wall indicating that the office was an 'antibiotic free zone' or words to a generally similar effect. This meant that antibiotics, which don't work against viral afflictions anyway, were not going to be prescribed unless you were delirious and quoting from 'Moby Dick' or singing the theme from 'Gilligan's Island'.

You know ... basically frothing at the mouth



## OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

### Awards to Ruth-Ann and company are well-deserved

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest an article in the April 16 edition of The Canadian Champion.

My daughter Meaghan is one of Ruth-Ann Hill's dance students in the competitive company.

As a parent, I cannot say enough about the dedication that Ruth-Ann has shown to her students.

One of the very reasons she won those awards is because she demands excellence from her students.

The article concluded by saying that many others

also won awards. That is almost an understatement.

As a mother, I would express my thanks publicly to Ruth-Ann for all her hard work with all the girls. She demands much from them, but in doing so she pushes them to their potential.

As a mother, I like that.

Thank you for printing the article about Ruth-Ann. She deserves the recognition.

Maureen Boland  
MiltonRob  
Kelly

and raving in mindless, tuneless rhyme; "This is the tale of the castaways, They're here for a long long time, they have to make the best of things, it's an uphill climb" ... Is that last line right? I don't know but I feel a tremor of delirium coming on.

So. With nothing to do in the doctor's little examining room, you only have a few options. You can play with whatever junk is in the cubicle. You can grab your file from the little door shelf and read it, or you can weigh yourself, since everyone assumes that a doctor's scale must be right on.

I think it's rude to play with other people's stuff. So I leave whatever instruments are there alone. I always weigh myself as a benchmark against which to judge cheapo bathroom scales.

Oh, and I read the folders the doctors have written up about me, or at least I have done. Although I'm sure that's considered enormously

rude too. But what the hell. It's about you, right?

Actually, one time a doctor I know came striding in while I was reading the file and he looked kind of embarrassed. But what else is there to do? By this time patient patience is pretty well exhausted. And I'm sure he doesn't want me playing with his medical stuff.

So the doc comes in and basically tells me that there's nothing he can do because the virus will just have to run its course.

And boy do you want to know from sick? I've been sick eight times this year, says the medicine man, a pleasant relatively new fellow in town whose name is Brian, I think. I don't really know since he's sort of filling in for somebody else, if I'm keeping track right, and I'm probably not.

This guy seems to have a pretty responsible attitude, since he's not about to over-prescribe on any front, and seems genuinely concerned about bugs developing immunity to antibiotics.

But in a way you look for a return to the good old days, when they'd load you up with some prescription no matter what you had just in case their latest pharmaceutical concoction could knock the hell out your rogue micro-organism. Better living through chemistry, that was the ticket then. These days you have to tough it out, which actually might be a lot more like the good old days than some of us would care to remember.