



# COMMENT



## THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Box 248, 191 Main St. E.,  
Milton, Ont. L9T 4N9

(905) 878-2341

Editorial Fax: 878-4943

Advertising Fax: 876-2364

Classified: 875-3300

**Ian Oliver** *Publisher*

**Neil Oliver** *Associate Publisher*

**Bill Begin** *General Manager*

**Karen Smith** *Editor*

**Steve Crozier** *Circulation Manager*

**Teri Casas** *Office Manager*

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## Enough of this strike talk, please, teachers

Teachers — 700 of them in Oakville, Milton and Burlington — gave their union a strong mandate last week after voting an overwhelming 92 per cent in favour of a strike.

One hardy soul was even said to have driven all the way from Manitoulin Island to ensure his or her vote was counted.

If this keeps up, the knowledge kids will most likely associate with Labour Day is that somewhere, some teachers' union is going to talk strike.

An ostensible purpose of the recent strike vote is, ironically, to avert a strike. This makes perfect sense to those who also believe that arming people keeps crime down and stockpiling nuclear arsenals is a sure way to keep a cold war appropriately icy.

Contract negotiations between the school board and the teachers' union began yesterday, with work load and compensation being hot issues.

The bottom line is this: The Province wants teachers to take on seven classes over the year instead of six, and teachers don't want to. They also want a raise, which they haven't had for years.

Teachers provide a critical, under-appreciated service. In a real way, the nation's future is in their hands.

But, ideally, teaching is one of those professions that really should be entered into for the love of it — long hours, strife and all.

That's strife, not strike. With virtually everyone working more for the same money, public support will fade fast if the wrong word is chosen.

## Hopefully some day, vandals, you'll appreciate this town

There have been a few letters to the editor recently about the frustrating issue of vandalism and its connection with a lack of recreational activities available to youths locally.

I can agree that no, there's isn't a bowling alley, roller rink or even a movie theatre any more, but I don't buy for a minute that a shortage of such facilities is a significant factor in why some youths are causing such destruction and big headaches for many residents.

Earlier this month, we heard about a Woodward Avenue couple who have been victims of vandals at least four times this summer. On two occasions, the fence surrounding their home was broken, and boards were scattered around the street.

And John Street residents reported having their fence spray-painted and rocks being repeatedly thrown in their pool.

I'm unsure of the reasons behind youth vandalism, but I have a theory. It's a deadly combination of low self esteem and a general lack of respect.

As I once heard a wise older woman say, "Those who go out of their way to mar other people's property don't think very much of themselves."

And more often than not, I think, low self-esteem develops in the home.

Parenting, which is facing even more challenges today with the magnitude of violence and mayhem in the mass media, certainly isn't easy.

But I believe a functional, supportive family life is key to giving youths the ability to make responsible decisions, especially when peer pressure is involved.

Learning to have respect for others goes part and parcel with that.



## OUR READERS WRITE

### Thanks for a great first four years, Milton

Dear Editor:

On August 25, 1996, Amity Goodwill arrived in Milton at the corner of Ontario Street and Derry Road. Mayor Gordon Krantz cut the ribbon and officially welcomed us to town. For me it was like a homecoming as I had lived in Milton for 14 wonderful years.

Amity Goodwill is a charitable, non-profit, agency that provides job-training programs for people with disabilities and employment barriers. We collect saleable, surplus used clothing and household items to sell at bargain prices in our stores throughout Halton and Hamilton. Our stores not only provide affordable quality goods, but provide job-training sites for our clients as well. We also have a positive environmental impact by diverting tons of items otherwise destined for landfill sites. Students in Milton have also been recipients of Amity Goodwill Fund Bursaries for students with disabilities.

The warmth and acceptance, which we have received from the people of Milton and the surrounding communities, has been gratifying. We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship especially as the town of Milton experiences dramatic population growth.

From the management and staff of the Amity Goodwill store in Milton, a sincere thank you for your support during the past memorable four years.

A reminder that we rely on your

continued supply of donated clothing and household items. Before you empty your closet, garage or basement this fall please think about the positive impact your donation can have.

If you're a student conduct a clothing drive on our behalf. Perhaps your parish can conduct spring and fall clothing drives for us.

Please contact me personally about donation options and our tax receipt program.

Thank you again, Milton, for four great years. We look forward to many, many more.

**Barry Coe, vice-president  
Community relations and  
marketing**

**Goodwill - The Amity Group**



*From the  
editor's desk*

KAREN SMITH

Parents must encourage their kids to find constructive ways to spend their time and take an active role in seeing it through.

While recreational opportunities in Milton may not be as plentiful as in the city, there are ways for youths to occupy themselves.

There's a wide range of sports, a skate board park, Xcape Youth Drop-in Centre, dances at the

Milton Leisure Centre, community groups such as cadets and Kelso Conservation Area. And part-time work is available if the cost of such activities are beyond parents' financial means.

Or youths can make their own fun in their own homes, renting movies or playing video games.

Earlier I emphasized that only some youths are committing vandalism because I believe just a small minority are involved. Many youths are making valuable contributions to town. For instance, recently we heard about the wonderful students who spent part of their summer volunteering at Allendale.

But here's a message to the ones who are inclined to be destructive: One day if you have kids of your own, you will appreciate being able to raise them in a relatively safe, quiet town like Milton. So don't put a damper on the quality of life for others now.