



COMMENT

A leap in crime starts with these baby steps

A recent release issued by Halton Regional Police plays good cop/bad cop with regional crime statistics.

The bad cop notes the region's crime rate has increased for the first time in a decade, while the good cop adds Halton is still the country's safest community with a population of more than 100,000.

But there's an unwelcome trend developing. Though robbery, theft and break and enters are down, sex offences are up almost 20 per cent, or 85 occurrences throughout Halton. And offensive weapon charges have shot up by a whopping 61 per cent, to 134 occurrences across the region.

The overall increase amounts to a 1.5 per cent hike in the crime rate. It's not a crime wave, exactly, but troubling nonetheless.

It's easy to overlook these incremental increases as the cost of modern life, the cost of growth, or even, as some letters to the editor seem to posit, the cost of being young with nothing much to do.

But there's no justification for lowering the standard of living of residents.

A leap in crime begins with baby steps, like these. If Halton wants to stay the safest community of its size in Canada, criminal behaviour can't be tolerated.



OUR READERS WRITE

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone

Dear Editor:

I've been sitting here constructing a letter of thanks hoping to express our appreciation to many businesses, donors of prizes, and licence plates. But we've had so much help from so many people, I'm sure I would make a big mistake by leaving some people or businesses off the list. So please accept our thanks to everyone who has helped out.

However, we as a committee would be remiss if we didn't recognize the volunteers who have come out for the last seven years and given their time. Without their assistance, the day

wouldn't run as smoothly as it does.

I personally would like to congratulate the committee members for their tremendous involvement in organizing the tournament. It's a year of hard work and they're some of the finest people doing their best for the good of all of us.

Finally, may our thoughts go out to the families of the people that we all know who have not survived this disease, and be thankful that we as a group are able to try and assist in some small way those who have the disease now.

**Mike Boughton
and Golfing 4 Cancer Committee**

Come out and see what cadets are about

Dear Editor:

I'm an avid reader of The Canadian Champion and for the past few weeks I have noticed articles dealing with such headlines as "not much to do for our teens in Milton." There have also been articles about the vandalism with Milton teenagers as suspects.

Well, I have a solution to the problem and would like to share it with parents and teens alike. I'm a mother of four children between the ages of 12 and 18 years. Six years ago my eldest son came to me and wanted to join the army cadets. I had never been exposed to the cadet program and so had no idea what to expect. Well, he was adamant about joining so my husband and I went ahead and gave him permission.

It was one of the best decisions we ever made. He has now been in the army cadets for six years. He has learned discipline, leadership and physical fitness. He has also learned how to manage other teens.

He has been to a number of summer courses in Borden and Banff, Alberta. He has also been to Florida for an adventure canoe week. It all has been absolutely free for my son — paid for by the cadet program. In fact, they pay teens a training bonus for each week they're at these camps.

My son has just returned from the army cadet camp near Banff where he made close to \$3,200 for seven weeks of supervising other cadets on course while surviving on the mountains of Alberta and climbing glaciers.

Several years after my eldest son joined the cadet program, my second son also joined. He now has been a cadet for three years. This summer he was part of a team that went to Nijmegen, Holland for 10 days paid for by the cadet program. He even got a training bonus to go.

My husband also got involved with the cadet program about five years ago, just to help out. Now he is a reserve officer in the Canadian

Armed Forces, the organization that trains and provides the officers to run the program. He also went to Holland this summer as an escort officer with the cadet team. He finds working with the teens personally fulfilling and extremely rewarding.

My youngest son has just turned 12 years old (the minimum age to join cadets) and is waiting somewhat impatiently to join cadets when they start up this month.

My point here's simple. There are things for teenagers in Milton to do that are fun, rewarding and don't cost parents anything. As far as I'm concerned the cadet program is one of the best kept secrets. I'm glad my family discovered it.

If this sounds appealing to you or your teen, why not come out and see what it's all about. They meet every Monday night at 6:30 at Milton District High School starting September 11.

**Fran Cranley
Coxe Boulevard**



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by Steve Nease