



COMMENT

Hopefully this timely lesson will hit home

Georgetown's Chelsea Vaters learned an important lesson last week, but it's one that should be taken to heart by young cyclists everywhere.

The very same day the nine-year-old had her bicycle helmet fitted properly, she took a nasty spill and landed head-first. Although Chelsea did sustain facial injuries, the helmet no doubt prevented injuries that — as chilling as they are to consider — the nearby youngster may not have walked away from.

That's something to think about, especially over the next two months when warm weather and summer vacation will see youths pedaling their way to friends' homes, parks and other destinations.

Helmets shouldn't just be worn, but worn properly. Wearing them too far back on one's head is the equivalent of, to quote a Georgetown officer, wearing a seat-belt with two feet of slack. The same applies for skateboarders, particularly when visiting the skateboard park beside Memorial Arena. Adult riders should be safety conscious as well — if not for themselves, then for the message it sends to children.

More often than not safety lessons are only learned when fatalities or serious injuries occur. This time, let's take our cue from a situation where tragedy was — thankfully — averted.



OUR READERS WRITE

Article a bit misleading, suggest reader

Dear Editor:

The June 12 Champion contains an article by Paul Mitchison entitled 'Bill 45 hurts education, says Halton Public Board'. In this story private schools are portrayed as schools for the rich. I believe this ignores some basic realities.

Having put our children through private elementary and secondary schools on an average income, I can say from experience that they're owned and operated by mostly average people who have become extremely effective at money management in both their schools and in their personal finances. Thus, these schools are cost effective and a viable

alternative to public schools. Whereas the cost per student in the public system is \$7,000, private schools tend to operate at \$4,000 to \$5,000 cost per student, and graduates have no problem entering college or university.

If all education was done privately, and government was to do no more than set minimum academic standards, imagine the astronomical savings that could be available to put back into education. Private schools make a lot of sense, and some form of funding, such as tax credits, is the only fair thing to do.

**Bill Oostdyk
Campbellville**

Resident irked by Ms Reynolds' comments

Dear Editor:

Reporting on speeches to Milton seniors and the Chamber of Commerce, The Champion (June 5) quoted Jennifer Reynolds, Milton's director of community services, as follows: "People who live way out there won't know what the Mill Pond is. We need to reach out to them. Our motto is we're the best town and country and that's where we're headed."

This is a reply to Ms. Reynolds from a couple of country dwellers "way out there". The problem, we suggest, is not that the country doesn't understand the town but that the town doesn't understand the country.

Ms. Reynolds, we do know what the Mill Pond is and, yes, we do appreciate it. We also like downtown Milton, especially for the farmers' market on summer Saturdays, and the lovely garden at Town Hall inside the old jail walls.

Our question is the reverse, do "you people way in there" in urban

Milton really know and care about us "people way out here" and our rural environment? Yes, in a sense of course you do, because we country dwellers are just as much your professional responsibility as are Milton's urbanites.

But do you care enough about our rural environment to plan with intelligence and imagination for the growth, which you rightly say, is inevitable? Or is rural Milton just a patch of pretty countryside, mostly agricultural, criss-crossed with roads, which have to be constantly "improved" for speedy commuting? Is this what "progress" means?

Janet and I live about as far "way out there" to the southeast as one can get, on Lower Base Line. Our problems are indeed minor compared to those at the other end of Lower Base Line threatened by the CN intermodal terminal. But problems we do have, namely huge traffic volumes. It's not the temporary increase due to the construction of Hwy. 407 that we fear, but the

"improvements" which will make Lower Base Line, at Town and Regional expense, a permanent free alternative to the tolled Hwy. 407.

Lower Base Line is an attractive cross-country route. On fine summer weekends literally hundreds of cyclists pass our door. When expansion and development are completed in Milton and Oakville, and provided that the intermodal terminal can be fought off, Lower Base Line will be the only entirely rural, two-lane collector (i.e. non-arterial) road across Halton region south of 401.

Lower Base Line should be preserved as a scenic route for those who enjoy a quiet rural drive (on two wheels or four). That includes commuters who enjoy a change of pace now and again; let the rest take Hwy. 407. And of course local business traffic, principally agricultural, has to be accommodated.

How about it, Ms Reynolds!

**Roger Beck
Lower Base Line**



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