



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Tie one on for MADD

Do you know someone who drinks and then drives?

If so, why not make today the time to confront them about your concern for their safety and that of the innocent motorists they could encounter on their way home?

This past week, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Halton/Peel has been actively working to promote the elimination of people who drink and drive from our roads.

Members of MADD recently spent time at Halton GO stations to spread the word. Next month, the non-profit organization will hold its annual meeting — welcoming anyone interested in volunteering to attend.

With so many reasons to celebrate — including Thanksgiving, Halloween, Grey Cup weekend, Hannukah, Christmas, New Year's Eve and Super Bowl Sunday — fast approaching, MADD certainly has its work cut out for it.

In November the organization will launch its annual Red Ribbon fundraising campaign, inviting drivers to "tie one on" while helping spread the anti-drinking and driving message.

However, drinkers or not, we all have an important role to play in reducing the number of alcohol-related accidents on our roads.

While it's true the majority of today's motorists have adopted MADD's message long ago, it's up to the friends and family of those who still ignore common sense, and the law, to challenge this careless behaviour head on.

What bothers me is how it all went down — or up

Only in politics can you decide you're worth more than you're getting paid and do something about it.

This week, town councillors and the mayor awarded themselves significant raises.

With the arrival of the new year, Mayor Gord Krantz's pay will increase from \$41,385 to \$44,340 and councillor pay will go from \$13,905 to \$19,039.

Whether or not the raises are in order is a matter of how well and how much you feel your local politicians are working for you.

The population is growing and their pays are currently at the low end of comparable municipalities.

But how comparable are the municipalities used in determining what's appropriate? Some have populations more than double the size of Milton's.

Personally, I don't believe a pay hike is in order. Being a councillor is a part-time position and the pay was always intended to be more of an honourarium than a salary.

Council deserves some compensation for its work, but the purpose of council is to make decisions for the betterment of the community, not cash cheques.

With the added population, the workload could be increasing somewhat in Wards 1 and 4 where the population is growing. But the added workload couldn't possibly be relative to the 37 per cent increase in pay.

The mayor is the only full-time member of council and, hence, I think is more justified in receiving the raise. But that's not to say I agree with it.

What I take most issue with is the manner in which the raises were awarded.

COME ON
Y'ALL...
JOIN THE
PARADE!



OUR READERS WRITE

Halton's Muslim community has in fact taken many steps to curb discrimination, say reader

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to Richard Bramwell's letter to The Champion on September 17 entitled 'More proactive steps should be taken to curb risk of discrimination'.

It's obvious that Mr. Bramwell has turned a blind eye to the many open houses and peace events hosted by Muslims and non-Muslims from Halton and the GTA.

There was an open house at the

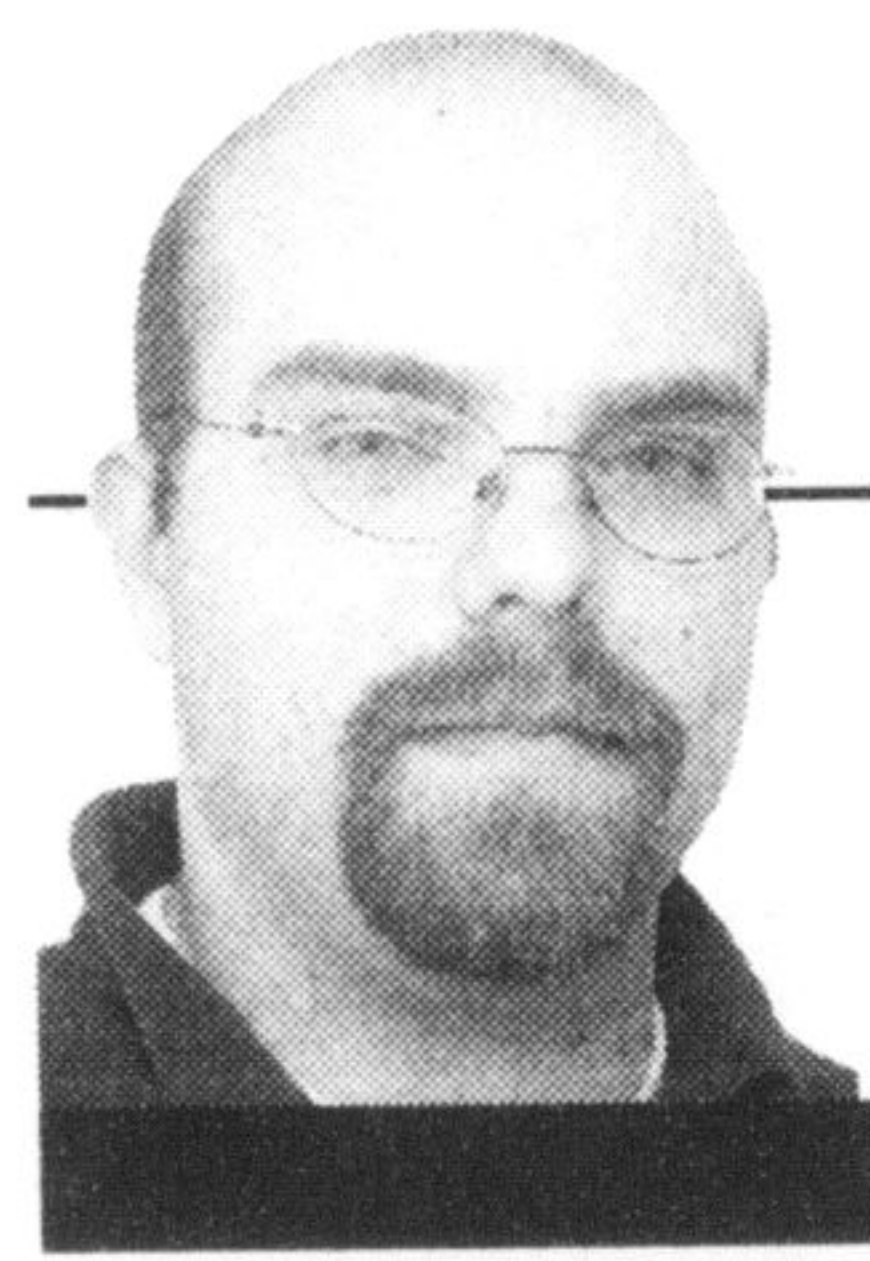
Halton Mosque on Fairview Street in Burlington as mentioned on the front page of the September 10 Champion. I also attended one of the many events that took place on September 11 — a peace event hosted by the United Church of Canada and the International Muslim Organization of Toronto.

I lived in the Middle East for two years and as far as your comment, yes the Palestinian Christians and Muslims would be freer and happi-

er if the brutal occupation they've been under for years would end. It's important for people around the world to open their eyes and become vocal. It's crucial for everyone to understand that ignorance was a major cause of September 11, not one's religion, and that any generalizations will only incriminate the innocent.

Sara Hasan-Alwahesh
Mariam Taha
Milton

Have your say with a letter to the editor. Fax us your letters to 878-4943, or e-mail them to miltomed@haltonsearch.com.



From my
perspective
with RICHARD VIVIAN

No council should be setting their own pay cheques.

However, this is more of a morality issue than a legality issue. Especially since there's nothing illegal about how it all went down.

I contend that every member of council knew what the pay was when they decided to run for election two years ago. That's the pay they signed

on for and that's the pay they should get.

If council was really worried about offering enough money to attract valuable candidates in the next election — as was argued by Councillor John Challinor — then the raise should come into effect starting with the next term of office.

By awarding the raise prior to the next term, we can all see what's most important — getting paid.

Last November, council also approved a policy for awarding themselves annual increases based, indirectly, on the rate of inflation.

This was a realistic and acceptable method — which will remain in place despite the recent raise.

But now here we are again, arguing what council's time is worth.

When will the lions stop feeding on the carcasses of taxpayers?