



COMMENT

Alert a year too late

Hughette Thomson is absolutely correct in her assessment that the provincial government's involvement in the West Nile virus has come a year too late.

Last year, Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal was quick to point to the seriousness of the disease and his department did its best to keep the public informed. However, the Province was strangely quiet.

Perhaps Queen's Park hoped this devastating illness would fade as quickly as the seasons. However, West Nile did (still does) have all the earmarks of a critical health issue. Thomson was at last weekend's press conference, which was held in Oakville and orchestrated by the Province. Her husband Vern was stricken with West Nile in August after being bitten by a mosquito.

He spent three months in Credit Valley Hospital fighting the debilitating effects of the illness. It took that amount of time before doctors could finally get the diagnosis from an overburdened lab in Winnipeg.

Thankfully, the Province is now recognizing what we have long known — that West Nile needs to be addressed quickly.

While only 42 cases in Halton were confirmed last year, and 18 were considered probable, Dr. Nosal estimates that between 2,000 and 4,000 area residents were infected. Not the kind of statistic we want.

In an effort to get a detailed picture of the spread of the virus in neighbouring Oakville — a hot zone for West Nile — a study by McMaster University with funding by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care is now underway.

But studies aside, we must all be extra careful this summer. Wear protective clothing when necessary, remove standing water and, above all, listen to the advice of our health department.



OUR READERS WRITE

Woman says thanks to hospital staff for great care they showed her hurt three-year-old son

Dear Editor:

Through your medium, please extend my thanks to the staff at the emergency room of Milton District Hospital who were on duty March 24.

The quick triage and quiet compassion of the nurses helped keep a frantic mother calm as they assessed the head wound of my three-year-old son.

I'd like to offer a special thanks to Dr. Tooming, who took the time to talk to a scared child and knew better than to ask mom to hold this child still as stitches were given.

Despite doctors' orders, Richard couldn't keep still for the required 24 hours.

But as he shows Nana his boobo, I'm extremely grateful for how fast and how efficient our hospital in Milton can provide care.

The \$4 parking fee didn't hurt at all compared to the level of treatment we received.

Once again, thanks very much to everyone who helped.

Cathy Imus
Milton

Milton's parking problems shouldn't be a surprise to anyone, says reader

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to Jason Misner's March 25 article entitled 'Town staff steps up efforts to deal with parking woes'.

The Champion reported that council and residents are raising concerns over parking problems in the new subdivision.

How can this be a surprise to anyone with an ounce of common sense?

Mr. Misner reports that Town staff suspect that residents are using their garages for storage or that they aren't big enough for their cars, that residents are storing trailers in them, and that on average, residents have more than two vehicles.

They suspect? What is this, on the job training for planning 101?

I suggest councillors put up a poster in the planning department notifying planning staff that we're mostly two-car families because

both parents have to work to pay for silly government initiatives that inevitably fail.

The planning department approved big houses on little lots with no place to park and now they seem to be realizing there's no place to park.

That's so ridiculous and suggests an incredible lack of recognizing reality on the part of council and staff.

About 1,500 new homes per year are being planned and parking is still not a priority. Planners think we should all take buses and live in high-density areas.

We don't want to. The buses don't go where we go and cost too much. Milton is a bedroom community and the planned residential growth will ensure we remain so for at least the next decade.

It would be nice if we could all live the fairy tale of public trans-

port, but it isn't and can't be done anywhere without great cost and continued inconvenience for everyone.

How many in the planning department or on council take the bus to work? I suspect zero.

Council told us they would handle growth better than anywhere else would and went on a hiring spree to bring in professionals to oversee this growth.

This has turned into a shambles and residents both new and old should be disgusted with the demonstrated abilities of council and their hired help to not even foresee such an obvious potential problem as parking.

Can't you just see their response — hire more parking police while raising our taxes to hire more staff.

Patrick Kelly
Milton



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

(905) 878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943

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Ian Oliver **Publisher**

Neil Oliver **Associate Publisher**

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by Steve Nease