



# COMMENT



## THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Circulation: 905-878-5947

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## Controlling SARS is up to all of us

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) is more than a scary acronym — it's a serious and potentially fatal illness.

Fortunately, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Halton Region Health Department have taken swift action to hopefully curtail the spread of this contagious disease.

While panic isn't warranted, it's important that the public follow the guidelines set down by medical officials.

One of the best things you can do to protect yourself is to wash your hands frequently.

If you develop the symptoms of SARS — a fever over 38 degrees Celsius, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing — medical attention should be sought immediately.

Keep yourself informed by watching the news on television and reading newspapers.

More information on SARS can be found on the Halton Region's Web site at [www.region.on.ca](http://www.region.on.ca). People can also call the Region at (905) 825-6060, ext. 7825.

SARS is a deadly disease, but it can be beaten if we isolate the illness and stop it from spreading. And for that we need to have an informed public.

## OUR READERS WRITE

### Article suggesting that nobody attended homeless shelter meeting was misleading: meeting attendee

Dear Editor:

I was surprised to read in a recent article in The Champion that nobody attended the meeting about the planned emergency shelter for Oakville.

Although my memory has suffered a little since I reached middle age, I have a distinct recollection of attending the meeting, asking a question about the proposed completion date and even chatting briefly with your reporter.

I was the only person there who was neither Halton Region staff, Salvation Army staff or a member of the media.

I attended as a representative of two local citizens' organizations concerned about homelessness and the availability of affordable housing, the Milton Affordable Housing Coalition and the Halton Town Hall Group.

It was surprising to me that no other Miltonians attended because although this first shelter is planned for Oakville, the guidelines developed for site selection and operation will apply to any shelter built in Milton in the future.

Given the current reluctance to fund affordable housing, particularly on the part of the current provin-

cial government, the need for emergency shelters will continue to grow.

If there's no change of government or change of heart by the Tories, the eventual building of an emergency shelter, here in Milton, is inevitable.

Your editorial, telling us not to be in denial about homelessness in Milton, was very timely.

Congratulations on your awareness and responsibility to our community, attendance-taking aside.

**Wendy Schau**  
**Randall Crescent**

Please e-mail all of your letters to editor to [miltomed@haltonsearch.com](mailto:miltomed@haltonsearch.com).

## We can all help preserve Milton's small-town feel

During my travels as a roving reporter, there's one comment I hear from almost every Miltonian I speak with.

"I hope Milton doesn't lose its small town feel."

It's not just the 'I-was-born-and-raised-here' crowd I hear this from. It's the young entrepreneurs who enjoy raising a family here. It's the police officers who say they like the way they can greet residents by name. And sure, it's the seniors who have spent a large chunk of their lives here.

It's people who know first hand that a small town of caring people is something to treasure — something never to take for granted. It's people like Clem Scholtz, who describes Milton as a "town of angels." Seven years ago, Mr. Scholtz's five-year-old daughter needed a bone marrow transplant. Milton demonstrated its support astoundingly by turning out for what became the biggest single family bone marrow clinic in

North America.

That's the Milton people love.

Unfortunately, people usually make the aforementioned comment with a doubtful, almost sorrowful tone of voice, as if they've already decided they might as well accept the inevitable.

It's important to realize that residents aren't saying they hope Milton will stay a small town. Development is inevitable — one glance at Thompson Road and Main Street confirms that. What people are saying is they hope Milton will keep its "small town feel."

And that's where you come in.

In my mind, retaining a 'small town feel' is something that depends on how residents react in the midst of growth. Are residents in historical downtown homes going to cut themselves off from those in newer areas? Are those in new areas going to ignore the stories of the "good old



### Around town

with STEPHANIE THIESSEN

days" told by long-time residents? Will there be a melding of new and old, or a split? It's up to Miltonians. Community spirit and goodwill are two qualities that characterize a small town. Who says they have to vapourize as soon as new residents come?

Why not turn talk into action next weekend. As most of you probably know, on April 12, a

fundraiser will be held for Milton resident Sarah Burt who was recently diagnosed with cancer. It will take place outside at 393 Main St. E. from 1 to 4 p.m. and will give residents a chance to make donations toward Ms Burt's medical costs as well as have some fun.

Wouldn't it be great if, just as Milton did in 1996 for Mr. Scholtz's daughter, the town pulled together and everyone showed up to lend its support? Wouldn't it be great to prove that seven years later, Milton is still the same town despite the population growth?

Keeping Milton a small town might be impossible, but retaining its small town feel isn't. Milton will change. But the heart of Milton — what makes it unique and set apart from other towns — doesn't have to.

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