



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Kids deserve better

They're calling it Holly's Law — a public campaign to change current legislation that puts child molesters back on the streets.

The call for a review of mandatory release laws follows the tragic slaying of 10-year-old Holly Jones in May. The death of the Toronto youngster shocked everyone across the province, but particularly Holly's neighbours who subsequently learned that 200 registered sex offenders live in their area.

Organizers of Holly's campaign say they have collected 420,000 signatures demanding sex offenders remain locked up until treatment has made it safe to reintegrate them into society. Holly's Law also calls for convicted child molesters to be subject to dangerous offender hearings.

One wonders just how many campaigns, laws and petitions must be circulated across Canada to protect our kids.

Just ask the parents of Christopher Stephenson, who was kidnapped and

murdered while shopping with his mom. In 1988, the 10-year-old was swiped from a shopping mall in Brampton by a man who can best be described as a monster. The perpetrator's record showed he should never have been allowed to return to society. But it took the death of a child to put the murderer back where he belonged.

His devastated parents were instrumental in the formation of Christopher's Law — a registry for sex offenders.

But it should sicken all of us that effective changes to legislation only seem to come about following the murder of a child — Christopher's Law and now Holly's Law. We don't want any more pieces of legislation named for slain children.

The federal government needs to step up now and review all legislation that refers to child molesters and other sexual predators. The Hollies and Christophers of our province need to be protected.



OUR READERS WRITE

Murray Townsend right about tattoos, says reader

Dear Editor:

Having spent several years in the Royal Canadian Navy, Murray Townsend's column in last Friday's Champion entitled 'To tattoo, or not to tattoo' caught my eye.

I agree with his suggestion that tattoos are stupid, moronic, dumb and ridiculous.

However, he seems to have missed the fact that they're also hypocritical, meaningless and sad.

One that I always viewed as hypocritical consisted of a skull impaled by a dagger with the words 'Death before dishonour'. Another meaningless offering depicted a sailing ship sinking and the words

'A sailor's last port'.

But the winner in the sad classification goes to the scars remaining after an attempt to remove a former girlfriend's name when Beulah changed her mind about a lifetime commitment to Jolly Jack Tar.

Ron Bezan
Harrison Road

Strawberry Fair a huge success: hospital auxiliary president

Dear Editor:

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped to make our annual Strawberry Fair — held June 21 — such a tremendous success.

Special thanks goes out to all the people and their families who came out and supported us, as well as to all the business merchants, service clubs, hospital

staff and auxiliary members who helped to make this day the success that it was.

I'd also like to thank and welcome all the newcomers to Milton who came out and supported this worthy cause.

Rose Barrow, president
Milton District Hospital Auxiliary

No senior should have to leave their hometown

Not so long ago the idea of me getting old was downright unthinkable.

Like many people in either their teens or twenties, I simply couldn't envision a time when I'd be retired and sitting in a rocking chair. Heck, for a while there I didn't even expect to hit the big 3-0.

Now more than three years past that mark, I've embraced the reality that I'm no longer a kid and that — barring any unforeseen circumstances — old-age will one day be upon me.

Growing old is never easy. Having recently become reacquainted with my Maritime-based grandparents, I'm starting to realize there's a multitude of challenges facing people in their golden years. Fortunately, some of those are minimized here in Milton.

Case in point is the hardship of having to leave one's hometown to move into seniors' housing. Still independent and going strong in their eight-

ies, my grandparents have so far avoided this transition. But as much as we all hate to admit it, the move is probably coming.

And unfortunately, seniors' facilities in nanny and poppa's little corner of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia are practically non-existent.

That's far from the case here.

Sure we don't have an unlimited supply of housing for the elderly, but Milton does have its fair share — especially if you factor in the soon-to-be-open Martindale Gardens, a non-profit assisted living facility overlooking the picturesque Mill Pond.

The 76-unit complex will go a long way toward allowing our seniors to stay in their community when some form of assisted housing becomes necessary.

Having to leave one's hometown is something no senior, in my opinion, should have to go through. It's nice to see that many others, like



with STEVE LeBLANC

Up
front

Martindale Gardens visionary Karl Reichert, feel the same way.

Another major problem facing seniors is that of fraud. As deplorable as it is, there are many people out there who regularly try to swindle seniors — realizing that these people are often easy targets for money-making scams.

But now Milton, and its neighbouring Halton municipalities, has a new soldier in the battle

against seniors abuse — newly-appointed elderly services support officer Gregg Davidson.

The creation of this position isn't going to wipe out the problem overnight — or probably ever, for that matter.

But having an area officer whose sole purpose is to snuff out seniors abuse, in all its nasty forms, may make many people think twice about taking advantage of our elderly. And knowing that someone with authority is in their proverbial corner will no doubt give many seniors a little extra peace of mind.

Being a senior can't be easy, no matter where you live. But it would seem that in Milton — thanks to these two good-news stories of Martindale Gardens' opening and Const. Davidson's assignment change — it's no more difficult than it needs to be.

So hey, if I've got to get old, it might as well be here.