



COMMENT

Crying wolf costlly

Policing is a tough enough job without the added burden of being led on wild goose chases.

Yet, in the last two months, too much of Halton police officers' time has been wasted on bogus allegations of an extremely serious nature.

Twice since September local teens in Burlington have reported that strangers attempted to abduct them — claims that turned out to be untrue.

In the latest case — involving a 14-year-old girl — three police officers were assigned to investigate the abduction allegation. During a second meeting with police, the teen confessed she had made the whole thing up.

Equally disturbing was the young complainant's suspect description, which happened to match a man seen in the area by others that day — adding the appearance of legitimacy to the bogus claim.

We shudder to think how many innocent lives might have been needlessly dragged through our justice system had this girl not recanted her story.

Whether these were childish pranks, adolescent attempts to gain attention or the actions of teens with serious problems, these stunts wasted precious emergency service resources.

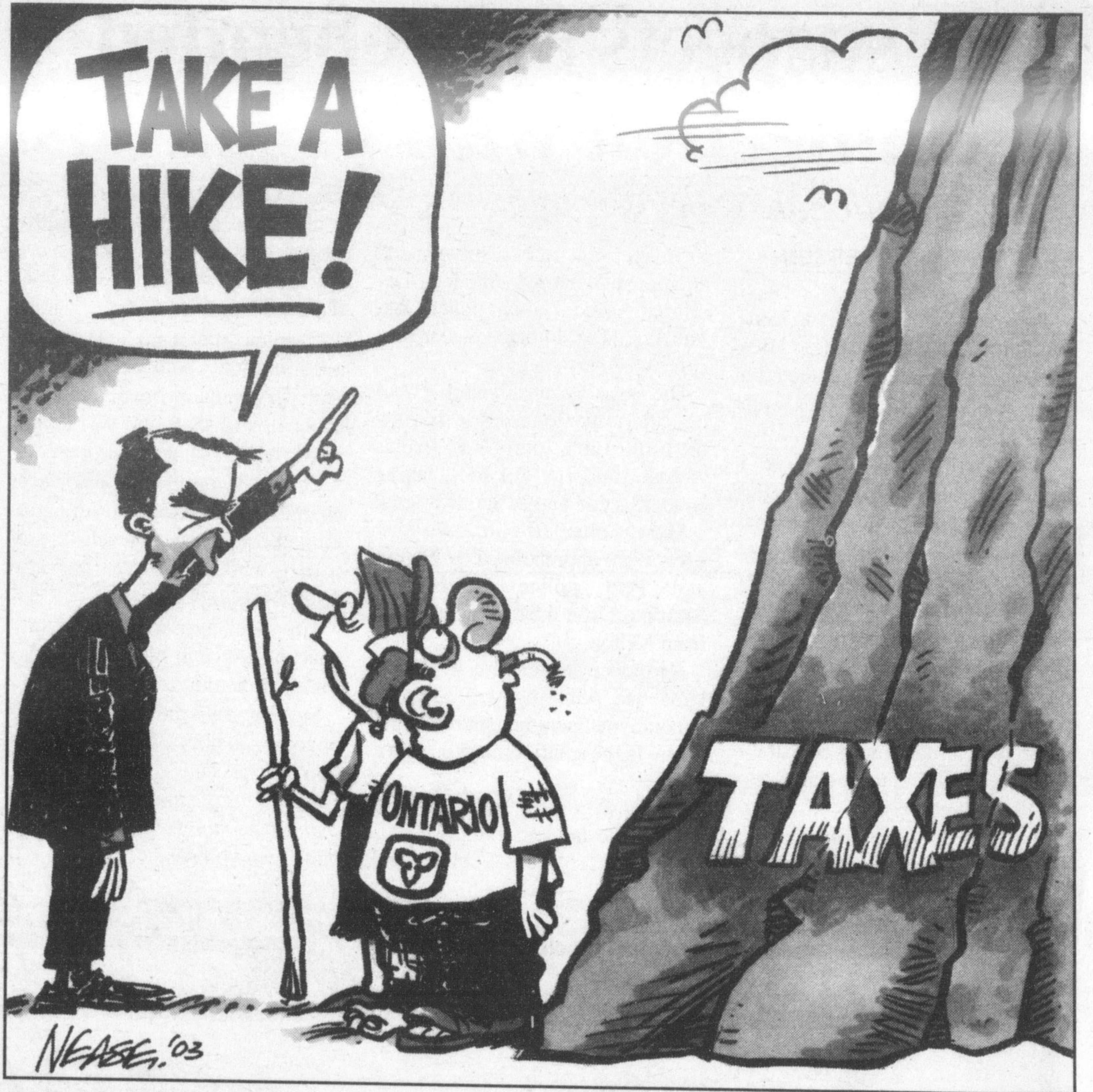
With a proposed double-digit increase to the budget of Halton's police force likely to receive close scrutiny, we believe such acts of public mischief should carry a price tag — perhaps literally.

While police are reluctant to charge teens — especially if they have never been in trouble before — taxpayers shouldn't have to foot the bill for such behaviour.

When you park your car where parking isn't allowed, you can expect a parking ticket. When carelessness or ignorance of fire code regulations leads to a blaze, fire departments can bill the cost of responding to the call to the at-fault party.

In cases of public mischief, parents or guardians of minors should be presented with a bill for the policing costs of investigating the false accusation.

Perhaps then citizens of any age might think twice before crying wolf.



OUR READERS WRITE

Thanks for everyone's support during municipal election, says council candidate

Dear Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the voters of Wards 2 and 4 in Milton for their support during my bid for town and regional councillor.

The swearing-in ceremony for the new councillors was set to take place last night, which makes this an appropriate time to thank all those wonderful Miltonians who voted for me.

I feel honoured that 2,688 voters found me a worthy choice. These same people are now looking to the new council to make the positive changes that both

Milton and Halton councils need to make.

I have offered my support to Town and Regional Councillor Ron Furik and would ask that all Miltonians — particularly those that voted for me — step up to the plate and volunteer for various committees and assist the new council in whatever ways possible to continue to make Milton a truly wonderful town in which to live.

Thank you.

Bill MacKinnon
Milton

Malboeuf says thank-you to everybody who supported him in municipal election

Dear Editor:

For all those who participated in this past municipal election, thank-you for showing an interest and caring about the future of our community.

To all those who supported me and voted for me, thank-you. Thank you for focusing on my past record as your councillor and the real issues facing our town and ignoring the dirty politics and personal attacks that were directed at me

during the campaign.

To the members of the new council, congratulations and good luck. You face some very difficult challenges ahead as you try to balance the needs and wants of the community with the fiscal realities of today.

Finally, I'd like to thank the people of Milton for having given me the opportunity to serve them over the past six years as a town and regional councillor.

Over the last six years there have been some frustrating and controversial times, but also some satisfying times.

I hope that through my efforts on council I've contributed to improving the quality of life for the people of Milton.

Maybe someday I'll have the opportunity to serve you once again.

Rick Malboeuf
Milton

Arthritis Society volunteers deserve thanks: Milton chair

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Milton Arthritis Society, I'd like to send out a special message of appreciation to the following people for their efforts in the Arthritis Society's September campaign.

Thanks to Marjorie Powys, Jim and Helen Powers,

Ellie Mulder, Barb Crowe, Derek Hodge, Virginia Mount, Cathy Romadenko, Lorne Greenwood and all the canvassers.

Thanks for all your help.

Audrea Lear-Costigan, chair
Milton Arthritis Society



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943

Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364

Classified: 905-875-3300

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The Canadian Champion, published every Tuesday and Friday at 191 Main St. E., Milton, Ont., L9T 4N9 (Box 248), is one of The Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd. group of suburban companies which includes: Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Barrie Advance, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Post, Burlington Shopping News, City Parent, City of York Guardian, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes, Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Review, Forever Young, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Halton Business Times, Huronia Business Times, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland/Penetang-uishene Mirror, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga Business Times, Mississauga News, Napanee Guide, Nassagaweya News, Newmarket/Aurora Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Oldtimers Hockey News, Orillia Today, Oshawa/Whitby/Clarington/Port Perry This Week, Peterborough This Week, Picton County Guide, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville/Uxbridge Tribune.

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by Steve Nease

