

Comment

The Canadian Champion

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Time to walk the walk

After running an election campaign with health care as the lead agenda item, now's the time for Prime Minister Paul Martin to "put up or shut up" and the PM appears at least to have taken the first step to putting up.

Martin announced recently he will meet with provincial premiers for a three-day health-care summit September 13 to 15. To his credit, the PM also announced the summit will be televised "so that it will be as transparent as possible."

We applaud this decision as Canadians will be able to see their leaders in action as they tackle this crucial issue. As Roy Romanow, the author of last year's report on health reform, said, politicians who attempt to block progress will be exposed.

Martin's goal is to devise a 10-year plan to rescue medicare and, undoubtedly, much of the talk at the summit will focus on the prime minister's offer of \$4 billion in extra federal money to the provinces in exchange for their help in implementing the National Waiting Times Reduction Strategy, among other

federal initiatives.

Ironically, Martin's summit announcement came on the heels of a warning by Ontario Medical Association president Dr. John Rapin that the number of new doctors coming to Ontario to practice medicine continues to fall.

Rapin fears the doctor shortage could cripple the economy and urges all levels of government to provide doctors with the necessary resources to meet patient demands.

Currently, there are 134 Ontario communities designated as underserved and in need of more family physicians, a situation that was exacerbated more than a decade ago when spaces to medical colleges were scaled back.

Whether it's long waiting periods, a shortage of funds, better accessibility to health providers, expanding home care, a doctor and nursing shortage or a national pharmacare program, there's no shortage of topics for the first ministers to discuss in September.

Let's hope, for all our sakes, they do more than just talk.

Our Readers Write

Dr. Dave's kindness will be sadly missed

Dear Editor:

I had been going to see Dr. Dave Dumencu for over 15 years and remember when Sue and him were dating, got engaged and had each of their three kids.

He was the best dentist that I ever went to and I told all my friends that I loved going to the dentist because

I got to see Dr. Dave. He was such a wonderful and pleasant man to be around and did such a good job.

The thing that I loved most about having him as my dentist was that he would never do anything unless he first told you what he was doing and how much, if at all, it was going to hurt.

I'm getting married in September and Dr. Dave was so happy for me. He gave me our very first wedding gift and I was so excited, happy and thankful for receiving it.

He will be sadly missed by my entire family.

Cheryl Baratto
Milton

Heart and Stroke's Big Bike event another big success

Dear Editor:

The Milton chapter of the Heart and Stroke Foundation is pleased to announce that the Big Bike Ride for Stroke held June 12 was a success, with more than \$5,600 to date being collected for life-saving research and public education.

The Big Bike for Stroke is an

event that emphasizes motivation and co-operation. Participants are asked to collect a minimum of \$50 in pledges and earn prizes based on enthusiasm and pledge totals. Five teams joined in the fun.

The Big Bike for Stroke is one of the foundation's most successful fundraisers, drawing the support of

more than 1,600 companies across the province. This year, the foundation is looking to raise more than \$3.9 million.

Thank you to all who made this such a great event.

Arlene Heidbuurt, area
co-ordinator
Heart and Stroke Foundation

Sooner the Derry Road widening comes the better

As residents desperately await the widening of Derry Road, driving in the area is more and more becoming a real challenge.

Just months ago it seemed the main problem in trying to cross or turn onto the road mostly occurred during rush hour, but now the road is crazily busy all the time — both weekdays and weekends, day and night.

It's mind-boggling to think that by 2016, the traffic volume is expected to reach a whopping 25,000 vehicles per day.

Right now we're seeing accident after accident there as time goes on.

I call it 'Derry Highway', as the high 80 km/h speed limit in the now residential area adds to the problem.

With the addition of new homes on Fourth Line, drivers heading northbound to Hwy. 401 or those looking to travel east or west on Derry

Road are that much more in abundance.

I've written about it before, predicting future problems such as these, as the road widening comes late in the development of the area.

And, as reported elsewhere in this newspaper, there are also concerns about the other end of the stretch — at the intersection of Derry Road and Santa Maria Boulevard/Commercial Street.

Town plans to install traffic lights at the busy intersection have been called off because the Region plans to do it next year as part of its Derry Road widening project.

Waiting for the Region to do it will save the Town, and taxpayers, \$200,000.

After some councillors expressed concern that action needs to be taken sooner as the intersection can be "treacherous," it was suggested that part of Derry Road be widened this year to speed up the traffic signal installation.



From the
editor's desk

with KAREN SMITH

Who knows if the Region will even do that, but regardless I can already hear residents east of Regional Road 25 piping up about the volume of traffic they're facing and claiming their area as a priority.

Preparations for the road widening to four lanes, which will occur from Bronte Street in the west to Fifth Line in the east, have already begun,

but the project is still a long way from completion.

When it's all done, traffic lights will have been installed at six different intersections and more street lights will have been added.

The road will be safer, but with the 25,000 vehicles travelling mostly east in the morning and west at night, imagine the congestion.

As I await the road work, I'm being extra careful and patient when I venture out onto Derry Road from Fourth Line as well as from Commercial Street, and I urge others to do the same.

Motorists must make sure they're not so much in a hurry or pre-occupied that they let their guard down even for a moment. And they can't let anyone behind them pressure them into entering the intersection before they're good and ready.

Another accident is waiting to happen.