

Comment

The Canadian Champion

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Fraser keeping tabs

Anyone who pays taxes in this country owes a debt of gratitude to Sheila Fraser. Canada's current auditor general released her annual report to Parliament last week. And, in what's beginning to sound like a familiar refrain, Fraser blasts our federal government for wasting tens of millions of our tax dollars.

Specifically, Fraser suggests that Health Canada is mismanaging the nation's drug plan. Her audit points out that hundreds of Canadians are receiving multiple prescription drugs from multiple doctors across the country. She said misuse like this could mean people are taking advantage of the system to fuel their drug addictions or re-selling prescription drugs on the street.

The audit notes Health Canada is unnecessarily increasing its expenditures by refusing to buy in bulk or purchasing generic drugs, which are considerably less expensive.

This is the third time Fraser's scorn has been cast at Health Canada.

"What does it take to get a department to act on such a serious issue?" she asks.

Taxpayers should be asking that, too. They should be asking why the federal

government has three times the money it needs in the Employment Insurance fund. They should be asking why a \$1 billion annual investment to improve First Nations education is not, as Fraser suggests, creating more First Nations graduates. And we should be demanding answers.

Fraser's scathing reports aren't new. The AG, who uncovered the \$250-million sponsorship scandal, has been revealing our government's wasteful, sometimes negligent, ways for years.

If she looks exasperated each time she appears on TV to discuss government mismanagement, it's probably because she is. Year after year, she reports of wasted dollars and, year after year, it seems our government does little to heed her warnings.

Fraser encourages ministers and high-level bureaucrats to take a more proactive approach to ensuring their ministries and departments are spending tax dollars properly. It's prudent for Fraser to call for these actions but, if recent history proves anything, her words are likely falling on deaf ears.

Our Readers Write

Increase in crime inevitable with Milton's growth

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest about the recent shooting in Milton.

With expansion comes new businesses, new roads, and most importantly, new families — including some attempting to move their children away from the crime areas of Brampton, Mississauga and Toronto.

Youths who were low-level gang members or want-to-be gang members in their old neighbourhoods get a fresh start here. With the small-town mentality of most kids in Milton, these low-level gang members will get elevated to a higher status in our town.

With new residents flooding into Milton — and new want-to-be gang

members walking our school halls — it was only a matter of time before old friends, acquaintances or enemies came to town to say hello.

Our quiet town is growing rapidly, and with it comes problems like increased congestion, increased taxes and, yes, increased crime.

T. Windmoller
Milton

Motorists really need to slow down on Woodward Ave.

Dear Editor:

This letter is to everyone who uses Woodward Avenue between Martin and Ontario streets as their shortcut across town.

Please respect the speed limit in this area. People have to slow down. If everyone continues to travel this stretch of road at the rate of speed that I witness on a regular basis, I'm afraid of what may happen.

This street is always busy with cyclists, early-morning and late-night joggers and people walking their children and dogs. One day someone may get hurt, or worse — and then, as normally happens, we'll look for a place to lay blame. Let's avoid having to look for that place. Just take your foot off the accelerator a bit.

Linda d'Entremont
Woodward Avenue

E-mail your letters to the editor to miltoned@haltonsearch.com.

Singleton display just the thing to beat holiday stress

Feeling that holiday stress yet?

December isn't even three days old and already I'm dreading those inevitable and highly annoying "So, are you ready for Christmas?" queries.

If I thought the question had anything to do with spending time with loved ones or celebrating the birth of my saviour I'd probably be more inclined to offer a good-natured response.

But who's kidding who? That's not the case at all.

Christmas is more about finding those perfect gifts and playing the perfect host. It's enough to make you downright edgy, especially when total strangers are asking you "Are you ready for Christmas?" every 10 minutes.

But like every year, I've vowed not to get too hung up on it all and just enjoy the season for what it's supposed to be.

And this year I've discovered a new weapon for my 'just relax and enjoy the holidays' arsenal.

While I'm not usually one to get excited about Christmas light displays, I have to admit I was pretty blown away recently when writing about the Singletons' 8565 Guelph Line exhibit for our sister publication, North Halton Life.

Situated just outside Campbellville, the display has become a holiday fixture around these parts, and simply has to be seen to be believed.

Requiring roughly 400 hours to prepare each year, the interactive exhibit includes just about everything about Christmas imaginable — from jolly old St. Nick and his ensemble cast to two separate nativity scenes.

Covering every square inch of their spacious front yard and featuring about a dozen different audio tracks, it's definitely worth the 10-minute



with STEVE LeBLANC

drive from downtown Milton.

Available for viewing every night, the Singleton homestead drew a whopping 250 people for this year's "Turning on the Lights" evening, and will no doubt attract hundreds more before the new year.

I've seen it twice already, and am pretty sure

I'll break down and make the trip out at least once more before Christmas.

It's one of those things that just makes you smile and forget about those pesky personal hassles you may be wrestling with at the time.

And for those with kids, seeing their excited little faces when the massive display is completely illuminated is priceless.

If you really want to feel warm and fuzzy about your trip to 8565 Guelph Line, the Singletons have a donation box — with proceeds going to children's programs at Halton Women's Place.

All in all it's a win-win situation.

Bit of advice though, you may want to swing by Tim Hortons for something warm first, because the display takes a good 20 to 30 minutes to see — more than enough time to get the chills this time of year.