

Comment

This isn't democracy

Politicians just don't seem to get it. It always amazes us that the very politicians we elect to uphold the democratic principles that form the basis of our various levels of government in Canada are frequently trying to thwart them.

This time around it's the Halton Catholic District School Board trustees.

Last Tuesday night, rather than discuss a notice of motion by Burlington Trustee Joanne Matters to write a letter endorsing the Catholic church's opposition to redefining marriage to include same-sex couples, the trustees met in a private 'caucus' meeting 90 minutes prior to the scheduled meeting.

At that meeting they agreed to send a letter of endorsement signed by the trustees, but not on school board letterhead.

Whether the meeting was illegal — as suggested by Burlington Trustee Bob Van de Vrande — we'll let others argue. All we know is that the 'caucus' meeting was wrong and the trustees should know better.

The Halton Catholic school trustees aren't members of a caucus. Caucus meetings are held by political parties in the

provincial and federal government levels to work out their strategies and discuss their differences in an effort to appear as a unified group against the other opposition parties.

Some critics would argue that the need to tow the party line is one of the serious faults with our provincial and federal parliamentary system of government.

But party politics does not — and should not — exist at the municipal level of government and there's no such thing as a 'caucus' meeting. Such meetings betray the trust we place on our trustees.

Our democratic system of government depends upon being open to the public.

Often democracy isn't pretty. At times it can be fractious and cause bitter feelings between participants, but at all times it must be open and honest.

Since the issue was discussed privately we have no idea what led our elected officials to arrive at their final decision — and that's our entire point. Back room private 'caucus' meetings like this one have no place in a democratic system dependent upon open government.



Our Readers Write

View on community soured by hit and run

Dear Editor:

Since I moved to Milton last May, I've jokingly referred to my new home as 'Pleasantville' because of how friendly the people in my neighbourhood and the town are.

However, my view of the town changed a little recently — with a loud thud. That thud came from someone smashing into my car.

On February 1 my car was rammed by someone driving down my street in a mini-van.

After inflicting \$2,500 damage to my car, the person promptly fled the scene, leaving large pieces of their own car behind.

Now I'm out \$500 for the deductible and had to make out an insurance claim, all because I decided to temporarily park my car on the street. What does this say about the level of honesty and accountability in this town? To whoever did this, I hope you're proud of yourself.

Vic Roger
Collis Court

E-mail all your letters to miltomed@haltontsearch.com.

Thanks to everyone who's come through with donations for Rose Cherry's Home

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the children of Rose Cherry's Home for Kids, I'd like to personally thank Joice Schofield and the staff at The Champion for generously printing our advertisement recently.

Without their support, we wouldn't have been able to inform the Milton community about the essential services that Rose Cherry's Home for Kids provides to chronically-ill children across Ontario.

I'd also like to thank the businesses that came forward to purchase the surrounding ad space, including KFC, Ruffins Pet Centre, Appliance Depot, First Professional Collision and Paint, Milton

Jaycees, 4U Emporium, Deidre and Friends Foundation, Voice Paralegal Services, Cores Pump Service and Well Drilling, The Champion, Milton Toyota, Gorrud's Auto Plus Group, Halton Power Equipment, John Cavan — Mortgage Intelligence, Brake Parts Canada Inc. and Johnston Petroleum.

These organizations have distinguished themselves as community leaders, making a difference in the lives of chronically-ill children and their families. We hope that the Milton community will continue to support these local businesses who care.

I also wish to extend a heartfelt

thank-you to members of the Milton community and surrounding areas. Your generous donations will help ensure that chronically-ill children are able to receive the specialized care they so desperately need.

We hope that you'll visit www.rosecherryshome.ca to see how your donations are helping make a difference.

On behalf of the children who use Rose Cherry's Home for Kids — or will in the future — you have my heartfelt thanks.

Kristin Horrell,
Resource development
manager
Rose Cherry's Home for Kids

Recent letter writer bang on about traffic lights problem

Dear Editor:

I'm in full agreement with D. Simpkins' recent letter about the outdated traffic lights in Milton.

I hope that the powers that be in this town have read

it and will take action. All I can add to the letter is 'welcome to the 21st century, Milton.'

V. Boyer
Milton

Pud

by Steve Nease



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