

# OPINION

## Attitude needs changing, now

If there's one lesson to be learned from this past Earth Day, it's that we have a long way to go in changing people's attitudes when it comes to disposing of trash.

This past weekend, under glorious conditions, residents of all ages did their part to help beautify our town by filling hundreds, if not thousands of bags of trash. The amount of garbage — which included everything from tires to office furniture — was mind-numbing. How can so many thoughtless people treat our community as a dumping ground?

Equally troubling was a warning this week from Gord Miller, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner, who said the Ontario government has failed miserably when it comes to waste reduction.

Despite election promises to divert 60 per cent of Greater Toronto Area garbage through the three Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) and composting, the Liberal government hasn't made a dent in the garbage piles and even worse, doesn't have a plan on how it can be done.

According to government statistics, Ontarians recycle and compost only 25 per cent of all their garbage. The rate rises slightly to 32 per cent if commercial waste is eliminated from the mix and only residential figures are used. That's still a long way from the 60 per cent target the Liberals set for 2008.

While improvements in recycling numbers have come from municipalities that have adopted green bin organics programs, there are currently no strong markets for finished compost.

According to Miller, that won't change unless the government establishes province-wide standards for what can be in compost and the techniques used to produce it.

While the province has indicated it is open to energy from waste incineration as a replacement for landfills, strict limits on what can be incinerated must be established so as not to undermine recycling efforts, said Miller.

Forcing businesses — from restaurants to the construction industry — to recycle must also be part of the plan. A survey of 260 businesses last year indicated 93 per cent did not comply with provincial recycling regulations.

The efforts of all who took time this past weekend to clean a river bed, a park, a school ground or a ditch should be commended. However, we would like to see less work for them on future Earth Days.



## Readers Write

E-mail your letters to [miltomed@haltonsearch.com](mailto:miltomed@haltonsearch.com).

### Chamber's Citizen of the Year award a wonderful surprise

**DEAR EDITOR:**

On March 31, we were honoured to be the recipients of Milton's Citizen of the Year award.

We would like to thank the Milton Chamber of Commerce for the incredible evening they arranged for all the nominees and winners at Granite Ridge

Golf Course, as well as all their family and friends.

A special thanks goes out to our nominator, for thinking of us and putting our names forward for consideration.

**DEL AND ROSE OXFORD MILTON**

## Upfront

### I guess not all victims of crime are actually victimized

Technically a victim, but not exactly victimized.

Your local sports scribe found himself in that rather unusual situation a little over five years ago — connected to a massive three-region debit card scam that'll finally make its way into the courtroom for sentencing today.

As one of more than 240 people in Halton alone whose card was double swiped at a local gas station by a long-gone employee, my discovery of this illegal activity came during a quick Easter weekend trip to the bank.

Strangely enough — and offering another reminder that real-life crooks aren't nearly as bright as their big-screen or TV counterparts — there was actually about \$2,500 more in my account than there should have been.

Rectifying what I can only assume was a simple botched withdrawal took all of a half-hour, including a call to the cops.

So when a call came in recently from Halton Regional Police's Kim Duncan seeking a victim impact statement, I was — sadly enough — unable to comply. I'd be the first one in line to aid law enforcement officers in any way possible, but considering myself a victim would, under these specific circumstances, really be stretching it.

Besides a very minor inconvenience, about the only impact this individual had on me was offering a momentary temptation to remove the aforementioned funds. But figuring the money simply wasn't mine to spend, I quickly discarded the idea.

If anything, he provided tangible evidence that — while perhaps not priceless — my honesty is worth more than a couple thou-

sand dollars. That's a comforting notion, to say the least.



Steve LeBlanc

So does this mean I'm hoping for a light sentence or have any sympathy for this guy, even given the fact that he turned himself in? Certainly not.

The fact is he and others involved in this scam bilked hundreds (maybe thousands) of people out of more than \$2 million while presenting themselves as legitimate employees at three different gas stations across the GTA.

I'd actually have had more respect for them if they'd just stolen my car. At least they wouldn't have been getting paid to do so.

This kind of theft represents an especially serious breach of trust, and is just downright sleazy. It should be punished accordingly.

The Canadian Champion  
Milton's Community Newspaper Since 1860

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Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943  
Advertising Fax: 905-878-3187  
Classified: 905-875-3300

Circulation: 905-878-5947  
[www.miltoncanadianchampion.com](http://www.miltoncanadianchampion.com)

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