

OPINION

Great role models

Despite recent stories detailing a bitter dispute between elected school trustees at the Halton Catholic District School Board, there has been much to celebrate in Halton's publicly-funded education systems recently.

Last week, the region's Catholic school board celebrated its 19th annual Sharing the Spirit Awards of Excellence, recognizing an exemplary student from each of the school board's elementary and secondary schools.

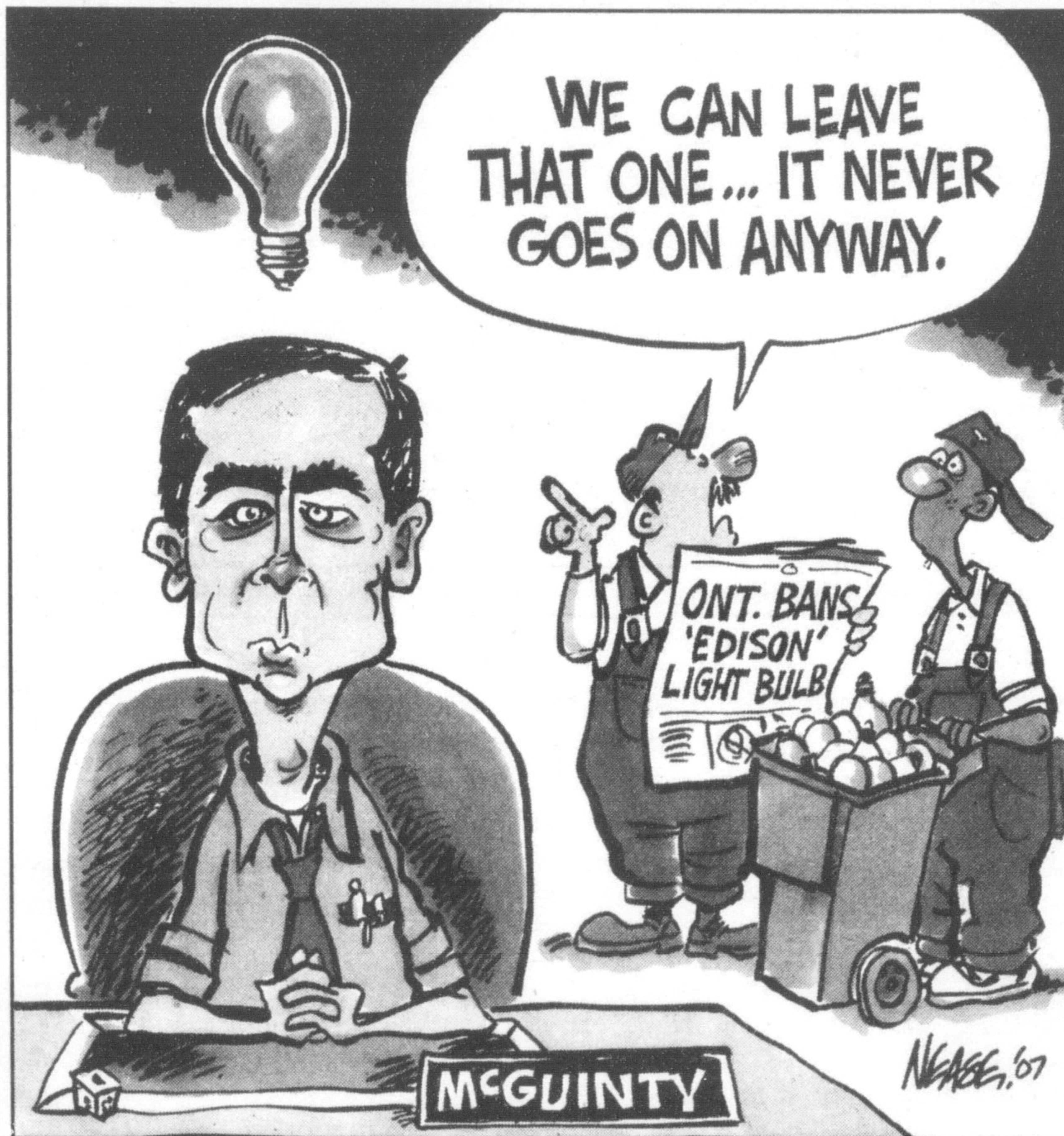
The nearly four dozen young people honoured were selected for having "demonstrated outstanding qualities in the following areas: Catholic leadership, family commitment, involvement in school affairs, involvement in

community activities and dedication to a difficult situation or task."

And this Thursday, the Halton District School Board will honour 93 exceptional students during its 23rd annual Celebration of Student Excellence evening.

Those being recognized have demonstrated excellence in at least two of the following areas: academic, vocational and athletic fields, self-improvement, community work, citizenship and student leadership, or specific criteria that reflects the school's unique priorities.

We salute these students for providing positive role models for their peers and all who come after to follow.



ReadersWrite

E-mail your letters to miltone@haltonsearch.com.

Support shown since fire has been just unbelievable

DEAR EDITOR:

On April 17, life as I knew it on Roseheath Drive changed forever.

I am the owner of the house that was destroyed by fire. Fortunately for me, it was only the house that ceased to exist — not my daughter or the love found in that house.

Unless one has been through something like this you can never truly understand the emotional roller coaster ride that follows. It's not something one gets through alone. I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few — okay hundreds — who have been there for myself and daughters these two weeks.

First, to Const. Doug Williamson, thanks for being there for a very scared 14-year-old girl. I can only imagine the fear my daughter was experiencing that day, and I am sure your presence helped to calm her. You were the first face I saw when I arrived, and I have seen nothing but a constant stream of kind faces since that moment.

To Fire Chief Larry Brassard, Barry Kory and all the men of the fire department who responded so quickly and managed to save the structure of my house, thank you, thank you, thank you. You put your lives on the line every day, going about your duties not ever getting to know the victims of fire.

To my family of friends on Roseheath Drive, Milton has grown, but my street still has that small-town feel. Your support for my daughter that day will never be forgotten, and although I'm not living

on Roseheath, your continued support is felt daily. I look forward to the day I can return.

To the staff and students of Milton District High School, your love and support for my daughters has not gone unnoticed and is greatly appreciated.

My co-workers and other members of Peel Regional Police have overwhelmed me with their generosity. Your financial support has allowed me to keep my head above water and to breathe. Thank you just does not seem to be enough.

Now, to my sister Laurie and friends — the 'wall' as we like to call it. A phone call was made and within minutes your strength was all around me. You have made the most difficult days of my life manageable. You have allowed me to cry and through the worst of it, we as a group have laughed. Most don't understand the uniqueness of our small group, but on that day it was seen by many.

To Jude, Sharon and Ty, thanks for opening your house to us. I know three more people and a dog can't be easy, but you have made us a part of your family and once again that generosity will never be forgotten.

To my daughters, Alex and Sami, I am so proud of the both of you and how you are managing through this little bump in the road. Just know we are a strong team and together we will get through this. Today is the first day of the rest of our lives.

**BETH KIS
ROSEHEATH DRIVE**

Soldiers' sacrifices must not be forgotten — ever

DEAR EDITOR:

This letter is in response to the Champion's April 13 front-page story entitled 'Wounded soldier son of Milton man'.

The reality of war was recently brought home to me as I worked on a presentation regarding the ethics of a Christian going to war. Coincidentally, the project coincided with the 90th anniversary of Vimy Ridge and the deaths of the eight men in Afghanistan.

After finishing the project, as a Christian, I continue to support the military and their work in Afghanistan.

I believe that Christians, in general, have hidden behind a pacifist message and tried to make many believe that war is never right.

After looking at both sides of the issue, I believe that God, while hating the violence associated with war, sanctions it in order to keep evil from spreading. In the Old Testament the Psalmist David wrote, "He teacheth my hands to war..." (Psalm 18:34). God has taught some people how to make war and they can use those talents to keep our world free.

I applaud those who have gone to fight for freedom and I am proud to tell people that I am from the same town as Brian McCallum. I applaud our prime minister for working to better supply Canada's military and I applaud those Canadians who continue to join the military, even though they know the risks associated with it.

I hope in another 90 years, all the men who have died and been wounded in Afghanistan will be remembered, just as Vimy Ridge has been forever memorialized.

I am proud to be Canadian.

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