

OPINION

Be water wise

Four weeks into the official start of summer, it's easy to become complacent about water safety.

Sunday marked the start of National Drowning Prevention Week, an effort by the Lifesaving Society to make Canadians aware that they can help prevent water fatalities.

With more than 400 drowning deaths recorded each year, drowning remains the third leading cause of accidental death among Canadians under 60 years of age, according to the society.

There are two really simple ways to ensure you and your loved ones make it home safely from all the fun activities summer offers — make sure there's a trained lifeguard at public swim areas and wear a life jacket.

In both cases statistics supporting these basic preventive measures tell a startling story.

According to the Canadian Red Cross and Lifesaving Society, 78 per cent of all recreational boating drownings in Canada in 1999 involved victims who were not wearing a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD).

The presence of a certified lifeguard greatly reduces the risk of drowning while swimming. Less than two per cent of all drownings in our country occur when there is lifeguard supervision.

In 2006, the Lifesaving Society reported more than 250,000 Canadians were trained in National Lifesaving Society programs. Anyone interested in adding to that statistic should visit www.lifesaving.ca.

News Item: David Onley named Ontario lieutenant-governor



ReadersWrite

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

Councillors' pay increases should not be approved for current term

DEAR EDITOR:

I just wanted to preface this letter with the opinion that I'm in favour of paying our politicians well for the work they do.

I have no qualms with the amount of the pay increase recently approved for Milton council.

I do, however, have a problem with the way it's done.

Councillors should not be able to vote themselves a pay increase. They do vote on all budget matters, but this current council should not benefit from this decision. When it comes to pay increases, we should have these decisions made effective the date the next council is elected.

There's an old saying that 'politics is perception', and it rings true here. What are the citizens of this town to think after hearing that taxes will be

going up this year and now — very quickly and quietly — a pay increase for the people around the table?

It doesn't look right.

Greg Nelson was the only one to vote against the increase. Seeing as it was his first time sitting around the council table, he said he had reservations about voting himself a pay raise on his first day on the job.

Pay increases are fine. Paying politicians of all levels what they are worth is something that we need. The debate grows at each level to seek out what we should be paying our elected officials.

My only problem is that when they vote to increase pay, it should be effective for the next council. I was a candidate for last November's election, as all the others who sit around the table were. When we

received our candidate information packages, the salaries were posted. If anyone had a problem with the amount they were going to be paid, they could have made a decision not to run.

Not that the salary is the only factor in a person putting his or her name forward for election, but it does make a difference. They ran on the fact that their salaries were going to be \$21,000 and it should remain at that level until the next election.

What the Town needs to do is work in some sort of a cost-of-living increase at pre-determined times, and it would take the issue of councillors voting themselves pay increases out of their hands and be much more palatable to the taxpayers.

MIKE CLUETT
MILTON

Walk of Fame induction ceremony truly memorable

DEAR EDITOR:

I was an inductee at Milton's Canada Day Walk of Fame celebration at the fairgrounds.

I'd like to tell the organizers that this was the highlight of my life, and that they did a fantastic job organizing the parade and recognizing each inductee.

There were a few good speeches and a few not-so-good speeches. I wasn't prepared,

although I should have been, to say thank you.

It was great to see a lot of my friends whom I haven't seen for a while, and to sit in such great company.

Milton has always been a great place to live, and Mayor Gord Krantz is a good person to be directing things.

HARRY BARNES
CAMPBELLVILLE

Colour blindness can be serious issue in sports

DEAR EDITOR:

Colour blindness is a deficiency that affects 7 per cent of males and 0.5 per cent of females.

Red-green colour blindness is the most common form. It can cause difficulties from differentiating between similar-looking colours or being unable to tell if a traffic light is actually red or green.

In the Internet age, one can quickly check for this condition at home using sites like <http://www.toledobend.com/colorblind/lshihara.html>.

In contact team sports, uniform colours can pose a risk to the participants if there is insufficient contrast for a colour-blind person to distinguish between their teammates and the opposition. Back lighting or a setting sun can intensify this problem.

People playing team sports make about two decisions a second. In my opinion, a child under 12 years old doesn't have the cognitive skills needed to process information this quickly. If a player cannot tell if someone coming toward them is their teammate, all of these mentioned factors increase the likelihood for collision and injury between players.

What is your minor sports organization doing to reduce this risk to its participants?

MIKE MILLER
HAYWARD CRESCENT

The Canadian Champion
Milton's Community Newspaper Since 1860

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Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364
Classified: 905-875-3300
Circulation: 905-878-5947
www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

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The Canadian Champion, published every
Tuesday and Friday, is a division
of Metroland Media Group Ltd. —
Group Publisher Ian Oliver

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