

OPINION

What's up, doc?

No more Band-Aid solutions. The Province needs a comprehensive plan to ensure Ontario residents have access to a family physician.

A lengthy investigation by Metroland West Media Group (see Part 2 inside today's *Champion*) reveals the Province is spending less money and allocating fewer resources on programs designed to find and keep family doctors here.

"Forecasting the current or future need for any health profession is very difficult," the Ministry of Health said in answer to questions posed by Metroland.

We politely suggest to the ministry that its answer simply isn't good enough.

The GTA — in particular Halton — is experiencing unprecedented growth. The

shortage of doctors and the serious issue of general practitioners not wanting to work in hospitals are among the many problems plaguing the health-care system.

Halton Region had the foresight to hire a full-time family physician co-ordinator. It is Angela Sugden Praysner's job to entice general practitioners to set up shop in Halton's four municipalities. Over the past five years, she has recruited 60 doctors. While that number sounds impressive, the area still requires 30 doctors.

Family doctors represent the glue that binds the fabric of communities. Without these dedicated men and women providing day-to-day patient care, our elected officials will no longer be able to brag about the quality of life here in Halton.



ReadersWrite

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

Parade issue an embarrassment

DEAR EDITOR:

The Milton Santa Claus Parade was very nice and well organized, and I want to thank the committee for their hard work.

I just have to say, though, that this whole hullabaloo about Garth Turner is completely ridiculous, not to mention embarrassing. I can't believe that Milton is front and centre in the major newspapers for, of all things, 'politicizing' our parade.

Of all the issues this town is

facing, we get noticed for banning politicians from a parade.

I can't believe that the committee felt it fine for several real estate agents to drive their cars in the parade, yet they didn't feel it was appropriate for our democratically-elected officials to show their support for the event and the community.

Apparently, they felt that it was more important for my children to see real estate agents than to be exposed to Canadian democracy. Not that I have anything against real estate agents,

but there were a lot of them.

While I appreciate all the effort that goes into organizing such an event, I have to just shake my head that this committee could be so narrow-minded and in so doing, embarrass our community so badly.

If you need to keep the parade short, perhaps you should've started with first-come, first-served instead of resorting to censorship.

**J. HEWITSON
BRONTE STREET**

Politicians should have been part of parade

DEAR EDITOR:

I can't help but wonder if this whole situation with the Milton Santa Claus Parade could have been avoided with a little common sense.

Did Garth Turner apply for and pay the fee for a spot in the parade?

If he did, then he should have been allowed to participate.

If he didn't pay the fee, then he shouldn't have been allowed in. Does it have to be more complicated than that?

I, for one, always enjoy seeing our duly-elected politicians participating in the parade, even if I didn't vote for them. It shows they have community spirit.

I can't help but wonder if Turner had single-handedly wiped out the GST, lowered the PST and income taxes — and had the government removed the gasoline tax — would his participation in the parade have been considered?

**M. DAVIAU
MILTON**

There's no place for politicians in Santa Claus parade

DEAR EDITOR:

Money talks, apparently.

According to the November 24 edition of the *Hamilton Spectator*, the reason Mayor Gord Krantz was allowed to participate in the Milton Santa Claus Parade was because of the

donation of nearly \$10,000 from the Milton Community Fund, as well as some barricades.

Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr said he thinks that youngsters are interested in knowing who the politicians are riding in the parade.

That is ludicrous.

If politicians wish to help, let them volunteer their time if they do not already do so, without notoriety. The Milton Santa Claus Parade is for children and their families.

**AGOSTINO GALIOTO
MILTON**

Housing project support terrific

DEAR EDITOR:

On behalf of Regenesis and the Milton Affordable Housing Coalition (MAHC), I would like to thank *Champion* reporter Melanie Hennessey for her excellent article on the affordable housing project planned for Ninth Line in Milton.

We believe that this innovative, environmentally-responsible project — which combines 100 supportive and geared-to-income rental units, with 50 Habitat for Humanity homes — is a wonderful way to begin to address the great need for affordable housing in this area.

I would also like to thank the many people who contacted Derk Maat, president of Regenesis, to volunteer to help with the project. Maat is very pleased to have had such a positive response. He has suggested that it might be helpful for people to also have a Milton contact, as MAHC is working with Regenesis to help make this excellent proposal a reality.

Anyone interested in helping out and who has not already called Derk, please contact me at either (905) 878-3216 or wendy@schauhaus.ca.

**WENDY SCHAU, CHAIR
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