

OPINION

Why the change?

Trustees' reversal on vaccination puzzling and tough to swallow

Does the accessibility of a vaccine that combats a sexually-transmitted disease make young women more sexually active?

What about when the same vaccine is no longer as accessible? Do its potential users automatically become role models for chastity?

In both circumstances we believe the answer is — of course not. That's why we're baffled by last week's decision by Halton Catholic school board trustees to discontinue Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination clinics on school property. By doing so, trustees effectively tossed a wrench into a Halton public health program that had seen a growing number of Grade 8 girls protected from HPV in Halton. Two strains of the HPV are responsible for about 70 per cent of cervical cancer cases.

Last week's narrow vote not to continue the vaccination clinics on Catholic school property next fall saw four trustees reverse their position from less than nine months ago. Last September, Burlington trustee Joanne Matters disputed the argument that the vaccine contravened Catholic teachings.

"I'm not sure a vaccine meant to prevent illness is a Catholic issue," she had said, adding, "At the end of the day this is the parents' decision."

Last week, her tune had changed dramatically.

"I believe this clearly sends a double message to our students. In the Catholic education system, we teach the lessons of the Catholic church, which are quite clear about sex before marriage, and on the other hand we offer a vaccine against a disease that can only be contracted through sexual activity."

The vaccine is administered by regional health department staff and only with the consent of parents. Schools — both public and Catholic — are simply being used as central sites to make accessibility easier for everyone involved.

We expect Matters was just as well-versed on Catholic teachings last November as she is today. So what changed her mind? Is it possible she didn't understand what the vaccine was for when she voted last November?

Milton trustee Rev. David Wilhelm is bang on when he suggests that trustee flip-flopping on this issue sends a message of indecision that isn't in the board's best interest.

Once upon a time the board had been satisfied to leave the vaccination decision up to parents. Why not now?



ReadersWrite

E-mail your letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Thanks to driver for his abrupt stop

DEAR EDITOR:

I would like to offer my appreciation and many, many thanks to a driver.

Not just any driver, but a great driver of a dump truck — at least I think it was a dump truck.

On May 12 around noon, my apricot-coloured puppy, Ellie, ran into traffic on Derry Road near Thompson

Road. This amazing driver, travelling eastbound, miraculously screeched to a halt just in time, leaving a mere three feet between the truck and my Ellie.

I don't know what I would have done. Ellie is my everything, and I cannot express enough thanks to you.

**APRYL FORMOSA
MILTON**

VantagePoint

Even with major growth, Milton still offers major appeal

Everyday, like clockwork, I tear across the Milton GO station platform to catch the bus that will take me to work.

I'm a rare breed.

My daily commute doesn't take me to Toronto, Brampton or even Oakville. Nor does it keep me within the bounds of Mississauga. Like a kid who wears her clothes backwards, I'm breaking the mould.

When most other 9 to 5ers are barely stirring, I'm heading out to Erindale GO Station to catch the GO bus to Milton. It's a 55-minute ride to the Milton GO Station. If I miss it, I have to wait an hour for the next one.

Once I reach the local terminus, I take a Milton Transit bus directly to the Champion's Industrial Drive office.

I looked it up and work is just about 30.22 km away from my home. As far as dis-

tances go, that's pretty far, but not unreasonable.

I've lived in Mississauga for five years and that's not about to change. Die-hard urbanite though I am, I still appreciate the many things Milton has to offer. I know my friends don't spot horses or witness the beauty of the Niagara Escarpment to and from work like I do.

I read that Milton's population grew by 71.4 per cent over a five-year period, according to Statistic Canada's 2006 Census. Perhaps city dwellers have got it all wrong, and Milton is the new mecca.

Granted, because of the development the commute can sometimes be a pain. The other day, construction on Thompson Road

slowed traffic to a halt. My nose was stuck in Richard Bach's Jonathan Livingston Seagull, and I found myself wishing for wings that would take me to new heights and record speeds.

Being that I'm an outsider, though, it's not as much of a threat to me as it is to some.

As evidenced by groups that are popping up on Facebook, many onlookers are locked in spirited debate about Milton's development.

A group called "Old Milton is Better Than New Milton" boasts more than 1,800 members, and one called "New Milton is better than Old Milton," was created in response. Though their views are polarized, the members all seem to share passion for

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