

# OPINION

## With gratitude

There's a certain peace of mind that we all enjoy, not just during the holidays but all 365 days of the year.

It's easily overlooked and frequently goes unnoticed, until a need arises.

Whether we're confronted by an intruder, trapped inside our overturned vehicle after a traffic accident, awakened in the dead of night by the high-pitched wailing of a smoke alarm, or suddenly fall seriously ill, there's a small army of people out there waiting to help us.

While most of us are blessed to spend some extended holiday time with those we love most, those who work in "emergency services" — firefighters, police officers, paramedics, nurses and doctors — have to be at the ready to help us cope with the worst life sends our way.

We simply can't imagine what our lives would be like absent these vital components of the community we call home. Emergency situations would escalate to pure chaos without them.

Our health care professionals, law enforcers and firefighters experience humanity in its time of greatest need and, sometimes, in its darkest moments.

We rely on these professionals to provide a calming influence during some of our most difficult, most trying times. What may be a stressful but (hopefully) short-lived experience for us, is but one call in one day out of one year for someone who has chosen emergency services as a career path.

In Halton, we're so very fortunate to live in one of the safest communities in Canada. (Maclean's magazine recently rated Halton the safest regional municipality in Canada.)

While we still do experience crime and our health care isn't always accessible to us as quickly as we would like it to be, we are actually better off than most.

Sometimes, during holiday moments of reflection, we need to step back and see all that we have compared to so many less fortunate regions of the world.

We should be grateful we live here and not somewhere where wars are raging, basic medicine is virtually non-existent and there's no 9-1-1 service to call when emergencies arise.

So, the next time you see one of Halton's behind-the-scenes heroes, thank them for all that they do to make your life just a little better.



### Letters welcome

*The Canadian Champion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters.*

*Letters must be signed with first and last name, and the address and the telephone number of the writer included for verification purposes.*

*Email your letters to [editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com) or send by mail to 555 Industrial Dr., Milton, Ont., L9T 5E1, or leave them at our office. Our office hours are Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.*

## UpFront

### Best of luck with your New Year's resolutions

It's New Year's resolution time, Milton.

For those who recall my previous shpels on the topic, don't worry. I've resisted the urge toward self-deprecating humour — or any kind for that matter.

Actually, I'm feeling fairly good — and rather serious — heading into the New Year's resolution period.

Why? Because if you consider the fact that self-improvement has a lot to do with a willingness to embrace change and step outside one's comfort zone, then this past year your local sports scribe laid a solid foundation for what could be a productive 2012.

Now these circumstances weren't anything monumental and weren't anything worth writ-

ing home about. But there were plenty of them — presenting themselves in my work, faith and personal life.

Without patting myself on the back too much, I really tried to meet these changes/challenges without the full-scale resistance I might have in the past. Whether it be tackling new skills here at the *Champion*, trying new dishes like sushi and octopus on a trip to the Dominican Republic or shedding a bit of my introvert ways through my church group or other social situations, Nike's 'Just Do It' could be considered my newfound mantra over the past 12



Steve LeBlanc

months. And for the most part, the results were quite favourable.

Now I've just got to take that mindset and apply it to other areas of my life in order to affect real and lasting change.

Yes, it's a bit intimidating to think about, given my often-glutinous demeanor.

But if the past year has taught me anything, it's that change isn't the frightening evil which must be avoided at all costs I'd once made it out to be.

Good luck with all your resolutions, Milton. And happy New Year!

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