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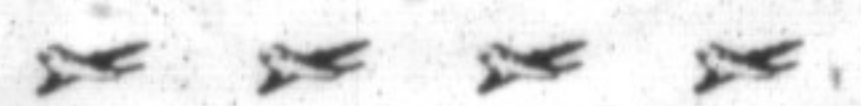
**Travel**  
with  
*Bruce Hood*

**TIME TO GO TO FLORIDA — BASEBALL SEASON COMING**

Yes, the BLUE JAYS are back, or will be with their first game at DUNEDIN March 2nd. Wow, thinking baseball in this weather, well the temperature this week in Florida was around 23 celsius, hmmm, and we know it will be warmer in the next few weeks — not a bad thought! We don't know how the team will be this year but thoughts of that green grass and those warm breezes combined with the sound of the crack of the ball on the bat ...



You can call (813) 733-9302 in Dunedin to get information about the Jays schedule. (813) 733-0429 for reservations — top price \$9 per seat, plus service charge, with games taking place all during the month of March. Or you call them in Toronto at (416) 341-1000. The way the local teams, i.e. Leafs in hockey are playing, it makes the Florida scene even more inviting!



There are some 20 teams in spring training in Florida so you have a real choice. Montreal Expos are in West Palm Beach and the rest are spread across the state and from top to bottom. We have the schedules and contacts for all the teams, so call us or this newspaper for info. If you can use it. Jays play Baltimore on March 7th at Dunedin Stadium — likely a hot ticket! There are good packages to Florida which is still one of the most popular winter get-away spots. See your local travel professional for assistance, and if you are driving south, be sure to see them for your OUT OF PROVINCE INSURANCE COVERAGE!



How about MYRTLE BEACH, South Carolina — they celebrate their 35th annual Can Am Festival March 9th through 17th. Beach games, musical productions, sporting events, family participation 's front and centre including a parade to entertain. Call 1-800-356-3016 for info.



The war is on between two air carriers more than ever these days — with the latest salvo being the advent of CANADIAN AIRLINES SHUTTLE aimed at the business traveller. Initially you, the traveller will benefit — but in the long run, we wonder! The U.S. carriers have inched their flight costs up by a few dollars for spring time travel so what's in store for us? Watch for the AIR CANADA — CANADIAN battle to heat up even more and get down and dirty!

*The way to go!*  
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# Guide dog school saved from Halton taxes

By BRAD REAUME  
The Champion

Despite an 11-year oversight, a guide dog school in Oakville that was finally collared by provincial assessors will escape a portion of its property taxes.

Recently regional council decided to waive Halton's portion of the school's annual property tax bill, despite a recommendation at the committee level not to support the exemption. The Town of Oakville had already approved an exemption for the school.

Citing unusual circumstances, Oakville Mayor Anne Mulvale carried her appeal to council after failing to generate support from members of the administration and finance committee last week.

Several councillors stood firm, however, unwilling to set a precedent of waiving property taxes, no matter how worthwhile the organization.

But council waived the region's portion of the school's tax bill and supported a move to create a permanent exemption through private legislation

at the provincial level. Several other organizations in Halton have permanent exemptions through legislation.

The Lion's Foundation, a registered charity, has been operating a school in Oakville for 11 years providing guide dogs to serve those with sight, hearing or mobility impairments. They produce about 50 dogs per year, 503 since the program began. Dogs are given to people from across Canada. Each dog takes 18 months to train.

They operate out of an old school with an annual budget of \$2.3 million, which comes from corporate sponsors and private donations. The property tax issue arose when they recently applied for a building permit to expand, and were told development fees would be due.

An attempt at Oakville council to have the group exempted from development charges because they

also did not pay property taxes backfired, when it was discovered the school should not have been freed from property taxes. They have been subsequently added to the tax rolls. The school's new annual bill for property taxes is \$23,370, of which \$3,069 is the regional portion.

"The site has always been a school, there have never been property taxes paid on it," said Mayor Mulvale to the committee. "This facility is life-changing. It's amazing."

Burlington Councillor Ralph Scholtens said he sympathized with the Lions Foundation and Mayor Mulvale, but couldn't understand why recipients of the guide dogs pay nothing for the service.

Councillors heard the public school board, which receives the largest portion of property taxes, did not support an exemption.

"Dollars being eroded from the tax base is an issue for all governments," warned Burlington Councillor Jack Dennison at committee. "Permanent exemption shouldn't be granted to anyone. That would just be compounding errors that have been going on for 10 years."



Anne Mulvale

# Valentine's

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**HALTON HEALTHY LIFESTYLES COALITION**  
*Presents*

**THE HEALTHY CHOICES RESTAURANT PROGRAM**

These restaurants/cafe/terias offer meals low in fat and salt in a smoke-free environment or offer healthy choices upon request.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternatives</li> <li>Bronto Bagel Cafe</li> <li>Chaps - Dorval</li> <li>The Espresso Bar</li> <li>Colletts Cafe</li> <li>McGinnis Landing</li> <li>Holiday Inn</li> <li>McDonalds</li> <li>Paradiso</li> <li>The Pearl Street Cafe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burlington Racquet Club</li> <li>Chaps - Bronte</li> <li>Cedar Springs Athletic Club</li> <li>Georgeview Restaurant</li> <li>The Harrop House - Milton</li> <li>Halton Regional Centre</li> <li>Halton Hills Civic Centre</li> <li>Murray Lloyd's Chaps</li> <li>The Original Chaps - Fairview</li> <li>Sisterly Love Tea Room</li> </ul>
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**DO YOURSELF A FAVOUR THIS VALENTINE'S DAY...DINE IN ONE OF THESE PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS!!!**

If you would like more information about this program, please call 825-6060, ext. 7802