

# Opinion

## Is hiking fine for distracted driving going to be enough?

In Ontario, the fine facing motorists caught driving while distracted has increased from \$155 to \$280. The new fine came into effect Tuesday.

While the intent of hiking the fine may be to deter motorists from texting or making non-hands-free phone calls while behind the wheel, we question whether ultimately it's enough to change this disturbing trend fuelled by mobile technology making its way into the hands of more motorists.

According to the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) — which conducted a week-long blitz against distracted driving earlier this month — in 2013 distracted driving fatalities surpassed both impaired and speed-related fatalities investigated by the provincial law enforcement agency.

The numbers are staggering — 78 people killed in distracted driving-related collisions on OPP-patrolled roads last year versus 57 impaired driving deaths and 44 speed-related deaths.

Add to these figures the victims' families and friends, as well as the police officers and other emergency services personnel who attend the scenes of traffic fatalities and the human impact of distracted driving is overwhelming.

"When you consider the overall impact of these 78 fatalities last year and the 325 other distracted driving victims who have died since 2010, the number of people these irresponsible drivers have had a profound and devastating impact on is in the thousands," said OPP Deputy Commissioner Brad Blair.

While public awareness campaigns like this month's by the OPP will undoubtedly get more people talking about distracted driving, we fear those willing to risk a \$155 fine won't be dramatically deterred by the jump to \$280.

Considering the number of lives being lost on Ontario roadways due to the selfishness of a few, perhaps it's time the punishment fit the crime and its potential to kill the innocent.

Introducing demerit points, licence suspensions — even the threat of incarceration — may be the only way to grab the attention of those who refuse to keep their eyes — and mind — on the road.



### Heritage Matters

Ebenezer United Church, 12274 Guelph Line (north of No. 20 Sideroad), was built in 1846. Previously, travelling Methodist preachers held services at the home of W. Trudgeon and later in a log building that also served as a school house. Trudgeon deeded land for the frame church, which stood until replaced in 1915 with the current brick structure (inset). The church's name means 'Stone of Help'. The church was integral in the community. — Submitted by Heritage Milton and Nasagiweya Historical Society

## Editor's Desk

### It's time to cast your ballot in insidehalton.com photo contest

People love contests.

That's evident by the response we get every time we put one on.

I'm also aware of how popular contests are because I have judged a number of them in my day.

However, in the *Champion's* latest contest, we're asking you to be the judge.

You may have heard of the insidehalton.com photo contest launched in late February that invited residents to enter their best photo showing a resemblance between them and their pet. The entry period is over and now it's time to vote.



**Karen Miceli**  
Managing Editor

As indicated in a story on page 8 in this edition of *the Champion*, voting in the 'I Look Like My Pet' Photo Contest — sponsored by Metroland Media's *Burlington Post*, *Oakville Beaver* and *Champion* — got underway this morning.

I'm sure you can imagine the potential for fun and creativity based on the theme of this contest. So cast your ballot by going to insidehalton.com and clicking on the contest voting button and following the instructions. Only one vote per IP address is permitted.

Three winners will be selected by online voting. The top three entrants, whose photos garner the most online votes, will be declared the first, second and third-place winners.

Thanks to all who participated.

*Karen Miceli can be reached at kmiceli@miltoncanadianchampion.com or on Twitter @ChampionEditor.*

## the Canadian Champion

555 Industrial Drive, Milton, Ont. L9T 5E1

**905-878-2341**

Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364

Classified: 905-875-3300

Circulation: 905-878-5947

www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

V.P. — Group Publisher  
**Neil Oliver**

Regional General Manager  
**David Harvey**

Director of Advertising  
**Katy Letourneau**

Editor in Chief  
**Jill Davis, Halton Region**

Managing Editor  
**Karen Miceli**

Production Manager  
**Manuel Garcia**

Circulation Director  
**Charlene Hall**

Office Manager  
**Sandy Pare**

The Canadian Champion, published every Thursday, is a division of Metroland Media Group Ltd.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with a reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. The publisher reserves the right to categorize advertisements or decline.

**CCAB** CCAB Audited

**OPC** Ontario Press Council  
Defending principles to inspire public trust

Recognized for excellence by

**OCNA** Ontario Community Newspapers Association

**CNA** Canadian Community Newspapers Association

**SNMA** Suburban Newspapers of America

The Canadian Champion is a proud media sponsor for:

