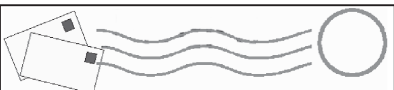


Letters



Frustrating time trying to renew passports

Dear editor
Were you born in Quebec?
 I have just had a very frustrating day and I need to vent and share some information. I want to renew my husband's and my passports before they expire in April. I'm sure since September 11th; it will probably take longer than before, so off I went to the post office for the forms. To my surprise, I find that my birth certificate from Quebec is no longer accepted! (FYI - If you were born in Quebec, only birth certificates issued on or after January 1, 1994, by Le Directeur de l'état civil in the province of Quebec are accepted for passports.)

dents, which I am not, and passport (I'm glad mine hasn't expired yet!), Canadian certificate of citizenship and "a driver's licence recognized in Quebec." That's good because this has my home address and my photo but is my Ontario licence "recognized in Quebec?"

I called the toll-free number on the form and it only works inside Quebec. I called the Quebec city number and, after doing the "push 1 for..." thing for forever, I push "0" for a human and was told the line was busy and please call back, click. Aaaaaaaa! I know....I'll call Julian Reed's office.

They were very polite and helpful until I said "driver's licence." They did not know if my Ontario driver's licence was recognized in Quebec because that is a provincial matter; call Ted Chudleigh's office. So, I called and they were very polite until I said "passport." Aaaaaaaa! After a deep cleansing breath, I mailed off a copy of my ageing passport, my no-longer-accepted birth certificate and my Ontario driver's licence, which may or may not be accepted.

Am I ever glad I don't need to leave the country anytime soon!

*Julia Roehrig,
Acton*

The form did not tell me what to do so I called the toll-free number. Three hours later, I got through to a human and he gave me the web site address to get the form I needed to get a new birth certificate.

(FYI www.etatcivil.gouv.qc.ca)
 Why isn't that information right on the passport instructions? Your birth certificate is no longer accepted and this is what you do about it.

To get my valid birth certificate, I need two documents, one with a photo and one with my home or work address. The list includes lots of documentation for Quebec resi-

51 families helped

Dear editor,
 Halton Hills Community Support and Information would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all those who helped to make the holiday season special this past year for 51 families in our community.

nesses and individuals assisted with our program by providing hampers for families. They purchased clothing and toys and put the hampers together for families. We are very grateful for their continued support of this program.

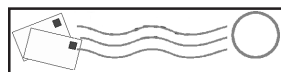
Last year was a difficult one for many families and we had an increase in the number of families that applied to our program. We are pleased that the community responded to the increased demand in a very generous way. We are so fortunate to live in a community where people care for one another and are willing to share their resources in order to help others.

Sincerely,
*Cathy Gerrow, Community Support Coordinator
 Halton Hills Community Support and Information.*

During November and December, members of the Halton Hills community generously donated many items to our Christmas Needs Programs, including toys, clothing, knitting and money. Many local businesses and individuals made generous financial donations to our program. These donations are used to purchase items of clothing for financially limited families.

Thank you so much to everyone who took the time to make a donation.

Many groups, churches, busi-



More letters on Page 6

Courtesy and caution...

continued from page 4

Motorists and cyclists are also confused about pedestrian crossings. The 30-metre safety zone on either side of the cross-over is a no-passing zone, sometimes ignored. Yet it's illegal to pass, even if there are no pedestrians, in the crossing.

Cyclists should know it's illegal to ride across at a crossover. They must walk their bicycle across.

Despite the confusion about the law there have been no serious injuries here, unlike places like Toronto where on crosswalk was dubbed "slaughter house corner" after two people were killed.

Obviously anyone using a crosswalk, both pedestrians and motorists, should observe the utmost caution - and courtesy. Once people are off the curb and that flashing light is going, motorists must come to a stop, or risk being charged.

Caution and courtesy are the two things that make crosswalks safe and usable.



HOCKEY HERITAGE: After watching his son play hockey at Acton arena on Saturday morning, Bryan Poirier was drawn to a poster sized picture of the 1930-31 Acton intermediate men's hockey team on display in the lobby. After learning the team's photo and details of their winning ways are featured in Heritage Acton's 2003 calendar, he bought one. - Frances Niblock photo

Views of the news

Several issues caught my interest this week. Let's discuss some of these developments which will, in one way or another, affect us all.

The Americans and British deployed more troops, planes and ships to the gulf region. It appears war may be imminent even though the UN weapons inspectors have not found any evidence of nuclear or biological weapons. I assume the United States has intelligence they are giving UN personnel, which has not been made public. It should be.

Saddam Insane is carrying on a very dangerous game of brinkmanship. I think all out war can still be avoided. I don't think the other Arab states will just watch while western powers take over the huge Iraqi oil reserves. In that sense, the anti-American brigade is correct. The war is about oil. Not the Americans coveting it, but the other oil producing states protecting their price structure by controlling supply.

I predict Saddam will make a last minute deal and go into exile. He'll take billions with him of course. He'll spend the rest of his days in obscene luxury railing at the great Satan in America. Maybe he can bunk-in with Idi Amin. Amin might have Saddam for lunch. Literally!

In the meantime Saddam sits in Baghdad lobbing insults at George W. Bush. Recently, he went on Iraqi television to say that the President's threats were the "Hiss of snakes and bark of dogs." Old Saddam may be a despot, a mass murderer and criminally insane but you have to give him his due: The man can turn a phrase.

We will know by the end of January whether or not the dogs of war are set loose. I pray for the people of Iraq they stay caged. This time the American Coalition will not stop short of absolute victory. The death and destruction will be heartbreaking unless Saddam goes. Unfortunately, he's a maniac so your guess is as good as mine as to how he will react.

I think that his instinct for self-preservation will cause him to go. If not, for sure he's toast. George W. will not repeat the mistake his father made.

A 6-year-old boy is tragically shot and killed by his 7-year-old sister. The children were playing in their bedroom and found a loaded pistol allegedly owned by their older brother.

As usual, there was much discus-

The Way I See It

with Mike O'Leary



sion about this horrific event. I couldn't believe the number of people who proposed passing more laws to ensure things like this don't happen again. There was even a serious discussion on CFRB about forcing legitimate target and sports pistol shooters to keep their guns in safes at their clubs. I tuned it out. I'm tired of listening to people who demonstrate the I.Q. of a zucchini.

The gun problem is not with lawful owners. The gun problem is with two-bit punks who think carrying a pistol makes them tough. These wannabe gangsters have no reservations about using their weapon. This is the problem that must be addressed. This is the problem that is being ignored while our politicians waste over a billion dollars on a totally useless registration program. A program that has not, and will not, save one life.

This column has long advocated legislated prison terms for illegal gun possession and/or use. These sentences must not be allowed to be plea-bargained away. They would not be subject to parole. They would be served consecutively after any other sentences are served. This would curb illegal gun use without criminalizing law abiding Canadians for nothing.

It's encouraging to hear senior police officers such as Toronto's Julian Fantino finally start to push mandatory sentences for illegal gun possession. This is a position, I must point out, that most responsible gun owners have been proposing for years. The Chretien loyalists are still flogging the dead horse called registration. No current word from MP Reed. Not to worry, as soon as the PMD tells him what he thinks, we'll hear from him.

Ontario Attorney General David Young has made it plain Ontario Crown Attorneys will not be prosecuting charges under the Gun Registration Act. Ontario and seven other provinces are pressing the feds to cancel the whole mess. In response Justice(?) Minister Martin Cauchon is spending another \$92 thousand for an ex-bureaucrat to devise ways to

make the registry more efficient. What a laugh. The Federal Auditor General, with all her resources, gave up after a year of trying to make some sense out of the books. Now this new guy is supposed to come-up with realistic advice in a few weeks? Sounds to me like a replacement scam for the advertising boondoggle.

I hope we get a federal government in the future, which cares more about saving the lives of 6-year-olds and less about the possibility of losing a few votes come election day.

I attended the information night regarding our new ambulance station last week. The details of the new facility are elsewhere in your New Tanner.

One reason I went was to ask why we needed a separate building instead of an addition to the fire hall.

Evidently, it's the Province's fault. When the new fire hall was built the ambulance was still under provincial control. A proposal was made to the province to incorporate the ambulance in the planned fire hall. The province declined. At this time, with the possibility of a future need to expand the fire hall, there isn't enough land to put the ambulance facility in with the fire hall. An adjacent building seems to be the best option.

Chairman Savoline is justifiably proud of the Region's ambulance service. For example, the service had approximately 18 advanced care paramedics when the Region assumed control. Today we have around 40 and we're recruiting. The more we age the more important numbers like this become.

Councillor Bonnette drew attention to the many volunteers who manned our ambulances before full-time staff were hired. We do owe those folks a debt of gratitude and I suggest a suitable remembrance be made part of the new station. Perhaps a plaque with their names on it would be appropriate.

Jim King, Director of Halton EMS, spoke about the "vial of life." Simply put, it's a small vial kept in the refrigerator, which contains important medical information on people in the house. EMS personnel look for the sticker, which is supplied, on the fridge. If the patient is unconscious this information could be critical.

Obviously seniors, or anyone else with drug allergies, ongoing conditions, etc., should have one. They are available, no charge, from Halton EMS, police or fire.