

# Caledon Citizen

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## Editorial

# Volunteers; Where would our community be without them

The month just ended saw several local demonstrations put on by various levels of government, along with other organizations, aimed at expressing gratitude to the many volunteers who help make this community work.

Many of you reading these words are among those who give of your time to make the community better, and let us add our own note of thanks here for the work you do. As has been said so many times, the community would not work without you.

And let us hope these expressions of thanks are contagious, and the sentiments are being felt by others in the community.

Do you have kids, and are they involved in sports? Then it's a volunteers who stands behind the benches of cold hockey arenas, urging your youngsters on and helping them learn the fundamentals. And as the weather gets warmer, it will be volunteers who teach the young athletes the proper way to kick a soccer ball or hold a bat.

Earth Day was late last month, and as usual, it was marked by a number of community clean-ups. These events are organized by volunteers, and it's more volunteers who actually show up and walk along the sides of the roads, etc, picking up the rubbish that others drop. Would anyone care to guess how the place would look if no one stepped up to do the cleaning?

In the last couple of weeks, it was volunteers who were out selling daffodils, trying to raise money to possibly find a cure for cancer.

It's volunteers who make organizations like Hospice run, providing support for people coping with the stress of serious illnesses.

It's volunteers who help out at hospitals and libraries and schools and at a host of other local facilities.

It's volunteers who help deliver food to people who otherwise would have trouble getting out to get it for themselves.

It's volunteers who help run the local food banks.

In our community, volunteers help run the fire service, responding to life-threatening situations, frequently with very little warning.

It's become traditional to take some time in April or May to thank these people for all they do in the community. But the fact is, we should probably be doing it a lot more frequently than just once a year.

## Our Readers Write

### Council does care about business

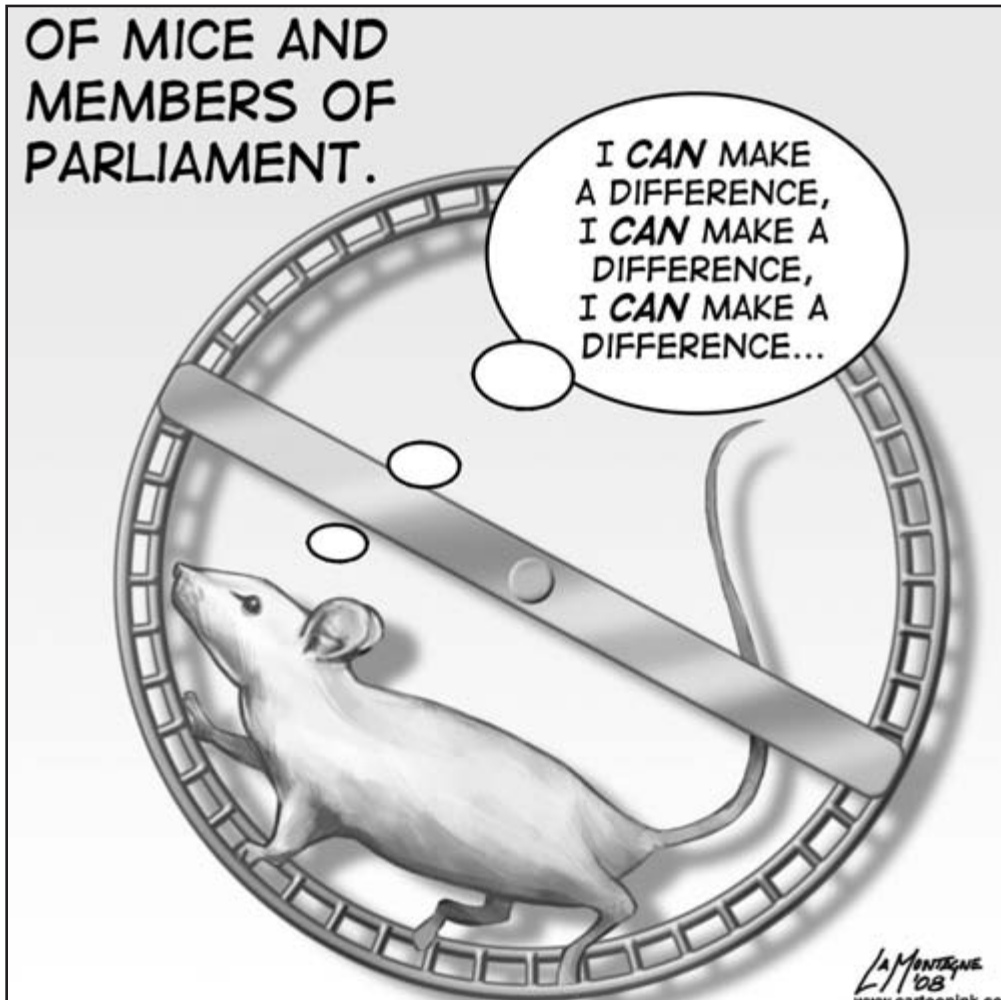
I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Folino at Caesar's for hosting the Coalition of Concerned Residents and Businesses rally April 26.

I was fortunate to attend and listen to the businesses about them remaining sustainable in Bolton. It was made abundantly clear that we as Town council need to promote the businesses of Caledon and work with them to find fast solutions for them to remain competitive and an integral part of our community.

The mayor and council are actively working with the BMA (Bolton Merchants Association) to encourage our residents to shop locally. The mayor has written about this in numerous columns to heighten the public's awareness and I take every opportunity at functions and events to promote local businesses. I will continue to advocate at the council table for Caledon businesses and the concerns that need to be addressed in Bolton today. To hinge our hopes on growth is too long term. Bolton needs help today and this can happen by pulling our community together.

Allan Thompson,  
Regional Councillor,  
Ward 2, Town of Caledon

OF MICE AND  
MEMBERS OF  
PARLIAMENT.



## We don't need an elected Senate

I firmly believe that Canada needs some type of parliamentary reform.

With equal emphasis, I believe that we will never see a meaningful version of such reform as long as we leave it up to the politicians.

When I refer to meaningful parliamentary reform, I have in mind a system that will let the people we elect to office in Ottawa (and to Queen's Park as well) work in our best interests, rather than in their own interests, or in that of the party under whose banner they were elected.

What I have no use for is governments (and the crews we currently have running things in Ottawa and at Queen's Park are examples) who come up with meaningless ideas, and trumpet them as some sort of reform.

The fixing of dates for general elections springs to mind. This was a measure that both Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Premier Dalton McGuinty have embraced. There was no pressing need for it. The system that was in place, with the leader of the government deciding on the dates for elections, provided that no more than five years passed between them, had worked reasonably well.

Although the heads of the respective governments called the shots, it's impossible to assemble the election machinery in this culture in secret. Election dates, when announced, were invariably the worst-kept secrets in the country.

But it made Harper and McGuinty look good in the eyes of enough voters who believed they were seeing meaningful reform, when in fact they were witnessing



Bill Rea

nothing.

More of that seems to be cropping up at Queen's Park these days.

Progressive Conservative Bob Runciman has put forth a private member's bill in the legislature calling for Ontario to become the second province (after Alberta) to elect its senators.

And I ask myself "why?"

The role of the Senate in Canada is one of the least understood features of the federal government. The people with seats in the Senate are not elected (apart from the provisions in place in Alberta), and they never have been.

The Senate has traditionally and officially been known as a place of "sober second thought."

If we wish to maintain such "sober second thought," I have trouble understanding exactly how that sobriety is going to be facilitated by adding political and electoral pressures to the mix. I would submit that very concept of sobriety stems from senators not feeling obliged to respond to the whim of the voters, but more to the whim of their wisdom, based on experience acquired over the years.

That is how it should

work in theory, and I have lived long enough to know that theory and practice are two different things.

But if we conclude that having an unelected Senate is a bad thing, why not simply do away with it? Why would we want to see another level of politicians representing the same constituents at the federal level? How is that going to benefit any of us?

I think part of the problem is we live too close to the United States, where they have two functioning chambers of elected officials at the federal level. There are those in this country who view such a system, and wish for the opportunity to elect their own senators.

My reaction to that is simple. If you really want to elect your senators that bad, then move south, take the oath of citizenship and Pledge of Allegiance and vote to your little heart's content. Oh yeah, check your health card at the border.

We live in cynical times, which seem to have lasted for as long as I can remember. One of the drawbacks of my profession, I guess, is I am constantly exposed to cynicism.

There are many people who view those on the public payroll as being hogs at the trough, packing away healthy pay cheques and attractive perks, which they perceive have not been earned. It is true that there are a lot of elected officials who don't earn a day's pay, yet somehow pocket their money. The same could be said for a lot of doctors, lawyers, teachers, account-

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