

# The Oakville Beaver

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**WILD RECOGNITION:** The Canadian Wildlife Federation Get to Know (G2K) contest (formerly the Robert Bateman Get to Know contest) held an awards ceremony for its winners last Friday (Sept. 7) at the Toronto Zoo. The contest invites residents aged 19 and under to get outside and create original works of art, writing, photography, videography and music inspired by nature. Quinn Dalgarno (centre) was the only winner from Halton Region. The wildlife at Bronte Creek Provincial Park is often the focus of Dalgarno's photography and videos. Presenting Dalgarno with his award certificate are Dr. William Rapley (left), conservation, education and research executive of the Toronto Zoo, and Sean DeVries (right), environmental manager of Panasonic Canada.

## Debt plan is an attack on Ontario citizens

*Editor's note: The following letter was sent to Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh and Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, and a copy was filed with The Oakville Beaver for publication.*

As a public sector worker, I will not be held responsible for a debt that I did not create.

Punishing police officers, firefighters, nurses, teachers, doctors, custodians and many others is an outright attack on the citizens of our province.

Governments fall, and opponents with similar beliefs will not gain support, when their leaders become oppressive and overzealous with power.

Mr. Chudleigh, since it's your policy to freeze the pay of all public sector workers' wages and benefits, I would expect that you will lobby to also freeze cost-of-living expenses.

It's a known fact that "52 per cent of Ontario workers live from payday-to-payday."

So, if most of us are barely keeping our heads above water and carrying "average pre-mortgage

debts of \$25,960," then how can we afford to live for the next two years when the cost of consumer goods will continue to rise?

In order for your party's shortsighted plan to work, we need a freeze on gas prices, property taxes, groceries, and other necessities of life.

And in all honesty, bailouts of major banks and auto-manufacturers are the real reason for the debt — not to mention the unprecedented Ontario student loan debt withheld against our province, which is currently surpassing \$2 billion.

Mr. Chudleigh, I would suggest that you stand up for your constituents and speak out against public sector cuts and place the burden on the real culprits: the misspending Liberal government and the multi-million and billion-dollar corporations who reap many more unnecessary tax benefits than us middle class citizens.

Thank you for supporting your voters.

**Marty Dettman, Oakville**

## Letter to the Editor

# Oakville charities big losers in council's decision on bingo

*Re: Town balking at a 'Take it or leave' choice, Friday, Aug. 17, 2012, The Oakville Beaver*

Regarding *The Oakville Beaver* article on Friday, Aug. 17, *Town balking at a 'Take it or leave' choice*, that decision by council will have a significant impact on local charity groups and the individual charities they support.

Oakville Delta Bingo has told the charity organizations that use bingo to fundraise they will be closing effective Oct. 31.

I belong to one of the 34 charities that are involved with Oakville Delta Bingo.

Our group is called the Altruists, a name symbolic with what we do.

We are a small group of Oakville residents who decided to band together and start a new charity to give back to our community.

We average about 25 active members and have raised just short of one million dollars in 25 years.

Our annual donation commitments include local food banks, school bursaries, Kerr Street Ministries and the Oakville Distress Centre.

Our projects over the years include Oakville Transit handicapped buses, Oakville hospital projects, the Halton police DARE (drug prevention for children) program, the police care bear program, and bringing defibrillators into many community buildings like seniors centres.

The Red Cross, Big Brothers and Sisters and The Oakville Literacy Council are other organizations that also get funding for their own projects through the Altruists and other bingo charities.

My personal favourite is the Lions Foundation Dog Guide program where we sponsor dogs specially trained for autistic children. There are countless other worthwhile recipients.

Bingo reached its height of popularity in 2005.

Since then, attendance is down significantly and revenue to the charities is down 50 per cent.

The hall operator is losing money and cannot operate under the old bingo model.

Yet, the fees the Town of Oakville collects for licences are the same as they were in 2005, so bingo revenue to the Town has remained consistent while everyone else took significant losses.

In fact, many municipalities around us reduced their bingo licensing fees to help the bingo model while Oakville did not.

The cost-recovery factor is therefore misleading and needs a reality check.

When Oakville Delta Bingo closes, there is not just a reduction in revenue; there is zero revenue to the Town from bingo licence fees.

The OLG initiative or bingo-revitalization is an attempt to modernize bingo and make it sustainable. No one has proposed slot machines or casinos, in fact none of the involved parties wants them.

The idea of the revitalization project is to build a successful model that keeps Oakville Delta Bingo's doors open, not close them.

At the Town council meeting in the spring, councillors Pam Damoff and Cathy Duddeck were the only councillors who wanted to talk about the reality of the facts in front of them.

The other councillors participated in a charade meant to disguise that they regard bingo players as gamblers and they are not wanted in Oakville.

Bingo and gambling (casinos) are separate issues, yet Mayor (Rob) Burton keeps trying to tie them together.

These worthwhile endeavours we support have been jeopardized by a political game.

We are one of the 34 Oakville charities that generate revenue from bingo.

The bingo hall will close, the Altruists will be one charity group who will wind-down and cease to exist, the Town will lose the revenue it currently generates, the loyal Oakville bingo players will move on to Mississauga or Burlington to play, the other charity groups will have to explore ways to replace lost revenue, the charities they support will lose significant amounts of income, Oakville Delta Bingo staff will lose their jobs — who actually wins this game?

I would like to conclude with a big thank you to all the loyal bingo players who have shown us support over those 26 years.

You made our fundraising on Monday afternoons a lot of fun, and gave us the opportunity to do our good deeds and give back to our community.

**Ray Pade,**  
executive member,  
Altruists of Oakville charity