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King Township Sentinel  
P.O. Box 310  
Beeton, Ontario  
L0G 1A0  
705-458-4434  
Fax: 905-729-2541  
E-mail address  
thescope@rogers.com  
web site  
www.innisfilscope.com

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**Publishers:**  
BRUCE HAIRE  
JOHN ARCHIBALD

**Editorial**  
**Managing Editor**  
BRUCE HAIRE  
**News Editor**  
Michelle Minnoch  
**Reporter**  
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**Ad Designers**  
Penny Gilbertson  
Joanne Radyk-Carrick  
Lisa Rosati  
Brian Valdock

**Business**  
Jacquie Archibald  
Janice Coté  
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# Alberta? Quebec? We are all Canadians

Last week I was fortunate enough to take part in Exercise Maple Defender in Wainwright, Alberta. A total of 19 Ontario journalists were invited on board, to interview the soldiers, take part in missions, and to basically gain a better understanding of how the Canadian Forces are training the reserves.

There were few of us that had exciting missions - I was one of three who actually got to visit one of the Afghan villages; some hit an IED seven minutes into their mission, and had to return to the base for the day; others spent the day in their G-Wagon, with no action at all.

Luckily, I was not only out for almost eight hours, but I walked a great deal as the boys were looking for IEDs, and later on our squad was attacked by the enemy. Although it sounds harsh, it was a tremendous learning experience, not only for the boys who got to experience a fight, but for the journalist who felt a rush as she had to dive into the bushes for cover.

Coming home to the news of two more soldiers killed in Afghanistan drove a nail through my heart. Although I personally do not know a soldier serving in Afghanistan, I personally feel a sense of loss when I see another soldier on the news making the trip home most fear.

You know there is someone, whether they are someone you know or someone in the media,

## Comment

by Michelle Minnoch

that when they speak makes you cringe and want to slap a piece of duct tape on their mouths? For me, that person usually is Gilles Duceppe.

When BQ Leader Gilles Duceppe announced his threat to topple the Harper Government unless there is a firm commitment to troop withdrawal by 2009 his outrage angered me. My anger was not because he wanted a commitment; it was how this desire came about.

It seems as though when the first 67 soldiers were killed, the commitment to withdrawal was not needed by Mr. Duceppe. When the latest two soldiers were killed, both from Quebec, his voice became loud and clear.

We are all Canadians whether Mr. Duceppe likes it or not. We are the True North Strong and Free. And united, we do stand.

But playing politics on an issue that concerns and affects people from all over this great country does not cut it in my book. Whether from Quebec, Nova Scotia, or Ontario, these men and women and fighting the best fight they can, with a sneaky enemy in an unfamiliar territory.

There is a great amount of debate whether supporting the troops means supporting the war, and people are conflicted as to whether they are one in the same. I not only support our troops, but I do support the fact they are helping a country in dire need and reform. Sure, I would like to see more Canadian troops in ravaged Darfaur, but right now this is where we are, this is where we stand, and this is where we will fight.

Like it or not, Mr. Duceppe, we are united as a country and until our Government calls a vote regarding troop commitment, maybe you should keep your comments to yourself. I realize speaking up is a fundamental right we all share, but there's speaking up and there's speaking out of turn. If he voiced his concerns over the rising death toll before some Quebecois were killed I might not be so angry. His comments came at a time when two Quebecers were killed - and to call an emergency debate over the issue because of that - is an insult to the soldiers, their families, and Canadians. One lost life due to this conflict is no greater than the next - they are all men and women making the sacrifice many of us would or could not. Whether an Ontarian, Newfie or from the NWT, we all have one thing in common, and that is this great country of ours.

Where's Red Green when you need him?

## Another successful golf tournament for the GICC

The Greater Innisfil Chamber of Commerce would like to thank all the sponsors and participants who helped make this year's tournament our best ever. Because of support from people like you, we continue to grow and improve on our events.

Sincere appreciation goes to OLG Slots at Georgian Downs who donated registration bags for each participant. OLG is a regular supporter of the chamber, providing gifts for all events. Once again, thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Special thanks to Elmer Spring for arranging a putting challenge with MP Peter Van Loan. Funds raised from this event and will be donated to the Innisfil Historical Society.

The following businesses sponsored a portion of the day;

A.N.T. Construction; Ainley & Associates; Ainley Group; Atlas Corp.; Barb Baguley; Bell World; Business Development Bank

of Canada; C.C. Tatham & Associates; Cellar Wines; Donna Orsatti; Eagle Eye Contracting; Freedom 55 Financial, Al Jones; Gibson & Adams; Graphic Apparel; Hair Reflections; Innisbrook Golf Course; Innisfil Beach Gardens; Innisfil Funeral Home; Innisfil Hydro; Innisfil Self Storage; Jones Consulting Group Limited; Loopstra Nixon; MHPM Project Managers Inc.; NT Temps; Pearson McCuaig; People's Credit Union; Pet Country Estates; Peter Works Ltd.; Rod's Esso; Ruth Hunt and Geranium Corporation; Sandy Cove Acres; Schneider Power Inc.; Scotiabank; Spherion; Spring Tree Farms; Tanjen Precast; Tarpin Lumber; TD Bank, Stroud; The Original Flag Store; Weedman

We would also like to recognize all the wonderful volunteers who generously donated of their time.

And of course, thank you to our corporate sponsors for their continued support:

Pratt Development; Canaccord Capital;



Elmer Spring and Hon. Peter Van Loan took a swing at the putting challenge. The \$500 raised from the challenge will be donated to the Knock Community Centre.

submitted photo

Spherion; Peoples Credit Canada forward to having another  
Union; Business With all of your successful tournament next  
Development Bank of continued support we look year.

## Host an Alzheimer Coffee Break

Get together with friends and co-workers while raising money for critical services. If you enjoy socializing with friends and colleagues, and want to do something positive for your community, the Alzheimer Society of Greater Simcoe County needs your help.

As part of a nationwide fundraising effort, the Society is looking for community volunteers to open up their businesses, organizations or homes during the 12th annual Alzheimer Coffee Break™ this September.

Hosting a coffee break is easy; all you need is a place where friends, neighbours, customers or co-workers can gather to have a cup of coffee in exchange for a donation to the Alzheimer Society. Coffee break events will kick off coast to coast on Thursday, Sept. 20. For more information about Coffee Break, or to host an event, call 705-722-1066.

## Stroud Library news

The Stroud Branch of the Innisfil Public Library is holding an "End of the Summer Book Sale". (this will go into September)

The 2007 edition of the Innisfil Public Library's Seepe Walters Story Writing Contest is open to all youth in grades 6 to 12, inclusive. Aspiring young authors are invited to submit a story, on any theme, either through e-mail to jasselstine@innisfil.library.on.ca or on a disc dropped off at any branch. Entries should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 3,000 words. Contest closes on Saturday, September 8, at 5:00 p.m.

The Innisfil Public Library is pleased to announce that Janet Matthews, co-author of the Canadian best seller, Chicken Soup for the Canadian Soul, will be appearing at the Stroud Branch on Wednesday, September 26, at 7:00 p.m.

Please register for this uplifting and inspirational presentation by phone, 436-1681, or in person at the Stroud Branch. Books will be available for purchase. The Library thanks the Friends of the Library for sponsoring this special event!