



# Dave Gittings

## Town of Oakville

Town Councillor, Ward 3

*Keeping you informed . . .*



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Here is my June e-letter. I am frequently asked by residents how I decide what to include in these updates. The simple answer is that I don't, YOU DO! I receive calls, emails and speak with area residents on a daily basis about issues and concerns in Ward 3, so I include the most commonly asked questions. I look forward to input from you on any general or specific questions that you may have. Have a happy and safe summer!



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Do you have an Ash tree on your property?

If you have not started treatment for the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), this is the last year that you can try to save your ash tree. **Treatment must be performed before the end of August.** Please share this with neighbours and friends!

While Oakville has the most aggressive EAB management program in Canada, we are about to see the full effect of the devastation that is decimating ash trees across North America.

Last week, Council approved the town's 2013 Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management Program highlighting the town's ongoing efforts to control EAB infestations and to educate the public about treatment options. Town staff have prepared an excellent [presentation](#) including information on the devastating effects of the EAB.

Treatment and removal of municipal ash trees included in this year's program will begin this month. Healthy public ash trees on streets and in parks across Oakville will be injected with TreeAzin® to protect them against EAB. Approximately 2,500 ash trees will receive the treatment from the town's service provider before the end of August. This will be the third treatment for many of the trees since Oakville first launched its EAB management strategy in 2008. Of the over 5,000 municipal trees treated since the treatment program began in 2008, 98 per cent are still alive and in good condition.

In total, the town will be treating approximately 5,700 municipal ash trees over the next 10 years. Currently 40 per cent receive treatment in odd years, while the remaining 60 per cent receive treatment in even years. TreeAzin® is a natural and safe bio-insecticide derived from the seeds of the neem tree, and provides up to two years of protection against EAB before it must be reapplied.

The balance of the municipal ash tree canopy on public roads and parks do not qualify for treatment due to heavy infestation or size, and are becoming structurally unsound. The town



Typical ash leaf

will begin removing high risk trees from streets and parks this month before they become public safety hazards and to curb the spread of EAB. Removing just one 20-centimetre DBH (diameter at breast height) nine-metre tall tree eradicates over 570 EAB from the population, helping to safeguard those trees being treated.

“The devastation by EAB is unprecedented. It is on Time magazine’s top ten list of evil animals,” said John McNeil, Manager of Forestry Services. “With 80 per cent of Oakville’s ash trees located on private property, it’s important for residents to make a decision now about the fate of their ash trees. We’re encouraging residents to treat their trees or have them removed and replaced.”

EAB is infesting ash trees across Canada and the United States and is responsible for killing tens of millions of ash since its discovery in 2002. This year is believed to be the tipping point for the EAB population in the GTA. Urban forestry professionals warn that 2013 may be the last year an effective treatment program can begin. The town recommends that residents have a certified arborist assess their ash tree(s) to determine the best option.



If you require assistance in identifying an ash tree and have access to an iPhone, iPod touch or iPad, you can download LEAF SNAP, a free app developed by Columbia University, the University of Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution. This free mobile app uses visual recognition software to help identify tree species from photographs of their leaves.



A number of residents have called me asking about these green triangular shaped 'boxes' that have recently appeared in our area. These are Emerald Ash Borer 'traps'. 100 of these traps have been placed in trees around Oakville. Their purpose is not to kill Emerald Ash borers. They are covered in a substance that mimics the smell of ash trees and smell like breakfast to the EAB with the purpose of allowing staff to monitor the level of infestation by geographic area.

Have a close look at ash trees that have thinning leaf cover or look stressed. Chances are that you will see 'D' shaped holes in the trunk. This is the exit hole of the beetle, and a sure sign that the Emerald Ash Borer is killing the tree. The EAB larvae bore tunnels under the bark to feed on inner bark tissue. The tunnels cut the flow of nutrients and water to leaves.

We had the ash tree at our home treated last week. Treatment of TreeAzin® is performed every other year. A series of holes are drilled in to the base of the trunk and vials of the insecticide are drawn in to the tree. The cost of treatment varies based on the diameter of the tree. There are numerous licenced tree care companies performing this service in our area.



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Speed Sentry Test

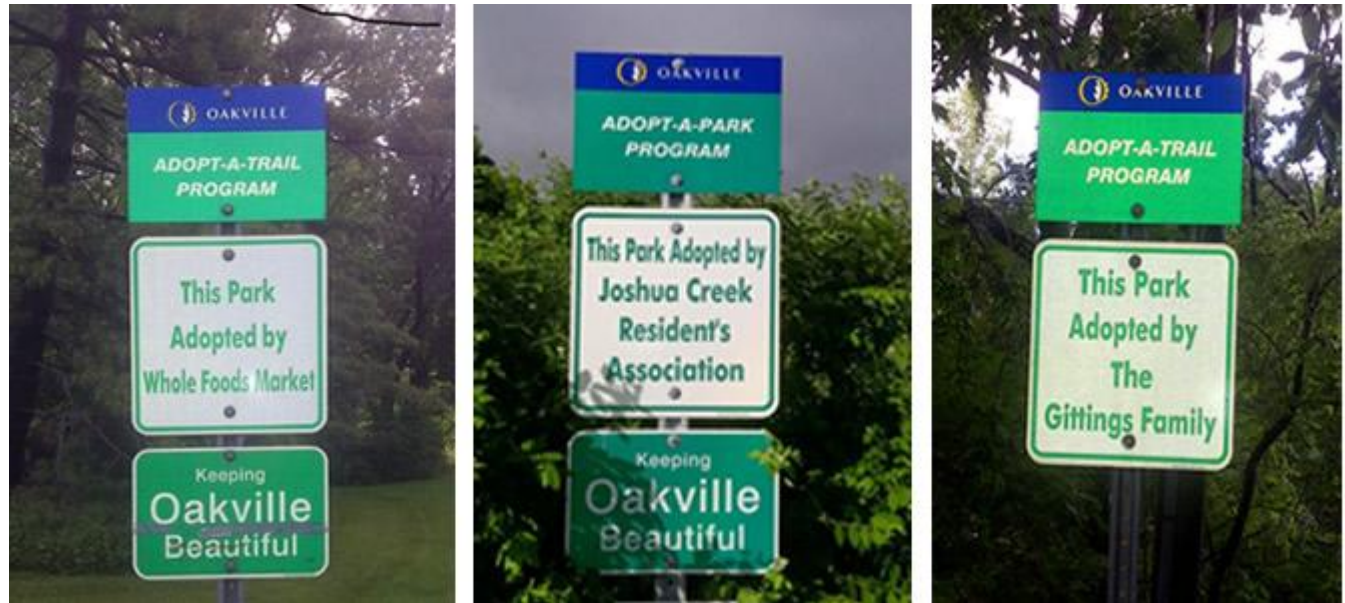
As a result of ongoing community concerns over speeding in our area, I am happy to report success in having Ward 3 as the test site for Solar Powered Speed Sentry unit testing. Oakville staff will be experimenting with speed radar recording/display technology over the next several months working with suppliers and other jurisdictions that have experience with this type of technology to assess the effectiveness to mitigate speeding. This unit displays vehicle speed and also records the numbers of vehicles and their speed. This allows for the data to be collected in place of the usual rubber strips that are traditionally used for data collection. Once the test is complete, staff will bring a report to the Community Services Committee later this year to discuss the costs and benefits of implementing such devices in a wider and/or more formal degree to address speeding concerns in the community.

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Adopt - A - Park







With more than 200 parks, playgrounds and sports fields, two harbours, and 31 waterfront parks, there are plenty of opportunities for citizens, schools, youth groups and corporations to lend a helping hand. Whether you are interested in a formal park adoption, are a student volunteering your time, or are interested in participating in community clean-up events, we want to hear from you.

#### Adopt-a-Park/Trail details

Adopting a park or trail costs you nothing. All we need from you is a commitment to:

- Adopt your selected area for a minimum period of one year
- Provide a litter cleanup and inspection of the area at least once a month during the winter, and twice a month from spring through fall
- Report to the Parks and Open Space department any damage through storms, vandalism, graffiti and illegal dumping of household, garden or pool waste material onto town land

- Provide contact information (as available) on anyone causing the above-mentioned damages

What does the town provide?

- Registration package outlining the program and volunteer responsibilities
- Free gloves and garbage bags
- Public recognitionA sign erected at the entrance of the park or trail bearing your name for the duration of the adoption
- A personal letter of thanks from the Mayor
- An invitation to a volunteer appreciation reception with the Mayor

For additional details, please let me know [dave@gittings.ca](mailto:dave@gittings.ca) or visit [Adopt a Trail](#).

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## Project Night Watch targets Oakville Parks

Over the summer months, Halton Regional Police officers from #2 District in Oakville will be stepping up their patrols of town parks in order to reduce illegal activity including drug and alcohol use.

Traditionally summer time leads to increased illegal activity in the public parks. A community survey was released in November 2012 showing that one of the major issues was community safety in public parks. During daylight hours, 97% of respondents felt safe in public parks, but that number dropped to 67% after dark.

Project Nightwatch commenced on June 18th and will run throughout the summer. Officers will be conducting patrol in parks throughout Oakville in both uniform and plainclothes. Police will be targeting individuals consuming both alcohol and drugs, as well as enforcing Town of Oakville By Laws and other criminal and provincial offences. The intent is to eliminate drug and alcohol consumption and the crime associated with them.

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## Committee of Adjustment

This orange sign is a very common sight in many areas of Oakville. I receive calls on a regular basis from residents asking about the process, what is meant by 'minor', and how can they receive further information. The committee of adjustment (COA) considers applications for minor variances from the zoning by-law, applications for land division (consent to sever land), and any other variances specified by council that implement the official plan.

The committee is authorized by the Planning Act to consider applications for:

- Minor variances from the provisions of the zoning by-law
- Extensions, enlargements or variations of existing legal non-conforming uses under the zoning by-law
- Land division (severing a new lot from an existing lot, adding land to an existing lot, easements, mortgages or leases in excess of 21 years)
- Determining whether a particular use conforms with the provisions of the zoning by-law where the uses of land, buildings or structures permitted in the by-law are defined in general terms

## Minor variance

The zoning by-law regulates how land and buildings are used and where buildings and structures can be located. The zoning by-law also specifies lot sizes and dimensions, parking requirements, building heights and other provisions necessary to ensure proper and orderly development. When a proposal does not comply with the provisions of the zoning by-law, an owner may make application to the COA for a minor variance that provides relief from a specific zoning by-law requirement, excusing a property owner from meeting the exact requirements of the by-law.

**Committee of Adjustment** File # \_\_\_\_\_

The owners, \_\_\_\_\_  
have applied to the Town of Oakville Committee of Adjustment  
for a: \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at 7:00 p.m. at 1225 Trafalgar Road.  
Further information can be obtained from the Town of Oakville,  
Building Services Department at 905-845-6601 between the  
hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Or Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Or Please Visit:  
Committee of Adjustment \_\_\_\_\_  
Building Services Department \_\_\_\_\_  
Town of Oakville \_\_\_\_\_  
1225 Trafalgar Road \_\_\_\_\_  
Oakville, Ontario \_\_\_\_\_  
L6J 5A6 \_\_\_\_\_

[www.oakville.ca/coa.htm](http://www.oakville.ca/coa.htm)



The committee must ensure that the variances, if approved, satisfy the following:

- Is considered to be a "minor" change from the zoning requirements
- Is desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building or structure
- Generally maintains the intent and purpose of the official plan(s)
- Generally maintains the intent and purpose of the zoning by-law

The Chartwell-Maple Grove Residents Association has an extremely informative [overview](#) in layman's terms of the Committee of Adjustment process.

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FRI DAY July 19th, 2013 - from 6:00pm- MIDNIGHT

Oakville's largest retail event of the year is back! With food, live music and lots of community spirit. Drawing more than 50,000 people every year to downtown Oakville, Midnight Madness begins at 6 p.m., closing the downtown stretch of Lakeshore Road for the event. Those who head down can expect live music featuring everything from classic rock, blues, and pop!



Downtown Oakville Jazz Festival - FRI DAY August 9th till Saturday August 10th, 2013



The Downtown Oakville Jazz Festival is underway for August 9th and 10th with road closures on both days beginning at 5pm and re-opening at midnight. This year promises to be filled with great artists including Jen Chapin (daughter of the late Harry Chapin) and her trio, Juno award winner Liali Biali, Juno award nominees Jaffa Road, and a rising star guitarist from Brazil Diego Figueiredo. The Jazz Festival provides great opportunity for you to engage new customers who appreciate arts & culture and all that Downtown Oakville has to offer!

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## Downtown Oakville Parking Study

At a public meeting on June 5, 2013, a number of potential options were presented, in response to issues that have been raised concerning parking in Downtown Oakville. Now it's your turn to tell us which of these options you prefer most. Please take a few minutes to rank the options provided in this [survey](#). We will compile your rankings and add our findings to the [Commercial Parking Study](#) report that will go to Council this fall.



## 4th Trafalgar Scouts



The 4th Trafalgar Scouts is inviting boys and girls in the South East and Clearview area to join Beavers (age 5-7), Cubs (8-10), and Scouts (11-13). Programs start in October 2013. In Scouting, kids have fun developing into capable, confident, and well-rounded individuals better prepared for success in the world. You may obtain further details from [4thtrafalgar@gmail.com](mailto:4thtrafalgar@gmail.com) or register

at [www.scouts.ca](http://www.scouts.ca).

Halton Region | Kidney Walk Taking Steps, Inspiring Hope – Saturday, September 21st.



We look forward to welcoming you to the 2013 Kidney Walk.

The walk is a special time for dialysis patients, organ transplant recipients, living donors and the medical community to come together and support the Foundation in such a way that we can do more. With your help, we can take steps and create a better future for the 10,000 Ontario families affected by kidney disease. Details are

available from Ron Newman at [newman2@sympatico.ca](mailto:newman2@sympatico.ca).

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The Oakville Chamber Orchestra is thrilled to invite you to "Chelster Hall Community Festival" at Chelster Hall, 1150 Lakeshore Road East, on Saturday, July 20th, 2013 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Proceeds from this event will benefit the following local charitable organizations:

- Oakville Public Library

- Oakville Chamber Orchestra
- Oakville & Milton Humane Society
- Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital
- St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School

Some generous enterprises and sponsors of the community will be providing the opportunity for Oakville citizens to enjoy a spectacular summer evening of entertainment and dining on the lake. This is a rare opportunity to participate in a very special event to be held on the grounds of one of the most magnificent estates of Lake Ontario.

Patrons will enter the house proceeding to the lakeside grounds. Entertainment will be provided by the Oakville Chamber Orchestra. Music legend Ian Thomas will also perform and act as Master of Ceremonies for this special evening. Raffles and other surprises are also planned. Delicious signature dinner entrees and beverages will be provided compliments of sponsoring local restaurants and beverage companies. Pipers of the Toronto Black Watch Association will close the event at 9:00 p.m.

Tickets for the event are limited and will be priced at \$250. They are available at <http://chelsterhall.eventbrite.ca/>. Charitable donation income tax receipts will be provided.

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O.T.'s Chimney Swifts in the news!



Last month, I received a call from the CBC's Paul Wilson who was concerned about the chimney swift population living in the chimneys at the old OTHS on Reynolds, and whether they are in danger as a result of the proposed South Central Recreation Centre. The Town is working to ensure compliance with all requirements of the Endangered Species Act, and we have been working with Bird Studies Canada on aspects of this project. The last study showed that 112 swifts were counted going into the chimneys there. This

is a significant number!

Here is Paul Wilson's article. . .

I'm standing in a parking lot at dusk, waiting to witness a chimney-swift spectacle. The location on this night is Oakville, but the show comes to Hamilton too. You need a chimney, of course, preferably one that's been around for a generation or two. Hamilton has plenty of those. And this year, for the first time, the city is going to try to count the chimney swifts who summer here. But Oakville is ahead of us on that, which brings us back to that parking lot. It's on Reynolds Street, in front of the old Oakville High School, the heart of town.

It opened 105 years ago. My mother, 85, went there through the war years. Now she – and my father – live right next door to the school, at the Wyndham Manor Long-Term Care Centre.



The chimney swift makes a long journey from South America. Once here, it flies from morning to night. (Mike Veltri/ Queen's University site)

Oakville has shown more patience with old schools than Hamilton. Oakville High has been empty 20 years. And still it stands – red-brick Collegiate Gothic style, designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. When my parents moved into Wyndham this spring, I started hearing about the swifts who come each year to the four chimneys of Oakville High. And how in the last couple of years people have come by to count them. They sit in lawn chairs at dusk, I was told.

This is a special session tonight, just three of us. There's Kristyn Richardson, a stewardship biologist with Bird Studies Canada, which oversees the Ontario Swiftwatch Program. And Nigel Finney, a watershed planner with Conservation Halton. And me. Overhead, getting ready to perform their remarkable disappearing act, there are fast-moving flocks of chimney swifts.

Famous bird man Roger Tory Peterson described the swift as "a cigar with wings." They



migrate here from South America's Upper Amazon basin. They are streamlined bombs, superb aerialists. They fly all day, scooping up flies, ants, wasps.

They liked beetles, a rich source of protein, but pesticides cut into that part of their diet. The population of chimney swifts has diminished by more than 90 per cent in the last 40 years. It's designated as a threatened species both provincially and federally.

Scarce food sources can be part of the explanation. The other part is that suitable chimney stock is diminishing.

For instance, a massive chimney on the Otis Elevator site in North Hamilton is about to come down. The Ministry of Natural Resources looked into that one and ruled that the aged chimney is "a high-risk situation" and advised the owner to demolish it fast.

As for new chimneys, they often have caps or designs that don't allow swifts in. Or the chimneys might have a steel liner. "Those are death traps," Kristyn says.

Chimney swifts have powerful claws that allow them to cling to the side of a chimney. They sleep that way, they copulate that way. They even build their nests in half-saucer fashion and glue them to the inside of a chimney wall with saliva. But if the swift ends up in a chimney lined with smooth, slippery steel, it's not coming out.

Two years ago, Conservation Halton started counting the swifts across the region – including Burlington, Milton, Oakville. It's an imprecise science, because first you have to find the chimneys. They're up to 34 chimneys now, but the four at old Oakville High are tops in the count.

There are about 100 birds here tonight. The sun set at 8.43. The sky is golden and the swifts are cavorting. They are like flakes of soot being scattered on the wind. They circle this way,



Barbara Wilson, aka Mom, went to Oakville High in the war years. The swifts were likely using the school's chimneys even then. (Paul Wilson/ CBC)

then that, keeping up their high-pitched chitter.

Kristyn previews what's about to happen: "It's like flushing a toilet."

At 9.14, one swift dive bombs into the north-front chimney. Suddenly, it is as if these small, dark creatures had been poured through a funnel. Whoosh, they are gone, a hundred or so, all vanished in less than 60 seconds, down that chimney for the night.

Oakville High is set to become part of a new rec centre in a few years. The town promises to make sure the development complies with the Endangered Species Act.

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Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rane".