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PHOTO BY BOB OWEN

THERE SHE BLOWS!

The last pillar of blocks falls from the face of the former Colborne Cramahe Arena. Demolition should be complete within the next few weeks.

COLBORNE
CHRONICLE

Castleton residents unite

Feb. 15/07 to fight possible school closure

By BOB OWEN
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Cramahe Township residents concerned about proposals by the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board to close Castleton Public School met again on February 7 to plan their next moves.

About 40 adults met in the basement of the Castleton United Church to get updates and consider their options.

Cramahe Mayor Marc Coombs offered the group

lists of names of people to contact within the board to register their concerns. Response forms were also made available.

The mayor reported on a meeting he had that morning with Northumberland-Quinte West MPP Lou Rinaldi. The MPP has promised to get back to the mayor after meeting with the board later the same day.

Mayor Coombs is convinced that Cyndi Dickson, the board trustee representing this area,

knew about the board's proposals last fall - prior to the November election.

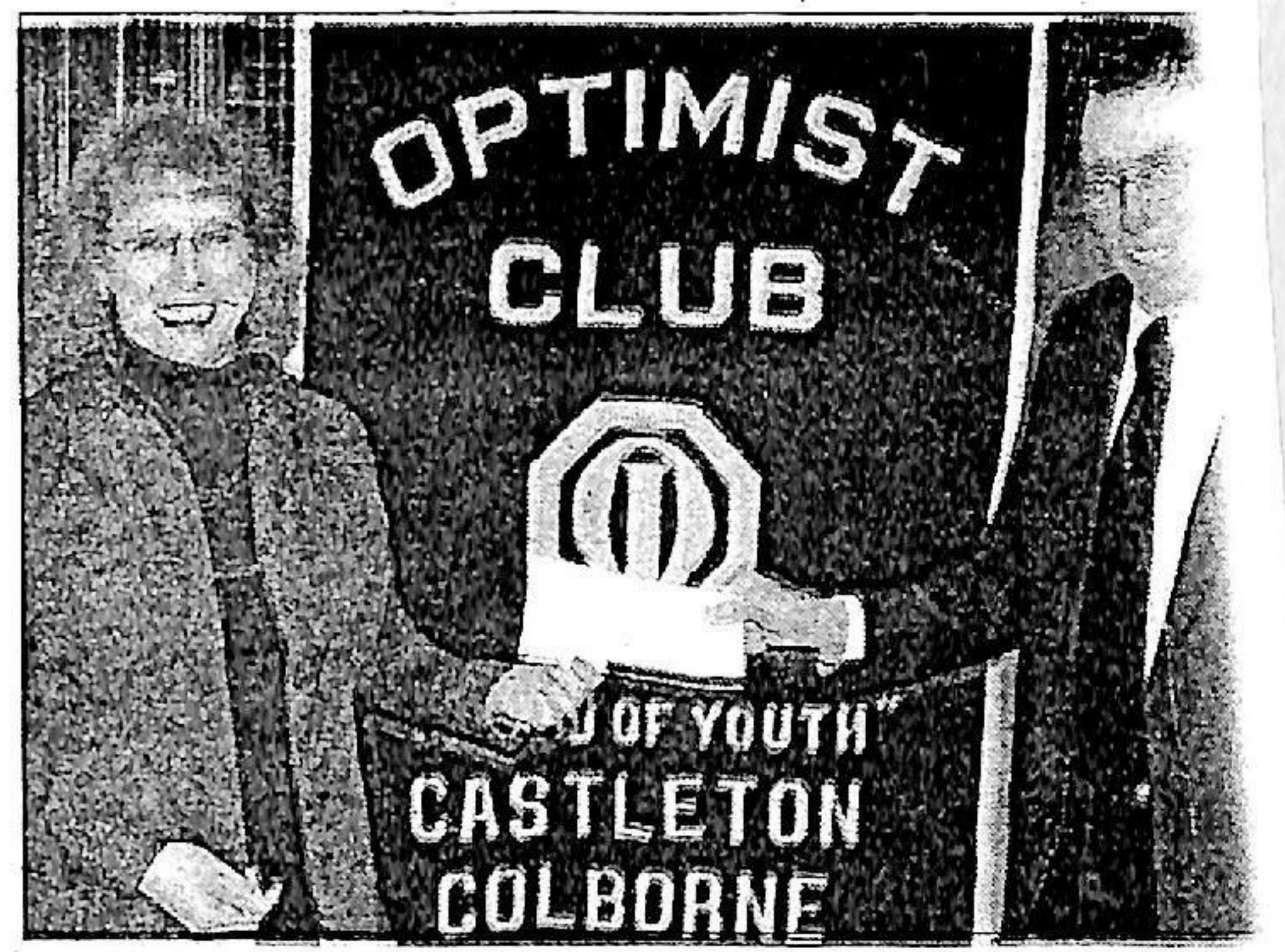
He also wonders what other options were considered by board administrators before they settled on this one. None have been divulged.

After speaking with Ms. Dickson, Cathy Galt proposed that people fighting to keep the Castleton school open stress the benefits for the children in attendance at the school.

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CHARITY SPIEL RAISES OVER \$2,300

Bob Rusk, President of the Castleton Colborne Optimists thanks Laurie Carrol of the Colborne Curling Club for the donation of \$2,308. The club raised the money at a special, curling, euchre, shuffleboard charity spiel in January.



Ratepayers object Continued from page 1

jobs in neighbouring municipalities catch up. She also pushed for performance evaluation, a sentiment that was repeated by others in the ratepayers' association.

In discussions with Mrs. Dobson, Cramahe Mayor Marc Coombs assured her performance appraisals will be done by this council.

He repeated that goal when he appeared as a guest of the members at their February 8 meeting at Friendship House in Colborne and promised he and Clerk Administrator Christie Alexander would be conducting the evaluations this year.

He went on to add that he hoped to see council approve the red circling of some salaries which are felt to be too high after it has completed a pay-equity review.

The Cramahe Ratepayers Association executive, at an earlier meeting proposed that department heads be based solely on merit.

Member Ed Greenwood offered his account of a discussion he had a few years ago with Bill Weingard. The two considered the possibility that the increases put into place were a means of "building a ladder" up to his recently approved salary level.

On a similar note Pat Calder wondered

about the logic of raising someone's pay when their qualifications haven't changed.

As one of the final people to speak, M. Greenwood observed that the public would be more accepting of staff salaries if they thought the staffers were doing a capable job. He could see the sense of giving a raise to build morale and develop a team approach.

He did go on to suggest that council should have all the information in front of them before voting.

Mayor Coombs explained that the current situation was inherited. Much of the unhappiness about pay ranges stems from open council discussions in which they were reviewed. This was a first in Cramahe Township, and it has made some staff members uncomfortable.

If people resign in the next three years of his term, the mayor proposed that the remaining staff share the responsibilities. He noted that, in the past term, people would be hired for 10 hours, then jump to 20 and on to full-time employment by the township.

His council is dedicated to keeping taxes down and has instructed staff to work toward zero budget increases when they meet in March to set the numbers for 2007.

Raise controversy Continued from page 1

municipalities published in the *Chronicle*.

It's a one-year deal and tells staff that they are appreciated by council, noted the deputy mayor.

That didn't convince Councillor Gilligan, either.

He admitted he would have voted differently on December 19 if he had had

the information he has now. "I'm a big enough person to change my mind," he added.

The councillor saw his suggestion as a way to correct an error and carry on.

When the call came for a seconder to Councillor Gilligan's motion, none came, and the motion died.