

## Parents complaining on short school days

Halton Board of Education expressed concern at the meeting Thursday about an increasing reduction of time students are spending in classroom instruction.

The discussion was triggered by a letter from Mrs. J. Vanderlinden of Glen Williams. Mrs. Vanderlinden said she was distressed about the fact that children seem to spend less time in school every year.

She noted her teenage daughter had just been home for a week because it was exam time and her son in senior public school was just completing his fourth day off because of professional development days for the teachers.

"So much time is wasted. By the time the first of June comes around all attention is turned to play days, field days, music festivals, trips and the like."

### Students watch movies

The writer noted that in addition to this the teachers had planning periods during which the students watched movies. Mrs. Vanderlinden linked her complaint about reducing hours to the allegation that children have trouble reading and writing.

"Seventy five per cent of the teachers I have dealt with should never have been in the profession in the first place. They are in it for the long holidays and the short work days, so it seems."

"I do want you to know that there are many people concerned about the quality of costly education their children are receiving," she wrote.

Director of Education Jim Singleton noted he had personally received seven calls complaining about the same matter. He noted that while only seven or eight spoke out there are generally about 20 others who feel the same way for each one who speaks. "That represents a fairly substantial number of people," he said.

Trustee Ernie Bodnar of Georgetown said he understood that this year exam days were to be included as instruction days.

### Elected to stay away

Superintendent of Instruction Orin Gilmore said the intention was for students to write exams in the morning and attend class in the afternoons. He said in some cases students had elected not to attend the classes and classes had to be cancelled.

He said he was looking into the situation and remarked it won't happen again.

Trustee Fred Armitage said he had been told of students being out of school in high schools early in the afternoon. He said he suspected attendance taking wasn't being watched as it should. "I hear about it in my area and I wonder if I could get the feeling of the administration. Is it a prevailing thing?"

"My feeling is, we should look into it — and soon," said Em Lavender, assistant to the director.

## HALTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

### Board under budget

Halton Board of Education will be within budget for the 1974 operation, trustees learned at their meeting Thursday in Burlington.

Superintendent of Business and Finance Bruce Lindley told the Board that spendings in the elementary school panel exceeded budgets by \$108,000 and schools for the trainable retarded exceeded budgets by \$16,000. Lindley noted however, that spendings at the secondary level were under budget estimates by \$338,000.

In the coming weeks the board will develop a budget for 1974. Halton Hills trustee Tom Watson is chairman of the committee working on the budget.

### Urge common assault to protest Bill 275

Halton Board of Education should meet with both elementary and secondary teachers in the region with a view to launching a common assault against the provincial government as a protest against Bill 275. That statement was made by Bill Priestner, chairman of the Halton Board at Thursday's meeting.

That bill would commit both teachers and trustees to binding arbitration. Chairman Priestner said the legislation, if enacted, would erode the role of the trustee with regard to responsibility and accountability.

Priestner noted that while the bill commits both sides to binding arbitration it doesn't rule out strikes or contain any statement about management rights.

### Ratio is sacred cow

Priestner said that under no conditions should the pupil-teacher ratio become a negotiable item. "That is a sort of sacred cow and if we give up that, we give up the right to manage the schools to a certain extent."

The pupil-teacher ratio has a direct bearing on how many teachers are required for a school of children and in turn it has a direct result on the budget.

Some alternative to binding compulsory arbitration should be found, Priestner said. The legislation is expected to be dealt with in the legislature this spring.

Education Minister Thomas Wells introduced legislation in December that would have withdrawn the right to strike or to mass resignation for teachers. That bill was eventually withdrawn.

### Only middle school

Georgetown Trustee Ernie Bodnar told Halton Board of Education Thursday that many families were moving into a neighborhood near Centennial School in Georgetown. He said they felt they had made a wise buy until they realized the area's school is for grades six, seven and eight.

Bodnar pointed the finger at real estate salesmen but wondered if the school could be renamed to indicate it is a middle school or to indicate which grades it handled.

The question was taken under advisement.



LIONS POOL canvasser Bill Coats has his territory assigned by campaign chairman Vic Bristow. Big map in headquarters at the Mill-Willow corner shows all town streets to be covered. Letters are going out to rural residents asking them to participate, too. Lions are confident the drive will be successful.

## Creative playground at Pineview school

A group of about 30 parents of children at Pineview School are actively involved in developing a creative playground for the school. While the concept is a rather simple one, creative playgrounds are a relatively new element in Halton schools.

The program at Pineview was instigated by teacher Herb Pilles who had become familiar with similar projects in other areas.

In some areas up to \$100,000 has been spent on elaborate plans and equipment. Pilles felt the concept was a good

one but couldn't justify that kind of expenditure.

Do it ourselves  
"I felt we could do it ourselves for a lot less. There is a lot of value in simple things," says Pilles.

Pilles presented his ideas first to fellow teachers and then to the parents in the community. At the latter stage it could have gone either way, according to Pilles.

Pilles recalled parents being excited over the idea and eager to help. He has managed to gather a cross section of people, many having access to building materials of one kind or another.

Swing, fort  
While plans aren't finalized, two things being considered for the playground include a swing-like affair constructed of wood and a fort which would allow students to climb and jump and generally have a fun time. Included in the model of the fort is a sliding pole similar to that firemen use to quickly get from the upper floor in a fire hall to the ground floor.

A committee of parents and teachers are currently gathering material and getting ready for the construction of the playground equipment.

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## David Morris performs with Ont. Youth Band

Music at its very finest was the reward of a talented Acton youth recently when, out of approximately 300 contestants from all of Ontario, David Morris of Elizabeth Dr., was chosen as one of 80 young people to participate in a five-day music clinic in London, Ontario.

For the 16 year old, grade 11 student of Acton High, it was a tremendous experience never to be forgotten. It was stimulating, exciting, and above all, it was a touch into the realms of the finest music to which few people have the opportunity to be exposed.

Music in every form was experienced by the youngsters with some of the world's greatest leading them into the fantasy of the woodwind and brass with continual rounds of listening and practising all wrapped into sessions of musical absorption.

Leaving Acton last Wednesday morning bound for London, David was manned with his suitcase and bass clarinet. Members of the band were billeted in fours in London homes, mostly with families of other members of the band.

Marine's conductor It was a continuation of music clinics every morning, whole band work-outs in the afternoon, with six hours of practising each day. Trumpet, French horn, brass band, saxophone, and the talented youngsters were able to watch the world's top musicians perform and present their renditions of musical masterpieces.

Culminating the five-day learning span was the concert presented as the finale by the Youth Band of Ontario in an auditorium-packed audience at London's Centennial hall.

The 80, chosen Ontario's most talented youngsters,

synchronized their talents to blend with those of special guest conductor Sir Vivian Dunn, of London, England, renowned as the principal conductor of the Royal Marines.

Also participating in Monday's final concert was, as soloist, Eugene Rousseau, on the saxophone with St. Peter's Cathedral school choir performing as assisting artists under conductorship of Robert Towers.

From Acton to see the concert, were David's parents Vic and Joan Morris. Sitting in on the Saturday clinic at Fanshawe college, watching the players perform, was the teacher responsible for David's success, George Elliott, bandmaster of the Acton Citizens' band, who had worked constantly with the young musician giving special instruction and encouragement.

## Investigate 8 collisions

Milton OPP were summoned to investigate eight collisions in the north of the region between Jan. 27 and Feb. 2.

A total of \$2,330 damage was done to vehicles. Four people sustained personal injuries in four of these crashes.

Seven drivers will be required to appear in court. Causes of the accidents have been attributed to inattentive driving, unsafe lane change and speed too fast for road, weather and traffic conditions.

To David, it was the happening of a lifetime and, back home, between bashing at the puck during ice hockey sessions and taking cross-country ski jaunts with his family, he can, reportedly, be heard this past few days, practising diligently some of the tricks and new skills taught last week at the London clinic.

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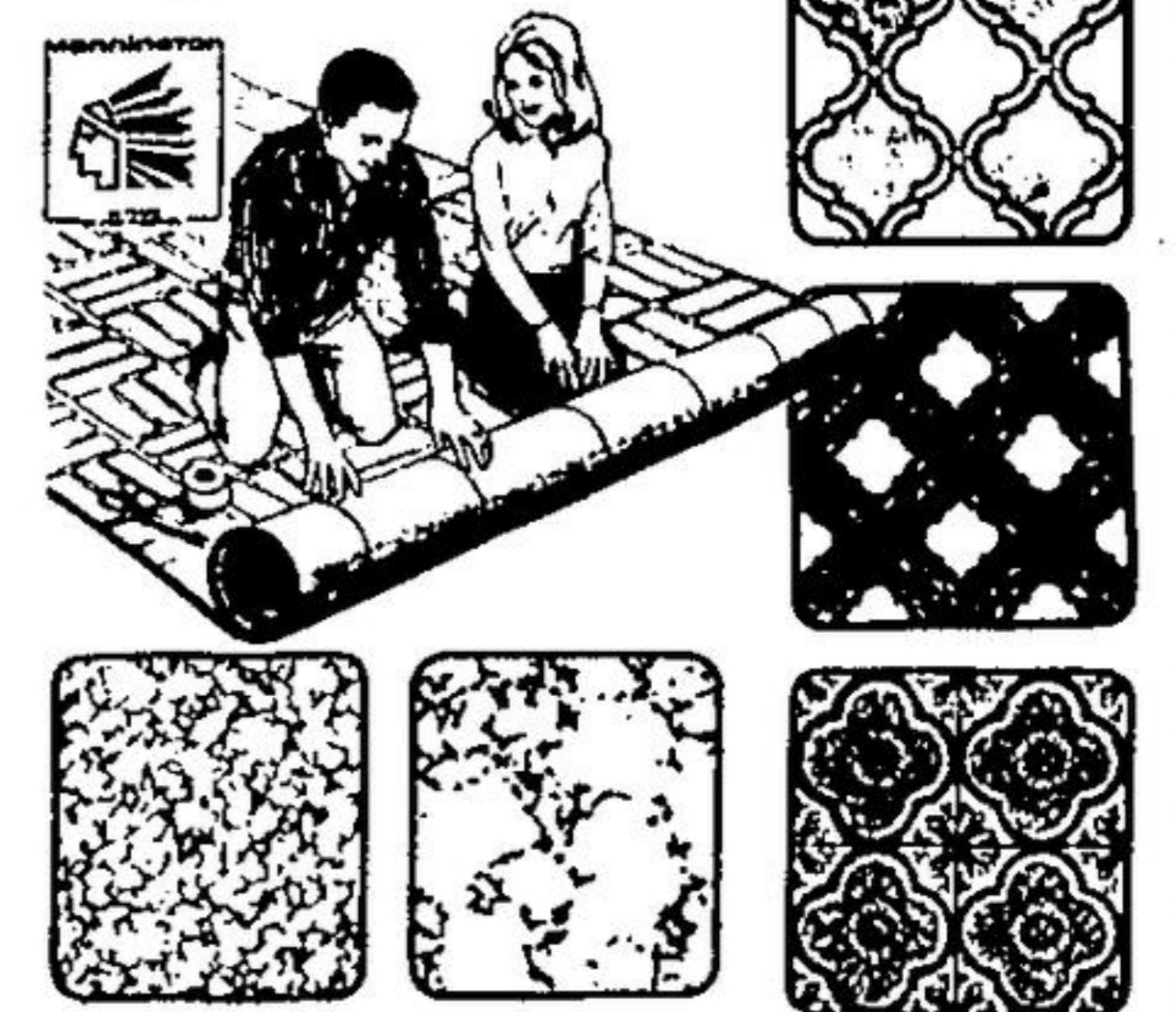
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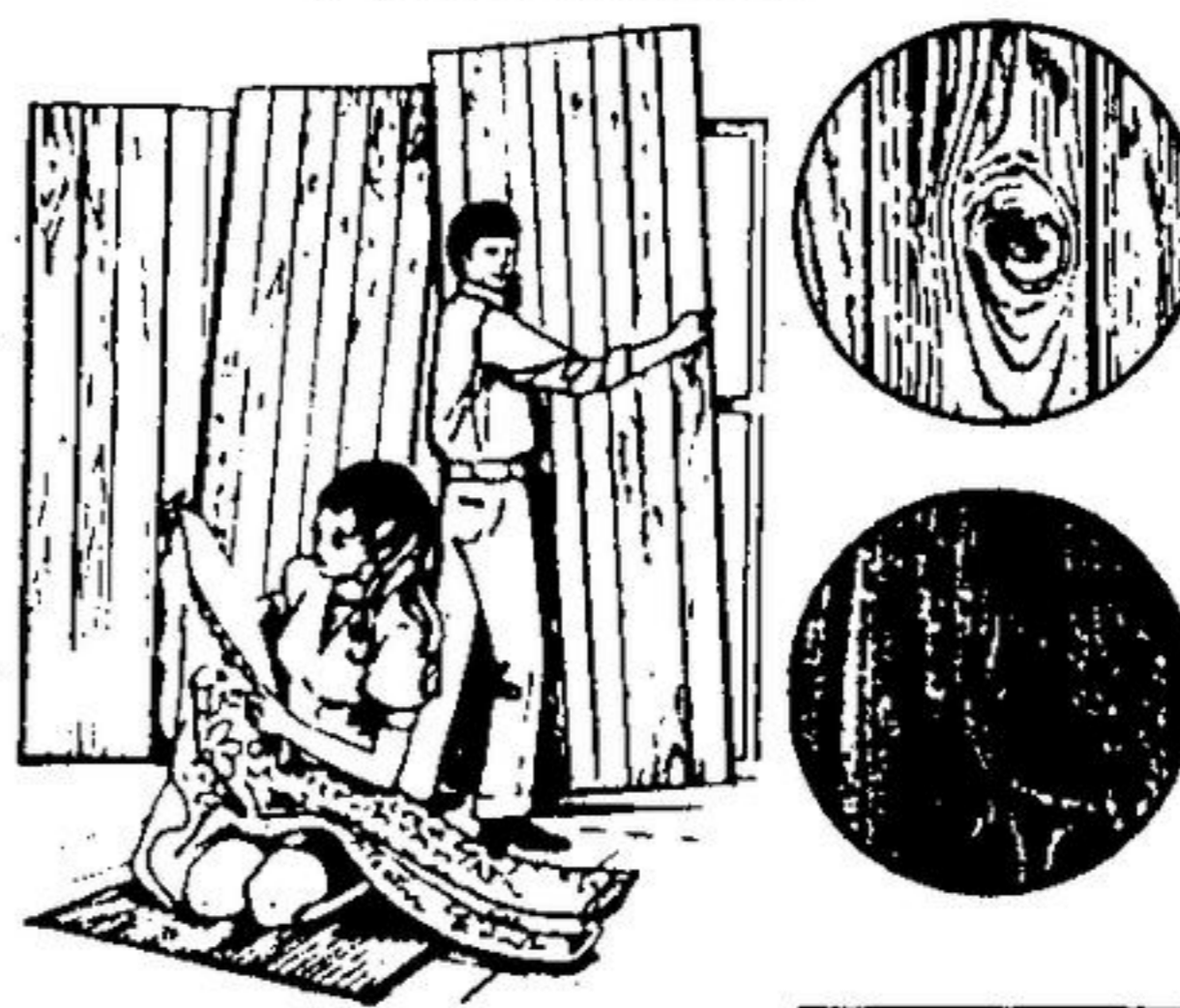
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## ANNOUNCEMENT

### New Agency Appointment

The Crop Insurance Commission of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food is pleased to announce the appointment of

MR. CLIFFORD G. BROWN  
360 George St., Milton  
878-4596

as an Agent to represent the Commission in the Halton area.

As an agent for the Commission, Mr. Brown will be calling on farmers in his area to make the government approved crop insurance program available to them. Mr. Brown becomes a valued member of the Commission's force of over 150 agents in the Province, and farmers in the area wishing crop insurance information are asked to contact him.