

Santa Claus drives own 'reindeer' in Saturday's parade

With Acton's best Santa Claus parade by far bringing in nothing but praise, and with \$200 in the bank, the parade committee already says there'll be another one next year. The Y's Men will again spearhead the event which was so successful this year.

Despite ice, rain and chilly weather, over 300 set out from the station Saturday on foot, on floats and on hooves to delight an enthusiastic crowd all the way to the scout hall. There they warmed up with doughnuts and hot chocolate served by the Scout and Guide Mothers. Ingredients were provided through donations.

Prize winners

First prize float was the large one entered by Speyside school. It was filled with smiling and waving children in costumes. The first prize was \$50.

Churchill community church was the only church to enter, and their participants depicted a reverent manger

scene. They won second prize of \$35.

In third place was the skating club with a colorful float by youngsters in costume. Their prize was \$15.

The judges were M.P.P. Julian Reed, mayor Tom Hill, Elsie Syme and Helen Jocque.

The committee's financial statement lists all the contributions which totalled \$598.75. Expenditures are \$375. The balance of about \$200 is already in a new bank account for next year's parade.

Santa

Santa's entry into town was completely unique—he came down the street driving his own hackney pony "Spunky" in a newly-painted cutter. Bert Robertson's high stepping pony evoked bursts of admiration as it pranced down the road disguised as a reindeer.

Mr. Robertson affixed antlers artfully to pony's head and it stole the show. Mr. Robertson said the animal didn't mind

the antlers at all.

Spunky is two years old and he has had her since she was a colt. He painted the cutter especially for the parade and loaded it with gifts.

Snowman

Another impressive entry was the Y's Men's 20-foot high snowman, which inched and swayed down the street at the front of the parade. It had taken many nights of preparation. It will be preserved and hopefully will march again.

The firefighters had three entries. The Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe, a Christmas scene, and their old fire truck. Firefighters also acted as parade marshals with genial enthusiasm.

All of them

Participants were Acton Skating club, the Y's Men, Halton Hills Electric, Halton Hills works department, Marilyn's Boutique, Georgetown Kinsmen, Speyside public

school, Acton fire department, Acton Snowmobile club, Junior Farmers, Page Glass, Rockwood Gardens, Halton Regional Police, Halton Hills Collision, Churchill Community Church, Country Mart, Acton Agricultural Society, Ospringe cubs and scouts, Acton scouts, guides, brownies, beavers and cubs, Jennifer Barr with her donkey, and various district riders with their horses.

Reception

The Y was filled with bright balloons and decorated with streamers for the time that Santa Claus received his subjects, after the parade. A throne was set up at one end of the room and youngsters marched bashfully up onto the platform in turn.

Bewickered Ron Douglas welcomed his callers quietly and talked with each one for a little while.

Photographer Jim Jennings took orders for pictures of the kids with Santa.

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Christmas program on local network

The new network of Halton Cable Systems including Georgetown, Acton and Milton will have a special Christmas program on the local Channel 5 on Christmas Eve in Georgetown and the night before in Acton and Milton.

The special Christmas program includes the Georgetown Choral Society's Prelude to Christmas, St. John's United Church, Georgetown Christmas pageant and the Watch Night service from Knox Presbyterian church in Georgetown. Programs begin at 6 p.m. both nights.

The local channel has been shut down since last June and the carousel of pictures and announcements is all that has been offered to viewers until this special Christmas program.

Halton Cable Systems hopes to have regular local programming when they procure a suitable studio, either in Georgetown or near the transmitter at Speyside.

SIGHT OF SANTA amazes two-year-old Andy Rauwerda, Cook St., at the big Beardmore party Saturday afternoon. His parents are Henne and Bill Rauwerda. Miss Acton Fair Jill Parry, in the background, helped Santa Nellis cope with the crowds.

Christmas issue

Next week and the week after The Free Press will be published on Tuesday rather than Wednesday.

News and ads should be in to the office on the Monday of each week for publication.

Next week's paper is expected to be large and special. It will contain the Christmas greeting ad-

vertisements of the many friendly people who are in business in the district. There will also be more personal greetings ads from people who have chosen to send their best wishes this way, rather than sending out cards.

Some pictures and stories have also been held over for next week's paper.

Rural arena first says committee

An arena-recreation complex in the rural areas of Halton Hills was suggested for the 1976-1980 capital budget by the Acton and Esqueping Recreation Advisory Committee at the December 9 meeting.

Pam Sheldon, outraged at a suggestion by Halton Hills

councillor Mike Armstrong for a third arena in Georgetown, declared that if such a structure is built, it should be in the central rural areas.

Elmer Dunn, at his first meeting of the committee, told the group Limestone would be the most logical place. He pointed out that

there was one arena in Acton, two in Georgetown, but none in Esqueping.

Ron Mitchell felt it would be hopeless to suggest a new arena very far from Acton because they will need a new one some day.

Peter Papillon, after listen-

ing to his fellow advisors, interrupted. "We have to forget about having Acton and Georgetown. We are Halton Hills now."

Mr. Dunn felt that if an arena went in the rural areas, it would start the identification of one town instead of separate towns thrown together by regional government.

A location of the prospective arena was tossed around with many suggestions coming from the floor. Mr. Mitchell said that the Speyside area was central to everything. John Cooper, recreation program co-ordinator verified Mr. Mitchell's statement. Mr. Mitchell was also

not in favor of putting the complex in an area which will only be close to 1,000 of the town's 30,000 population.

Mr. Dunn pointed out that when he was a boy living in Toronto, the city erected such a complex just north of the metropolis. People were so glad to have it, they did not mind driving a distance to it. He explained that now the city has grown around the complex, and even though it is in the middle of an industrial area, it is still in use.

The group finally decided to suggest an area southeast of Acton in the northwest section of Esqueping.

The arena recreation complex idea has been placed in the advisory group's list of capital budget suggestions which still must be passed by the General Administration Committee, before getting into the budget recommendations.

GO takes over Gray Coach operations in North Halton

GO Transit will take over the operations of Gray Coach Bus Lines in North Halton February 15.

GO spokesman Tom Henry said this week GO will take over operation of the Guelph, Rockwood, Acton, Georgetown, Brampton, Islington and Toronto east bound buses and the buses which made the same stops going from Toronto to Guelph.

He said the Gray Coach operations will be taken over the same day as the new Georgetown GO bus service to York Mills subway station in North Metro Toronto starts.

"We have taken over Gray Coach's operations in North Halton so we can come up with two bus services. This system will eliminate between intercity bus service and interregional bus service," he explained.

The takeover of Gray Coach operations the service Hills by GO Transit will have no effect on the special GO bus service started in mid-

November to bring Guelph, Rockwood and Acton commuters to the Georgetown GO station.

GO Transit will take over Gray Coach operations of buses from Milton through Streetsville to Toronto.

Henry noted Gray Coach will continue to operate its Guelph to Toronto express bus which travels via Highways 6 and 401.

When GO takes over Gray Coach operations the service will operate with a mixture of both GO buses and Gray Coach buses.

This new GO Transit service will continue to stop at Moore Park Plaza, downtown and Georgetown Market Centre in Georgetown and Watson's Restaurant in Acton.

There will be nine buses going to Toronto each day and 10 to Guelph each day on this route. One extra west bound bus is added on Saturdays.

Despite the change in ownership GO will continue with Gray Coach's parcel service.

Gray Coach operates GO Transit bus operations throughout Ontario in much the same way as CN handles GO's train system.

Duby saves birds

The waterfowl on Fairy Lake, Acton are safe for the winter, due to Councillor Les Duby's concern for feathered friends.

He convinced Halton Hills council to come up with \$1,200 to cover the cost of feed for this winter, and asked them to form a long range policy on a bird sanctuary.

He said the birds would either starve or freeze, since they have lost the habit of migrating. He said a pump

should be installed to aerate the water, so ice does not form and trap the birds.

Duby said plans to take them to a large lake would not work since these birds are used to the small lake and "some are known on a first name basis". He said interested people have kept the birds fed.

"Whether or not we are going to continue having a bird sanctuary in Fairy Lake, we still have to feed them this

winter or they'll starve". Mayor Tom Hill pointed out the C.V.C.A. feeds waterfowl at Orangeville dam, and a staff member is assigned to look after them.

Duby said had advice had been received from the Department of Natural Resources. "Let's do it ourselves."

Council agreed, and decided to pay the cost of feeding the birds.

Bus business said improving

Business is picking up on the Christmas bus, says driver Lawrence Hemsley.

At first people weren't aware when or where they could catch the bus but now they're beginning to find it handy. A map of the routes and times appears in today's Free Press.

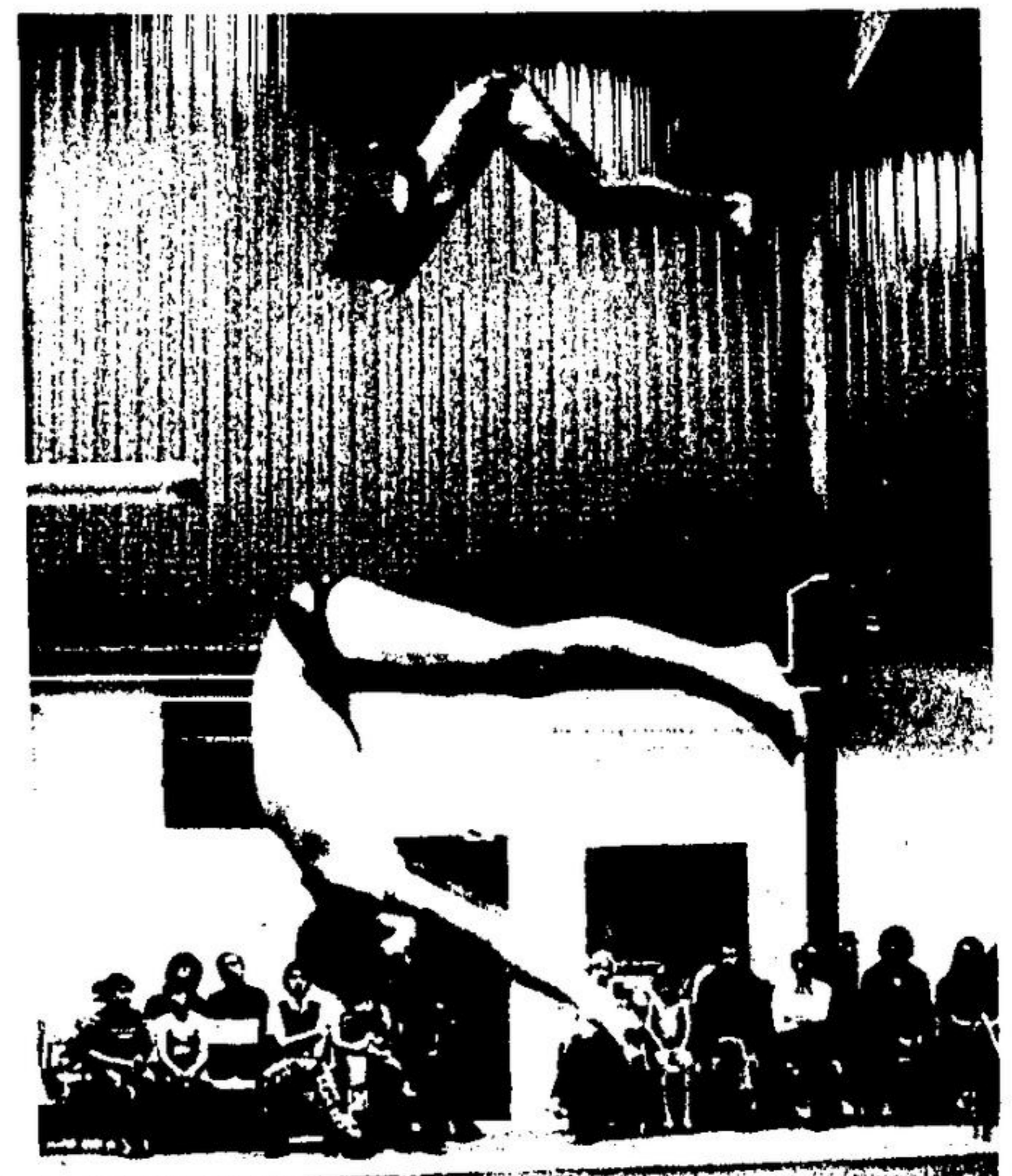
The bus runs daily, except Sundays, from 9 to 12 noon and then again from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

back to the police office every 20 minutes.

Decals in store windows indicate the merchants who have made donations toward the bus.

Early gift

Somebody took himself a little Christmas gift on the weekend. A string of colored outdoor lights was reported taken from a Tyler Ave. home.



SUSPENDED ANIMATION? Russ Gray, foreground and Ray Kingsmill demonstrate the inward pike dive at the first aquatic show in Acton with 60 swimmers taking part on Friday.

Price too high for town homes may replace park

Faced with a high price for Acton land on Elizabeth Drive, backing on Fairy Lake, originally sought for parkland, Halton Hills council decided to suggest single family homes for the area. They stipulated the back part would be dedicated as parkland.

Rugby Construction, was sought for parkland, with the town, the C.V.C.A. and the Region paying a share.

Councillor Ric Morrow reported the Region wants nothing to do with it, and Mayor Tom Hill said the original asking price, CVCA, on a cut-down budget, was not buying land.

Planner Mario Venditti pointed out under the R3

the price was too high, and pointed out the town had previously stated they would pay no more than \$50,000 as their share.

Councillor Pat McKenzie said the price had been reduced considerably from the original asking price.

Councillor Joe Hurst maintained only single family homes should be allowed on Elizabeth Drive, with the remainder at the back dedi-

ated for parkland.

Councillor Les Duby explained this was reclaimed land, which involved a court action at one time. He said he would prefer to see it all as parkland, but if that was not possible the next best thing would be the single family homes with parkland at the back and a walkway for the

public.

Councillor Morrow suggested the planner meet with the developer and see what could be worked out with houses only on the street.

With the agreement of the three Acton councillors, council recommended the consultation with the planner and developer.