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Eighteen Pages—Fifteen Cents



Old 1976 is just about finished . . . join him in looking back on a year of people in the news, on Page 2 of today's Free Press.

Five trucks to fight \$10,000 blaze

Fire fighters from Acton and Milton joined forces to combat an approximately \$10,000 blaze in the upper storey of Marilyn Ottaway's home on 25 Sideroad near the 6th Line Monday night.

Acton sent two trucks and stayed until after Milton's three vehicles arrived to take over the task. Milton stayed about three hours and Acton for about two. The fire was reported about 7:20 p.m.

Mrs. Ottaway was alone at home at the time, and was taken to Guelph General Hospital, but Milton OPP said she was not taken to Guelph as a result of the fire.

Sick Fire chief Mick Holmes said that Mrs. Ottaway had been sick and that her brother and sister came to the house to see how she was when they noticed the fire.

The fire is believed to have started in a bedroom and heat and smoke quickly spread through the upper floor of the farmhouse.

Milton fire chief A. E. Clement said that the fire is still under investigation, and that no definite cause for the blaze has been pinned down.

Fire chief Holmes said that there was smoke damage

through the upstairs, and water damage below.

Mrs. Ottaway's two children were away at the time. Mrs. Ottaway is the proprietress of Marilyn's Village Boutique on Mill Street East.

Christmas Day crash sends four to hospital

A two-car collision on Christmas Day at the intersection of Highways 24 and 25 resulted in four people being sent to hospital for cuts and bruises. Guelph Ontario Provincial Police report.

Vehicles driven by Hendrick Jansen, R. R. 4, Rockwood and Joost Drost, R. R. 2, Staffa sustained an estimated \$2700 in total damages. Passengers in both cars, Zwaantje Jansen and Sini Drost and the drivers were taken to Guelph General Hospital, where they were treated and released.

The incident occurred at 11:30 a.m.

Mr. and Mrs. Jansen are the parents of Hendrick Jansen, the 23-year-old who was killed November 13 on Highway 25 just south of Hillsburgh in a two car crash which claimed two lives.

Sanding

Halton Hills sanders were out by 8 p.m. Monday evening and worked through the night covering snow-laden roads, according to Works superintendent Frank Morette.



ACTON AND Milton firefighters battle the \$10,000 blaze at the Ottaway home Monday night. Falling snowflakes appear as blobs in the picture.



KICKING UP THEIR heels in the cabaret number at the high school Christmas concert are lively grade 13 students. It was one of the highlights of a sparkling program which featured originality and outrageous humor. Front row, left to right, Carol Grant, Sherry Ferguson, Sandra Early, Josee Charlesbois, Linda

McKenzie, Bev Duval, Becky Baxter, Shirley Mason, Deb Rippon, Susan Bruce and Rhona Silcock. Some of the male chorus line members, shown in the back, are John Gorjup, Neil McMillan, Alex Pitt, Robin Inscow, Dave Hannah and Steve Stanley.

Special meeting

Region will choose new chairman by secret ballot

Halton Regional Council members will cast secret ballots to choose a chairman for the new term, when the 1977-78 council meets at a special meeting next Tuesday, Jan. 4 at 4 p.m.

The idea is that council will debate the election of a chairman along with the terms of reference for the job, the pay, the expense allowance and the provision of a car.

At that meeting all of the people interested in holding the position for the two year term will make presentations to council and answer questions from the floor.

This is the first time the regional council has had to choose a chairman. Current chairman Allan Masson was appointed by the provincial government for the first three year term of Halton Region.

Division Prior to that the choosing of a warden under the old county system of government was often a controversial matter. The election of a chairman has the potential of causing a lot of division and antagonism within the council itself.

It was with that in mind that councillors agreed to a straw vote by secret ballot.

Clerk Garfield Brown told the council that secret ballot or no secret ballot, he was required by law to call for an open stand-up vote at the inaugural meeting of council Wednesday, Jan. 12.

"I have to call on you to openly declare your vote at the inaugural meeting. What the boys in the backroom declare or don't declare is of no concern to me," he said.

While council has no legal status as yet and can not accept motions or vote on them, there is nothing to stop councillors from holding an informal caucus at which they can make agreements.

Unanimous The meeting on Jan. 4 will be open and the debate will be public, but the voting will be secret. If everything goes according to plan, all councillors will then vote for the winner at the inaugural and no-one will have to know who supported whom for the post.

Halton Hills Councillor Ric Morrow was a strong advocate of the secret ballot. He said the secret vote on matters of this nature is an integral part of the democratic system and the only way to protect each person's rights from pressure and arm-

twisting.

"I'm opposed to a stand-up vote. I've seen what happens in a stand-up vote," he added. Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett opposed the idea of a caucus meeting. "I object to this, I want an open vote. This is just trying to circumvent the rules. You go into caucus and make deals and God only knows what goes on. I saw it in the County (County Council).

"In the open" "I didn't admire it and I don't want any part of it. Do it in the open. Do it by the rules," he said.

Councillor Morrow argued that councillors who did not support the winner could be subjected to two years of misery because they did not want him.

"There is only one way to protect the democratic right of choice and that is by secret ballot. It is too damn bad the law doesn't allow for it. Thank God those voters who vote for us are protected by the secret ballot," he said.

Barrett said, under the county system it was so secret he wasn't even invited to the caucus meeting, because he didn't support the right people.

Councillor Jim Watson said he supported the secret ballot but recalled Councillors Morrow scuttling a similar attempt to do just that under the county system.

Burlington Mayor-elect Mary Munro said she felt the chairman should be elected by the electors in a region-wide vote. She conceded, however, that as long as that isn't possible Councillor Morrow's proposal for a secret ballot is the best way to go.

The inaugural meeting for regional council will be held Jan. 12. Following the swearing-in of the members and the election of the chairman, a reception with wine and cheese will be held.

Chairman Allan Masson, defeated Burlington Mayor

George Harrington, Burlington alderman Jack Raftis and former Burlington Reeve and County Warden Jim Swinborough are among the serious contenders in the race.

Several councillors have indicated support for Masson but at least one councillor claims Raftis has an inside track.

Nobody seems confident enough to take bets at this point, however, David Coons, the man who had appeared to be grooming himself for the big job and who had a certain amount of support, now says he wouldn't touch it with a 10-foot pole.

Some councillors claim Coons was actively but quietly soliciting support prior to the Dec. 6 election.

Water break—frost "unreal"

A water break on Churchill S. Monday evening gushed water up into the ditch and over the roadway. The break was first discovered about 6 p.m. and the repair work was not completed (ill about 3.30 a.m. Houses in the neighborhood were without water much of that time.

The regional workmen had to struggle through four feet of solidly frozen ground to

locate the break. One of them said the frost condition of the ground was "unreal". A backhoe and other equipment were brought from Milton and a sand truck from Georgetown. The sander was required since water was pouring onto the roadway, making driving hazardous.

One regional workman from Acton, Brent Marshall, with two from Georgetown and one from Milton were in-

involved many hours in the repairs here.

There were also two water breaks in Georgetown the

past week. The lines break more frequently in winter, when frost is deep in the ground.

Animal hospital is fully equipped

In the past several weeks, the old James Henry Reed home on the corner of Main and River Streets has been completely renovated to provide the residents of Acton with an animal hospital.

Dr. Ron Trenton, a graduate of the Guelph Veterinary College, has moved to Acton from the Kleinburg area to take over where the now retired Dr. Frank Oakes left off. He and his family live in the same building as the hospital so he may provide round-the-clock care for animals which may have to stay over night.

The new veterinarian is looking forward to meeting the people of Acton and treating their pets. While in Kleinburg he worked on race horses and small animals. He also practiced in Lexington,

Kentucky for a short time. His hospital, complete with examining room and operating room, is equipped to handle ten to 20 patients a day. X-Ray equipment, kennels, operating equipment and many other veterinarian paraphernalia have been purchased by the doctor in order that his patients will have the best of care.

It was Dr. Trenton's love of animals as a child which led him to choose this as a career. He explained he had dogs, cats, gerbils, turtles and horses—to name a few.

His wife Carolyn will help him in the office, as well as caring for their two daughters ages one year and one month. Dr. Trenton is always liked small towns and is eager to get his practice underway.

Three inaugurals slated next week

Halton Hills council, Milton council and Halton Board of Education members will be inaugurated into their respective offices next week.

Halton Hills Council will hold its inaugural meeting Wednesday, Jan. 5 at 2 p.m. Clerk Doug Pritchard said the meeting would be curtailed to the swearing-in ceremony followed by a reception with coffee and sandwiches.

The inaugural meeting for Milton Council is planned for Wednesday, Jan. 5. Councillors will be sworn into office and following some short speeches, newly elected and returning councillors will mingle with the public at a reception.

The following night (Thursday) members elected to the Halton Board of Education will hold an inaugural meeting at the board headquarters, Guelph Line, Burlington.

The board traditionally

elects a chairman for the year at the inaugural meeting. Traditionally no regular business is handled at the first meeting.

On Wednesday, Jan. 12 Halton Regional Council will hold its inaugural meeting at 1:30 p.m. in the regional office in Burlington.

A wine and cheese reception open to the public will follow.

Regional council will officially elect a chairman for the new term that day, but if plans go according to schedule the election by that time will be just a formality. Plans call for a straw vote to be taken prior to the inaugural meeting.

The idea of the straw vote is to protect members from revealing which candidate they support for the chairman's job. The first vote will be by secret ballot and the stand-up vote in council Jan. 12 will legalize and confirm the action already taken.

Merchants happy with post-construction sales

Downtown merchants were very pleased with Christmas trade since the Mill St. paving was completed, according to Chamber of Commerce member Paul Neilsen.

The store owner said a lot of the merchants he spoke to had experienced record sales in the last day or two before Christmas, after losing an estimate half million to \$600,000 in sales during the reconstruction period.

Accident in Rockwood takes Arthur man's life

An Arthur man was killed on Main St. in Rockwood Thursday morning when his car went out of control and rammmed into a tree.

Guelph Ontario Provincial Police said James Robert Forrest, 28, of R.R. 1 Arthur died and a passenger Daniel

Bonus, 17 of R.R. 1, Rockwood received cuts and bruises. The accident occurred near the intersection of Highway 7 at 1.30 a.m.

Mr. Forrest is survived by his wife Judy Breese, children Willy, Wendy and David, all at home, his

parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Forrest, Rockwood, three brothers, George, Leonard, and Les all of Rockwood, three sisters, Phyllis (Mrs. W. McDonald) of Arizona, Sharon (Mrs. S. Franchetta) and Kathy (Mrs. D. Kocjuk) both of Guelph. He

was predeceased by one daughter, Barbara.

Funeral service was held from Skipper O'Drowsky Funeral Home Friday, with Archdeacon F. A. Hill officiating. Interment took place at Woodlawn Cemetery.



DR. RON TRENTON is setting up an animal hospital on the corner of Main and River Streets. His new equipment was being delivered last week and patients are being lined up.