

Committee concerned over trend towards fewer farms

A report published by Halton Region's Planning Department says that 14 acres of agricultural land went out of production every day between 1966 and 1971. The same report indicates that as of 1971 61 per cent of the farms in the region are owner operated. That compares to 71 per cent in 1961. "This statistic reflects the speculative activity within the region, but also reflects that many of the farms held in speculation are being operated by tenant farmers, which allows the land to remain in production until non-agricultural development occurs. This statistic also reflects the future possibility of 39 per cent of the farms which are non-owner operated, being withdrawn from agriculture," the report says. Of the four townships Esqueping experienced the lowest rate of farms and

farmland going out of production from 1951 to 1971. In 1951 Esqueping rated third behind Nelson and Trafalgar in the total number of farms. But because of the rapid rate of decline in both Nelson and Trafalgar townships Esqueping was rated as number one with the highest number of farms in the region in 1971. Nassagaweya had the greatest decrease in farmland during the same period. The number of farms has decreased from about 2,100 to 1,100 from 1951 to 1971. Figures used in the report were five years old and were taken from the 1971 census. The 1976 census figures won't be available until this spring. In 1976 there were 1,108 farms producing a total value of products of \$23,192,510 and the average size of a farm was 63.2 acres with an average of 42 acres of improved land.

The report was discussed during a meeting of the region's planning committee Tuesday. Burlington Councillor Ben Ciprietti said the most distressing thing in the report is the reduction in farms and farm sizes in the region. Oakville Councillor Ron Planche said the information is five years old. He expressed concern about the trend that showed farmland was leaving production at a rapid rate. Milton Mayor Don Gordon warned the committee about trying to get involved in the farm operation. "Farmers are cheeased off," he said. Mayor Gordon said that one farmer had told him, "if you want to make a living in farming don't do what the government tells you." Mr. Gordon said that governments must be prepared to assist the farmer but

not try to run his business. He cautioned the committee on what he called "scare tactics." He said that land is really only lost once something is built over it. He pointed out close to 1,000 acres near his home are in production now that haven't been worked for many years. He said the provincial government acquired the land and then leased it out to farmers. He suggested that while ownership changed, land use doesn't necessarily change. After considerable discussion the committee agreed to pass a resolution urging the province to give top priority to keeping farmland in production and to fostering farming as a way of making a living. Preservation of price agricultural lands is developing into one of the major concerns that will be addressed in the regional official plan.

Hints for babysitters in case of emergency

by Larry Brassard
Fire Prevention Officer
A fire can break out in a home for any number of reasons. Children cause many fires and are the chief victims of fire in Canada. If you babysit at any time, you are responsible for the safety of the child or children under your care. You as a babysitter should be fire conscious. Here are some tips you should consider every time you babysit: you should know

the general layout of the house and two exits that can be used in case of a fire; know the phone number of your fire department and keep it by the phone; if you are trapped on the second floor the door must be closed, blankets placed along the bottom of the door, and a window opened; you are not a firefighter and the best thing you can do in case of a fire is get the children out and make sure they don't go back into the burning house; if a child's clothes catch fire,

roll the child on the floor to smother the flames. Use a blanket or rug if it is handy, but don't waste time looking for one; never leave children alone—when they are alone they have accidents.

Remember, plan ahead. Know how to get the children out of the bedrooms if the front or back doors are blocked by smoke. Make sure

you know in advance what all your escape options are. If you keep these hints in mind you should have no problems, or if you have any questions do not hesitate to call the Halton Hills fire department. We are always glad to help.

Rockwood Brownies

by Brown Owl
Mrs. Ellen Thomson
Throughout the month of February, our Brownies prepared for Thinking Week and the combined birthday of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell on February 22. Many of the Brownies wore their uniforms to school as part of the birthday celebration. Special party during the month was a Valentine Party. The Brownies put together "Broken-Heart" puzzles to discover the Valentine customs in United States, Italy, Great Britain and Denmark. Swedish hearts were completed for card exchange. Game activities included two singing dances The

Friendship Dance and Ach Ja (Germany). These will be ready for Thinking Day. Theme "Love" developed for a big red heart for our pennies of friendship. These will be forwarded to The World Friendship Fund. Although we postponed our Thinking Day program, we are looking forward to doing this in March. Some of the Brownies earned awards: Golden Bar—Cheryl Baldwin; Tweenie tests—Johna Ofsonka, Cathy Hawkins. Cookie sales are on. Each box is 75 cents. We hope you will support this campaign. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 9. Keep Smiling!

Christmas Seal campaign

The 1976 Christmas Seal campaign, which officially ended January 31, 1977, was an outstanding success. Receipts totalled \$86,977.50. It is the largest amount ever raised by the Halton Lung Association, formerly the Halton TB and RD Association. It represents an increase of 24 per cent over last year's campaign.

The per capita return was 40.2 cents, based on the population figure of 216,167 for Halton Region. This is the second highest per capita return in all the 33 Associates of the Ontario Lung Association. Lambton County has the highest, with Norfolk-Haldimand third. Nationally, the Ontario Lung Association has the highest per capita

return in all of Canada. Results were encouraging to the local lung association which, after last year's strike-bound campaign, had to curtail expansion of programs in 1976. Although the campaign is officially closed, receipts are still coming in. These will be applied to the coming year's campaign.

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