

# Coons knocks Hill off commission

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JANET BOOTH has prepared her home on Mill St. W. for six to eight senior residents. The new rest home is the culmination of a dream she has had for years.

## Mrs. Booth provides

# Home-like atmosphere for senior citizens

A qualified nurse with 11 years' experience in geriatrics, Mrs. Janet Booth is the proprietor of the new rest home on Mill St. W. One resident lives there now but she expects to have between six and eight when the home is completely filled.

intimate, personal atmosphere intact. Mrs. Booth has just recently moved back to town from out west, saying it was nice in Calgary but her family is here. It has been a life long dream to operate a home like this, Mrs. Booth says. She has wanted to work with old people all her life. In addition to her nursing experience she has a degree

in Human Relations from Humber College. The house has been completely renovated and the basement is being specially set up for games and other recreation. Her daughter Rosemary Schonnop will run the handicraft program. There is 24 hour medical coverage, Mrs. Booth explains.

## Demoted to Constable

# Chief judges officer guilty

An open police hearing found Jason Fields, an 18 year police veteran guilty of using "unnecessary violence" in slapping Gary Sparling twice in the face after a police-car chase last May. Fields will be demoted to rank of first class constable from that of Sergeant. He has been a Halton Regional Police sergeant since 1974.

Police chief Ken Skerrett acted as judge and jury in the hearing conducted under the Police Act at Oakville Friday. Evidence was given under oath. The result caught Fields' lawyer, John Greenwood, of Brampton, by surprise. "It did not cross my mind before about the need for an appeal." He consulted the statutes and found an appeal goes to the Police Commission.

you could see from inside the cruiser." Currie: "I don't know. I saw it." Al Ruelens, president of the Halton Police Association, expressed his displeasure at the verdict. "Goats come in many colors including blue. This is just the proverbial sacrificial goat." At the beginning of the hearing, Greenwood indicated to Skerrett that technically the trial shouldn't be held in the first place.

Speculation in the court was that a Provincial Court judge will be needed to hear an appeal because the Halton Regional Police Commission has prior knowledge of the case. Conviction of Sgt. Fields rested mainly on the testimony of Gary Sparling's father—Roland Sparling, R.R. 2, Acton. Sparling Sr. recounted a conversation between himself and Sgt. Fields in the Georgetown police station early in the morning of May 27. Police had Sparling Jr. in custody at the station following a chase through Georgetown.

Police chased a white 1967 Firebird along several Georgetown streets. The car, according to police, ran several lights and stop signs. Police found the car abandoned on Ann St. Sgt. Field was at the scene when Sparling and Currie were driven up. Two other officers were present but neither said they saw Fields strike Sparling.

The original complaint, laid three months after the incident, included reference to "assault". Two weeks ago, the reference was taken out and a new charge drawn up, on which Field was tried Friday. But Greenwood pointed out, the new charge was drawn up more than six months after the incident and there is a six-month statute of limitations. Skerrett did not make a ruling on Greenwood's submission and proceeded with the hearing.

Sparling Jr. confirmed earlier testimony that he received a phone call from Robert Currie, a friend of his son's. Currie told the father he heard "someone say Gary would be in hospital before the night was over. The father soon went to the Georgetown hospital. Not finding Gary there he went to the police station." Sgt. Fields said he gave Gary a rap in the head or words to that effect," Sparling Sr. said.

The sergeant was about a foot away from him and he (Sparling) has his back against the cruiser," according to Sparling. Currie, of Mountainview Rd., Georgetown, in the back of the cruiser, said he saw Fields do it. "If Sparling was against the cruiser I don't understand how you could see his head hit," the sergeant's lawyer said. "You couldn't tell what happened. His head would be above the car," Greenwood asserted.

Sparling did not make a complaint about Field until three months later. In his original statement at that time, he said the two blows raised a bump on his head and made his eyes bloodshot for three weeks while he was in jail. He was detained only 12 hours after his arrest May 27 and admitted at the hearing he had been drinking that night. Sparling changed his story on another affidavit a month later, saying he had originally been confused about being in jail on three different occasions, in May, June and August.

Was Fields upset? asked Supt. George Moore, who acted as crown attorney. "If I was in his place I'd be upset," replied the father. Sgt. Fields, who was in uniform, denied hitting Gary Sparling. The officer told the court that he told Sparling Sr. "I know what I'd do—I'd cuff him to the head."

Currie: "I saw it." Greenwood: "Tell me how

Field's lawyer, John Greenwood of Brampton, said immediately after the hearing an appeal would be launched. During the trial he called all but one of the witnesses liars and said the prosecution evidence was "garbage."



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