

# Seal off Speyside classrooms before school closes

Speyside school will not be closing its doors in the foreseeable future, but there is a possibility a few rooms may be sealed off to help cut expenses.

Don Gentleman, North Halton area chairman for the Halton Board of Education, reassured some 35 parents at a special meeting last Tuesday night that the school would not be closed. Residents of the area were concerned about other small rural schools being closed due to declining enrolment and wanted to be prepared for

action in case word came of Speyside school's demise. Area resident Pam Sheldon chaired the meeting, and explained the school was the backbone of the community. She pointed out the school was in no danger of closing in September, "but that is not to say it is never going to close." The school could be facing twinning or split grades, Mrs. Sheldon stated. "Now is the time to cope with them and not after we find out about it," (a closure), she said. Mr. Gentleman presented the parents with a schedule

drawn up by the board indicating when possible closures of schools take place. Speyside, with seven classrooms, would be under consideration to be closed when the enrolment falls below 90 pupils. There are currently 170, he claimed. In 1972, he said, there were 244 students in Speyside school. That dropped to 240 in 1973, 214 in 1974, 188 in 1975, 197 in 1976, and 170 in 1977. Forecast for coming years, at this rate of decline, show that in 1982, there will be an enrolment of 134, still way above

the board's proposed closing figures. There are two factors in Halton for the declining enrolment, Mr. Gentleman told the group. He explained in Speyside kindergarten there were 35 students, in 1977 only 30. In the past year, he continued, there were more grade 6 pupils heading out to Stewarttown, than coming into kindergarten. In North Halton, he said, there were 1,000 grade 8 students going into high school, but only 800 kindergartners coming in, leaving a 200 student decline

in elementary schools. Mr. Gentleman elaborated on the situation and claimed that in two years, Halton enrolment will decline by 2,300 students. This is the equivalent of 14 Speyside schools, or one third the enrolment figures up. Mr. Gentleman said this was not possible as the high schools were not yet full. Mr. Gentleman said there is a possibility of some schools becoming twinned, and cited Campbellville and Brookville as examples. Twinning means that the two

schools have one staff and one principal. He admitted he sat in on informal talks of twinning Speyside, but nothing formal has been discussed. He said it could be twinned with Limehouse, but they didn't like the back roads to the other school, or possibly an Acton elementary school. It was all just an informal talk, he stressed. One solution that might be used, Mr. Gentleman said, was the sealing off of rooms. He explained that a few of Speyside classrooms were totally sealed off rather than

the school closed and eventually sold, a lot of money could be saved, and the facilities would still be there if needed in the future. He said this was more likely to happen than twinning or closing the school. Another resident stated that tax dollars are going up each year, yet the number of adults paying them are not going down but enrolment is. In addition, teachers are being laid off, she continued. Why are our taxes still going up, she asked? Mr. Gentleman explained

that when the pupil-teacher ratio goes down, so does the amount of grants received. The school board in turn has to make up the difference. One man reminded Mr. Gentleman just where the taxes come from—the people, no matter if they are local, provincial or federal. One mother in the audience said it seemed to her the solution was simple. Instead of attending meetings discussing declining enrolment in schools, parents should be home doing something to raise enrolment.

## Top breeders, producers honored

Close to 100 Halton Holstein Club members and friends met at the North Halton Golf and Country Club, Georgetown on Wednesday, Feb. 1, for their annual meeting. President Russell Hurren discussed the many successful activities of the Halton Club last year and stated how pleased everyone was that James C. Reid, Georgetown and Claude F. Pickett, Georgetown were receiving the Master Breeder Award at the Canadian Holstein annual meeting in Toronto on Feb. 8. This is indeed an honor for these men and for Halton.

Ralph Ford, the Halton Club secretary-treasurer received a "Certificate of Recognition" for his 11 years of service in this position. His duties are to be assumed by Bert Stewart, Hornby.

Joe Snyder, Holstein-Friesian fieldman, complimented Halton on having 89 per cent of the dairy herds on production test—the highest in the province. Joe stated that we should not be satisfied until a 100 per cent level is reached. He also stated that since cattle prices are low, now is the time to cull your herd and replace with higher quality cattle.

The certificate for top R.O.P. in Halton for 1976 went to Murray Harris of Burnview Farms Ltd., Milton. Twenty-seven Holsteins produced 8,894 kg of milk, 325 kg of fat, 3.65 per cent test for a composite B.C.A. of 175.5.

Runner-up certificate went to Claude Pickett, Georgetown — 25 records — 7,154 kg of milk, 283 kg of fat, 3.95 per cent test for a composite B.C.A. of 154.5.

certificates, which are awarded to the top five animals each year in Canada in each age class or to those with over 450 kg of fat, were awarded to W.J. Proud, 3389 Burnhamthorpe Rd. W., Oakville (two certificates), Burnview Farms Ltd., Milton (two certificates), James Carney, Milton and Claude Pickett, Georgetown (two for the same cow) and H. Craig Reid, Milton (one certificate).

Long-time production certificates were presented to 20 Halton breeders with the highest production certificates going to Burnview Farms Ltd., H. Craig Reid, Gordon McDonald, Georgetown, Fred Nurse, Georgetown, Jim Reid, Georgetown and Bryan Marshall, Milton. Jim Reid and Gertrude McGee, Norval each received the Two Star Cow Award. William Thompson, Milton and Marilyn Heslop, Burlington were awarded their 40 year membership pins by Joe Snyder, Holstein-Friesian fieldman.

Greetings were brought to the Halton breeders by the Canadian Holstein Directors from this area — Ralph Dutton of Peel, Earl Osborne of Wellington and Clarence Eby of Waterloo. H. Craig Reid was endorsed by the Halton club to run for National Director if the opportunity arose at the annual meeting in Toronto on Feb. 8.

Following a smorgasbord lunch, trophies were awarded to the winners at the Halton Holstein Show at Milton. Guest speaker was Dr. Ken McDermid, Director of the Veterinary Services Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Dr.

McDermid has been working in the field of Brucellosis for over 20 years. He discussed the history of the disease and the recent increases in the number of herds infected. During the 33 months which ended in December 1977, a total of 30,411 cows were slaughtered because of Brucellosis, with 215 herds completely de-populated.



**KEN MURRAY** of Acton is the new president of Halton Holstein Breeders Club, taking over from Russell Hurren of Campbellville.

## Rockwood Roundup

Everyone is invited to the Rockwood Horticultural Club meeting to be held at the Rockwood Town Hall at 8 p.m. Wednesday, February 15. Walter Mitchell of Rockwood Hardware will be talking on Lawn and Garden Chemicals and showing slides of common pests. Mr. Mitchell spent eight years working for a chemical company before buying Rockwood Hardware so it should be a very informative meeting. Mr. Mitchell says there will be some door prizes, so come along and bring your "buggy" questions. Admission is free.

Dr. McDermid stressed improved sanitation on the farm and suggested that all visitors to dairy and beef farms should be required to wear plastic boots or have their own footwear thoroughly disinfected. He discussed the greatly stepped-up program to reduce the incidence which has been undertaken by the Federal Health of Animals Branch and supported by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Officers and directors chosen for 1978 are as follows: Past President, Russell Hurren, Campbellville; President, Ken Murray, Acton; First vice-president, Jeff Nurse, Georgetown; second vice-president, Harold Patterson, Milton; Secretary-treasurer, Bert Stewart, Hornby; Sales Agent, Marilyn Heslop, Burlington; Safety Council Rep. Bill Robinson Jr., Georgetown.

Directors are George Bird, Larry Bennett, Sandy Buchanan, Bill Laidlaw, Bryan Marshall, Robert B. Marshall, Dennis McClure, Keith Moore, Alan Ness, Doug Peddie, David Reid, Junior Director, Paul Laidlaw.

# Free Press

# Rockwood & District

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## Swanston swims eight miles every day

by Barb Wynneck  
Local Rockwood swimmer, Alan Swanston, 18, who represented Ontario at the 1977 Canada Summer Games in Newfoundland, has recently returned from a series of meets against three college teams in the southern U.S.A. Alan was one of the 15 Canadian swimmers chosen to

meet some of the top American swimmers and world record holders. The Canadian team finished second, an accomplishment, when you consider that the U.S.A. has the best male swimmers in the world. Alan is a sprinter, competing in the freestyle and individual medley events.

The individual medley involves the swimming of four consecutive strokes, the butterfly, the breaststroke, the back stroke and the free style (or front crawl). His routine is to rise at 5 a.m., on deck at the Victoria Rd. Recreation Centre at 5:50 a.m., swim from 6:30 a.m. Breakfast and lunch are

eaten at Centennial High School where Alan is a grade 13 maths and science student. It is then back to the pool to train again from 4 to 6 p.m. At home by 7 p.m., Alan has dinner, then immediately hits the sack!

Presently, he is swimming eight miles a day, under coach Cliff Barry of the Guelph Marlins and Aquatic Club. Alan feels that good coaching is essential to winning. He has only been swimming competitively since he was 16½ years old. According to Alan, "It's the meets that keep you going and I hate anyone to beat me, even in practice!" and so he endures the pain and exhaustion of training, 11 months of the year.

There is a swim meet every 4 to 6 weeks. Strategy is the secret of the short distance swimmer, according to Alan. As the meet approaches all the strength, and endurance Alan has built up swimming eight miles a day, will be directed into the shorter distances. As the result of tapering his training he will be able to put all his effort and energies into the sprint, the day of the event.

Future competitions include the Canada Cup Meet in February in Etobicoke, The

Nationals in New Westminster, B.C. in March, and the Commonwealth Games Trials in Edmonton in July. If after the Trials, Alan is in one of the top three positions, he will go on to the Commonwealth Games. The top two Games' finalists head for the World Championships in Berlin, Germany.

When he completes Grade 13 this spring, Alan has a tough decision to make regarding his education and his swimming career. He wishes to major in accounting at University and to maintain excellent swimming coaching. He has yet to find a Canadian University which offers both the academic courses and the swim program he needs. No scholarships or training allowances are made at Canadian schools, as they are in the U.S., where the college courses are adapted to the athlete's schedule. This makes going to a U.S. College seem the easier course of action.

Alan has had a great experience in swim meets from Winnipeg to St. John's Newfoundland and as far south as Miami. His ability and competitive attitude may well take him farther and farther away from his home at R.R. 3, Rockwood.



ROCKWOOD SWIMMER Alan Swanston, 18, is shown on the right as he trains for the Guelph Marlins and Aquatic Club. Alan was one of 15 swimmers who represented Canada at Southern U.S. College meets.

## Erin township council make '78 appointments

Ivan Bird, Linda Larsen, Marlene Burnett, Dan O'Connor, Russ Miller, Linda Henderson, Morley Shortill, Sid Spear and Jo Schneider were appointed to Ballinfad Community Centre Board, at Wednesday's meeting of Erin Township Council.

Triton Engineering has suggested certain road standards concerning lot frontages in the proposed Armstrong subdivision. Council approved the tile drainage application of Roy Madgett for his property on lot 15, concession 1, W, and the necessary by-law was drawn up and passed.

The road accounts were brought in by Ed Barden, who also had received a letter of appreciation from Hydro, by R.S. Clarkson, manager of the Orangeville area, for the prompt assistance and cooperation of Ed and his men during the recent ice storm in the Orangeville area.

Council will renew their membership in ROMA (Rural Ontario Municipalities Association) as opposed to AMO (All Municipalities Association). Decision was based on the facts that it was cheaper and dealt more on rural affairs such as line fences and drainage, as well as planning, and tax reform. The membership fee schedule of \$100 is based on the township population of 5,490. AMO, also based on the population, is \$257.64 membership fee. A motion was passed, any member of council be authorized to attend ROMA convention that their expenses be paid. The general feeling was, over and above the benefits received from the convention itself, you meet people from other municipalities and learn of their problems and how they dealt with them.

A grant was requested by St. John Ambulance, and as they are stationed at the arena for every hockey game, decision was to find out where they come from and support that unit. A report from Roger Trummer, county planner, of a record study, shows Erin Township has 709 vacant lots under separate ownership that could be built on. It also shows there are 1,679 taxable buildings, which include houses, schools, and commercial buildings, in the township. Wellington County Plowmen's Association have issued an invitation to host the 1983 plowing match. The clerk was directed to write a letter to support the invitation. A mailbox and post on Ballinfad sideroad has been knocked over by the snowplow. The owner requested assistance to put it back in place.

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## Hoeys on TV

The Hoey farm in Nassagaweya will be featured on the television program Ontario Scene this Sunday evening, Feb. 12 at 7:30 p.m. It's on Channel 19.

Ontario Scene will include four different items, with the Hoeys' segment the major one. The program shows Elizabeth Hoey and her daughter Martha Currie with their sheep and crafts at Elm Tree Farm. It's lambing time there and they have had over 60 lambs in the past month.

The other three segments include a dairy farmer, a tobacco farmer and a man who produces both oil and soya bean on his land.

## \$33,100 fire

A neighbor turned in the alarm and 16 men responded to the Thursday, February 2, 4:25 a.m. barn fire at David Burnett's, R.R. 3, Rockwood. The fire, its cause not yet determined, had a good start, according to Chief Meadows. The roof was in before the firefighters arrived on the scene. They were able to confine the fire to the barn.

Young David Burnett lost 42 head of cattle, 31 pigs, hay, straw, grain and corn for a total value of \$33,100. His loss is insured. Allan (Jake) Burnett, David's father, lost \$2,000 worth of equipment stored in his son's barn. The arm is rented from Randolph Peterson, and his loss of the barn is approximately \$35,000.



Rich Man, Poor Man, Who's the Thief? Such is the title of this year's Ten Days for World Development program, taking place Feb. 10-20. When Eldon Comfort of Acton, coordinator for the program in Trinity Church, asked me to help publicize "Ten Days" my first thought was "Oh, oh, this is much too deep for me."

But after perusing the literature, learning the theme was the inequality of world food systems and how large a part our own country plays in this inequality, I began to get interested.

I've always felt we were getting ripped off in our society with megapolities (large monopoly) manipulating food costs and the hard working farmer receiving an unbelievably small percentage of that cost.

Common cry, when we hear of massive surpluses being dumped, is "what about the starving millions in the east?" Yet, Canada gives millions each year in foreign aid. We're the bread basket of the world, are we not?

Producing less, costing more  
According to Don Mitchell of the University of Regina, this may have once been true but is no longer. In a paper presented at a Ten Days National Food Conference, he states profits of Canada's food corporations averaged 18.7 per cent return on investment for retail chains and 25.8 per cent for processing companies during 1977. Yet we are producing less than ever.

In a long detailed paper, I can't hope to reproduce here, he calls for an end to profit speculation on commodities and land, among other things. He feels we need to begin raising discussion of food as a strategic energy resource being developed as a PUBLIC resource.

Third World developing similarly  
Susan George, author of "How the Other Half Dies—the Real Reasons for World Hunger", feels financial aid to foreign countries is merely setting up the same system of food monopoly as in western countries. She says it's land manipulation that is causing the problem and when large companies hold major portions of land they produce the least food. In fact, World Bank figures prove this.

Miss George states the "small peasant who gives tender loving care to the little he possesses is the most effective cultivator in the Third World."

She's right, isn't she. With our major corporations we as a country are producing less food than when we were as a nation of small independent farmers—statistics prove that. The starving countries of the world are also solving their problems with the same systems. It doesn't take much arithmetic to figure out what's going to happen.

Three local programs  
It's impossible to do more than merely wait the issues past your noses but for those who are interested there are three local events this year hosted by Trinity United Church of Acton.

On February 10 at 8 p.m. there will be a film and panel discussion with Reverend Das Sydney of the Baptist Church in Acton, Dr. Paul Puritt of OXFAM Canada, and Jim Johnson, former CUSO volunteer.

At the February 12 church service at 10:00 a.m. the speaker will be the Reverend Murray McInnis, former United Church missionary in Angola.

Friday February 17 at 8 p.m. will see Gwen and Jim Johnson giving an illustrated talk on agricultural development project in Nigeria.

Further information may be obtained from Eldon Comfort: 653-1089.

Remember: the greatest mistake of all is to do nothing because you think you can do only a little.

## Grandparents gave early Bible training

The Rockwood Presbyterian W.M.S. and W.A. Groups met at the home of Mrs. D. Gray for their February meeting. The president, Mrs. M. Milne, opened the meeting with prayer followed by a hymn, What a Friend We Have in Jesus.

Mrs. Elsie Peren gave the secretary's report and Mrs. Gray the treasurer's report which showed a very successful year. Mrs. A. Duby gave a report on cards that had been sent to the shut-ins in January.

Mrs. H. Leishman had charge of the devotions and read the Psalm 104 from the Living Bible followed by prayer. The topic was taken by Mrs. Gray. She spoke on the power of prayer. She said many received early training in prayer when very young by

visiting grandparents' homes where there was family worship each day. She also spoke on life after death. She said each person lived a good honest life and by trying to help the less fortunate, they are very little to fear.

The World Day of Prayer will be held in the Presbyterian church in March, and the ladies of all churches in the village are welcome. There will be no meeting in March as the members will be attending the Presbyterian of the W.M.S. at St. Paul Westminster church in Guelph. The meeting closed with a hymn followed by prayer. Mrs. Gray assisted by Mrs. L. Johnston served strawberry short cake and a cup of tea. Mrs. Leishman will be hostess for the April meeting.

# Avid observer notes birds' seasonal changes

Jeff Harvey, R.R. 1, Acton, is an avid bird watcher and a member of the Georgetown Naturalists club. He has been observing his feathered friends for several years now, and he is going to share his knowledge with readers of this newspaper. He will be writing articles on birds to be found in this locality.

The week he writes on seasonal changes in the birdlife of Halton county, and on bird-watching as a hobby.

by Jeff Harvey  
The number of people who study birds, whether in their own backyard, or in far away places, is on the increase. How many friends do you have who maintain a winter feeding station for birds? In a way, people who do this are in fact taking an interest in the environment. Other people who construct bird houses are

helping various types of birds to sustain their numbers year by year.

Just about everyone can recognize a robin, a crow, or a sparrow. But not every person realizes how many different species of birds are found in this area. Even those people who do not look for birds or cannot identify those he sees has any idea how many types there really are.

In Halton County, for example, on a warm spring day in mid-May, a person who searches hard enough could see as many as 50, or if very lucky, 100 types of birds in the one day. Over the whole year, there are about 250 species which at some time or other pass through Halton. Of these, between 70 and 100 are known to nest.

Many very rare birds, which migrate from as far away as Central South Amer-

ican, can be found nearby! Most of these can be found in the Niagara Escarpment forest, just south of Speyside. Here is a list of some exotic species which migrate thousands of miles every spring and fall.

Most of these you won't know, but could with only a little practice. Scarlet Tanager, Northern Oriole, Wood Thrush, Yellow-Throated Vireo, many types of warblers, Bobolink, Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, together with the well known Common Crow, Black-Capped Chickadee, Robin, Starling, and many, many others.

These names may sound like they came from who knows where, but it took me only two years to learn about these and the many others found in this beautiful area. And once this hobby starts, it tends to be addictive. As your

"life list" grows, you really get involved with it, and travel all over.

However, don't get the idea that you have to travel thousands of miles to see these birds. A good start would be to put up a winter bird-feeder.

Don't be surprised when the birds arrive. Some of these, such as chickadees, will even feed out of your hand.

Bird study is also relatively inexpensive. All you really need is your two eyes and an interest in all the birds. As you gain more interest you will find binoculars an essential. These should be chosen with care, but a good pair of 7x50 or 7x35 binoculars should cost between \$20 and \$80 dollars.

In addition to the binoculars, a good bird guide book would be very useful. Two books which come to

mind are Peterson's "A Field Guide to the Birds" and Robbins, Bruun, and Zim's "Birds of North America". These books, which are sold in either hard or soft cover, can be purchased at most reputable book stores, and by reading these guides, and looking for patterns within a family, it is possible to recognize most local species by sight.

Another invaluable aid in identifying local birds is by ear. All birds, in one way or other, have a voice, and though at first they may all sound alike, after awhile you will learn the local dialects of most species, and this will help you to separate the "rare" ones from the more "rare" types of birds.

I have studied the local birds for eight years, and I am familiar with 98 per cent of the songs of local species.



JEFF HARVEY, of R.R. 1 Acton, is an avid bird watcher and belongs to the Georgetown Naturalists Club. He will be putting his hobby to good use through the pages of the Free Press writing about various species of birds in the Acton area.