

Monday

# Wilbur St. home destroyed by fire



A family of four is homeless after fire swept through their home Monday causing an estimated \$20,000 in damages.

The family of Mr. and Mrs. J. Van Opstal, 13 Wilbur St., escaped the burning house without injury as fire spread from the kitchen throughout the rest of the house.

Fire chief Mick Holmes explained the fire started in the kitchen at approximately 12:30 p.m. after fumes from an adhesive glue burst into flames. He stated a contact cement was being used just prior to lunch, with invisible fumes engulfing the kitchen. When the gas stove was turned on to prepare lunch, he said, the fumes and open flame made contact, and burst into flames.

The blaze swept through the kitchen and spread upstairs, where a son was sleeping. He escaped without injury. The fire continued to travel into the roof of the home, the fire chief said.

Firefighters were on the scene within minutes of the alarm, and turned off natural gas and hydro leading into the house. Using water from fire hydrants, they spent an hour and a half battling the blaze.

Mr. Holmes said the exterior of the house is basically all right, but the interior received extensive damage. He said some clothes might be salvagable, but furniture and other possessions were completely destroyed. A neighboring house had to be cleared of smoke also, Mr. Holmes said.

Although there were no injuries during the fire, firefighter Dobbie Frizzell sustained a bruised shoulder while returning to the fire hall. He apparently slipped and fell off the truck in the two block ride. X-rays revealed no broken bones.

Mrs. Van Opstal said the family is staying with the Feenstra family on Highway 25 while the extensive renovations are done.

Boards were placed over downstairs windows soon after the fire, and clean-up crews were on the scene the next day in the beginning stages of the renovations.

Friends of the family told the Free Press Mrs. Van Opstal's father was coming this week for a visit from Holland.



FIRE GUTTED a two storey brick home at 13 Wilbur St. Monday leaving a family of four homeless. A dangerous combination of fumes and flames is blamed for the \$20,000 blaze at the Van Opstal home.

SMOKE AND FLAMES POURED out of windows and doors at the home of the Van Opstals, 13 Wilbur St., Monday. Fire started in the kitchen at noon and spread rapidly throughout the

house. It was the fourth major house fire in as many months in Acton, an area formerly known for its low fire damage.

## Cyclist hit by car

A Kingham Road resident was hurt when the bike she was riding came into collision with an as yet unidentified car last Tuesday, May 30 on Main Street South.

Cristine Vetricek, of 233 Kingham Rd., was slightly hurt in the mishap, according to Halton Regional Police.

Police state the car was trailing the 10-speed bike when the vehicle struck the rear wheel of the bike. The action knocked the rider off the bike.

The car then turned east onto Agnes Street, and left the scene, police say.

Damage to the bike is about \$40, according to police.

## Car-pole mishap

A damaged bumper and a broken telephone pole resulted from a single car traffic accident on the Nassagaweya 1st Line early Saturday morning.

Halton Regional Police estimate \$1,500 in damages on the car driven by Lynn Fisher of RR 4 Acton. About \$300 in damages occurred to the phone pole, police state.

The mishap took place at 1:15 a.m.

The vehicle was northbound when it spun round to face south, crossed the road, went into a ditch and struck the pole, according to police.

# Waive cash so senior citizen apts. proceed

Halton Hills council decided to waive the five per cent cash in lieu of parkland requirement for the senior citizens' apartment complex on Elizabeth Drive, Acton.

They will allow Ontario Housing Corporation to build a sidewalk only in front of the property, and if it is continued further the town will pay the cost.

Council also agreed to waive the normal administration, legal, planning and engineering fees for the project, which were estimated at \$600. The security bond asked of private developers was also dispensed with, since the OH-

C as a Crown Corporation said it was unnecessary.

The O.H.C. have agreed to pay lot levies.

Mayor Tom Hill asked if the same would apply if another senior citizens' complex is built somewhere. He said in Georgetown OHC paid the administrative, legal and planning costs.

Councillor Roy Booth said in Georgetown there was no cash in lieu of parkland and the only other concession was the paying of lot levies at the amount they required when the project was first suggested. Lot levies increased before the apartments got underway.

Councillor Walter Blehn suggested the province could well afford to pay the \$600 administration, legal and planning fees.

Councillor Les Duby stated the project has been moving very slowly, and warned if

they don't get started now it will be too late for this year.

"Here we are talking about lot levies, and talking like a bunch of money makers, we should be thinking about our older people", he said he is continually trying to explain

to people why it isn't getting anywhere, and stated now it is at this stage, council should make a decision.

Councillor Pete Pomeroy supported Duby. He said these costs are negligible compared to the inconvenience

of the people waiting to get in.

The mayor insisted he wanted a policy, in case another such building is erected.

On a recorded vote only Councillor Walter Blehn was opposed to the concessions.

## Patterson's plea

# Farmers annoyed over tax date change

Uping the tax due date from July 30 to June 30 is a hardship to the farmers, Councillor Pat Patterson stated in an impassioned plea to Halton Hills council Monday night.

He said the farmers are "into the bank" for fertilizer, seed and spray, and depend on their wheat crop in July to pay that off.

Patterson said the young people are budget conscious, and have known the bills always came due at the end of July and the end of September, while this year it was

suddenly changed to the end of June. "I'm going to tell every farmer not to pay their tax bill until this is straightened out."

He claimed the interest on the extra month is a hidden tax, and contended the change in dates on the bylaw was in fine print and nobody saw it.

Councillor Mike Armstrong said there was an amendment in the bylaw at the Region because it would cost other municipalities money in additional interest costs "If any of us are around on next year's

regional council the date should be moved back to the end of July."

"The farmer hasn't got the bucks to pay it in June," Patterson challenged. "Just because the Region made it June, doesn't mean this council should go along with it. We should throw the Region the hell out," he shouted.

Councillor Pat McKenzie said the Region only wants their money June 30. He said the town could have borrowed the money for the extra month. "It's our own council who did it."

"The Region has done nothing for Ward Two (Esquesing) but cost us extra money," thundered Patterson.

Councillor Russ Miller said it would have cost the town an extra \$3,000 in interest for the additional month. "So it was decided by this council to go along with it."

Councillor Roy Booth admitted when the change was passed in the bylaw the impact on the farming community was not realized. He suggested, if it is a hardship, there could be a relaxation of penalties. He said it would be difficult to change now since the tax bills are out.

The matter was referred to the finance-administration committee.



SUZANNE SWEZEY places the crown on the Blessed Virgin Mary at St. Joseph's school last Wednesday. The crowning of the Virgin's statue was witnessed by the whole school and many parents.

## Ontario Hydro crews drilling for samples

Ontario Hydro, anticipating a green light from an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing, has started gathering engineering data for the proposed Halton Hills section of the Bruce to Georgetown 500kV hydro corridor.

Hydro crews are drilling for samples of earth and stone along the portion of the line from north of Limehouse to Milton Station where the north-south line is planned to join an east-west line.

Crews are also determining access routes to the right of way, according to Ontario Hydro Community Relations officer David Patriquin.

In order to engineer a tower to specific ground conditions soil and rock samples are taken, normally to a depth of 40 feet, but sometimes to 60 feet, Patriquin said Tuesday.

The drilling is at a rate of about three or four holes a day, said Patriquin. He also said work will proceed for about a month or so, but an exact date of finishing cannot be determined because some landowners may object to Ontario Hydro being on their property.

In finding access routes to the right of way "we use implied consent", said Patri-

quin. That is work is carried on until the owner tells Ontario Hydro to leave.

Part of legal process in taking possession of land is the walking of the property, said Patriquin. Some people did not want us to walk the line, but if we did not, we would lose the right, he said.

Construction of the line through Halton Hills hinges on the results of an Ontario Municipal Board hearing next month. Halton Hills has consistently refused hydro corridors rights of way.

## Close street for holiday

Halton Hills council had no objection to the closing of Mill Street between Fellows and Willow Streets and Willow Street from Mill to Bower on Thursday, June 30 from 12 noon to 9 p.m., Friday, July 1 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, July 2 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The request came from the Acton Business Association, the B.I.A. board of management and the Acton Citizens Fund Raising Committee for "Back to Acton Days."

## Police check suds caper

Halton Regional Police are continuing to investigate the theft of a large quantity of beer from the Dominion Hotel's storeroom on Main Street North on the weekend.

A group of men were seen taking cases of beer out of the storeroom.

Police later checked a Knox Avenue residence and discovered a number of persons drinking beer in the basement — in the dark. A large quantity of beer was found in the basement.

## Glowing flames engulf car motor

It was a close encounter of a fiery kind Monday when Acton firefighters arrived at the scene of a car fire and met with "strange circumstances".

The fire was discovered by Halton Regional Police in a field opposite the Breezes property on the town line, about 9 p.m. Fire chief Mick Holmes stated the car, an old Volkswagen, had no licence plates or other identifying features on it. Because of the magnesium engine, and the

general construction of the vehicle, the engine glowed as it burned. Water would not put the strange blaze out, making it necessary to smother the flames, and the glow, with dirt.

Mr. Holmes said the fire was started by someone unknown, and that police are investigating the incident, to locate the owner.

## B.I.A. hires students for downtown clean-up

Two students have been hired by the Business Improvement Area to help clean up downtown Acton this summer. Chris Vetricek and Gary Manderino will be doing general maintenance and clean-up in the downtown area on Friday and Saturdays until school is finished. During the summer they will work full days Tuesday to Saturday.

The boys will be paid with the help of a provincial grant which was obtained by the B.I.A.

## Playhouse destroyed

A burning candle is believed to be the cause of a fire which destroyed a children's playhouse behind the Music Shop on Monday, according to fire chief Mick Holmes.

The chief said firefighters were called to the scene to put out the blaze. He said such houses are dangerous and should be discouraged.



CHILDREN'S PLAYHOUSE, situated behind the Music Shop, was the scene of the second fire on Monday.