

Smoke detectors warn of house fires: firefighter

Three people died and \$394,579 in damages were incurred by the 82 fires in Acton last year. And there was a human element in all of them, says Larry Brassard, fire prevention officer for the Halton Hills Fire Department.

That's why, during fire prevention week this week, the firefighters say they hope to increase awareness of fire hazards.

Fire prevention week Brassard says, is seven days set aside in North America to focus attention on fire dangers.

But he adds, prevention is a year round undertaking for the Halton Hills department.

"We are always inspecting public buildings and actively promoting smoke detectors." This week

they will also inspect and hold fire drills in schools—a department tradition during fire prevention week.

"It's hard to motivate people (to prevent fires)," Brassard says. "If there was a fire death tonight, our phone would be ringing off the hook tomorrow with people asking how they can prevent the same thing from happening to them."

"A smoke detector is the best way," he continues. "It's a \$20 piece of hardware that can save a life."

"Last year 14 people were saved by smoke detectors that we know of."

There are three basic plans of action a person should take to prevent fires, says Brassard; eliminate fire hazards, install a smoke detector and

plan an escape in case of fires.

The department he adds, would be more than happy to help by inspecting the home and suggesting a fire escape route. They also have film strips available on fire safety.

There are many different kinds of fire hazards people should be watching for, says Brassard.

Smoking in bed, as well as using gasoline for cleaning are two major dangers. A stray spark from even a lamp can ignite both blankets or vapors escaping from the gasoline container.

Brassard says last year in Acton many fires were caused by children playing with matches. They should be put out of reach.

Grease fires are common too. Brassard says a

person puts on a pot of french fries and goes out to chat with a neighbor while the hot grease has burst into flames.

In case of a grease fire, Brassard recommends placing a lid or large pan over the fire to smother it, use an extinguisher or get out of the house and call the fire department.

Chimney fires are on the rise again, said Brassard, with the arrival of cooler weather. To prevent chimney fires which can be quite dangerous if it is a prefabricated structure, have them cleaned often. How often depends on how often the chimney is used and what kind of wood is burned but two or three times a year is a good bet for fireplaces used once a week.

Fireplaces and wood-burning stoves are being used more now with cost of heating a home rising. Len Tuitman of Tuitman's Flowers reports sale of firewood is on the rise. He's sold 40-50 already.

Brassard said homeowners should also take precautions against arsonists, by securing their homes. Burglars often start fires to cover their break-ins. The prime prevention office of the police department has pamphlets concerning securing the home.

Last year, Brassard reports 11 fires were caused by arsonists in Acton alone.

Fires in Acton this year have already reached last year's total of 82, and have caused \$102,351 in damages.

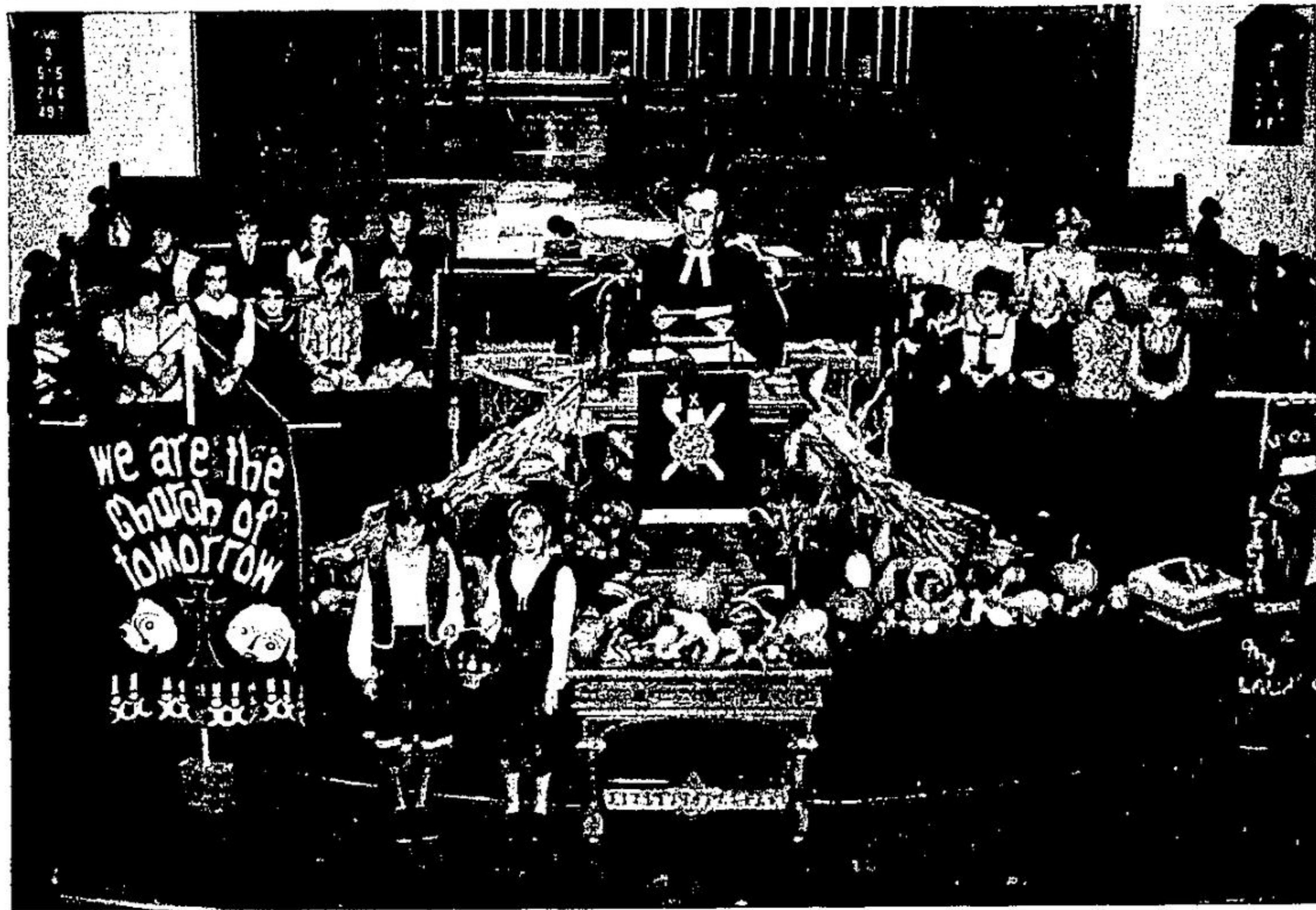
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Expressions of gratitude for all that is good for mankind will be heard this weekend in town and rural churches because this is the time for Thanksgiving, Monday, Thanksgiving Day, is a national holiday so that everyone may reflect on his benefits. Knox Presbyterian Church, pictured above with Rev. John

Robertson, and all others will be holding their special seasonal services. Many of the churches are decorated with the fruits of harvest.

Photo by ERIC ELSTONE

Sewer rates threaten town

"If the regional sewer surcharge started at the beginning of this year is abandoned I would hope by this time next year there will be no regional government," stated Mayor Pete Pomeroy to a shocked Halton Hills council Monday night. He said he is upset since the voting power is being used against the Town.

He explained that a Regional Water and Sewer Rates Committee recommendation Monday morning, flew in the face of the Price-Waterhouse \$15,000 study commissioned by the Region, and urged the turning back of all sewer costs to the local municipalities on a charge back basis, as it was prior to this year. Any 1980 shortfalls would be included in the 1981 levy which would mean each municipality paying its own costs, from realty taxes or a local surcharge.

Since Halton Hills would be hit the hardest by having to assume the whole \$3.2 million burden for the sewage plant, the water and sewer rates committee recommended the unexpended 1981 and 1982 Special Assistance Sewage Grants of \$526,000 and \$158,000 respectively would be assigned to Halton Hills, if the provincial government agrees.

If the committee recommendation is passed at this regional council, the incoming regional council will be asked to confirm this stand and the billing agencies told to take the necessary steps to eliminate all sewage surcharges from bills issued after the beginning of the year.

The switch back to local responsibility suggested is in direct opposition to the Price-Waterhouse report which urges the regional sewer surcharge system be retained. The report claims it is fairer to

have the "user-payer" approach than the realty tax levy.

The report said that adding the sewer charge to the tax bill would mean a considerable increase, especially to the residents of Halton Hills, "who would bear the full brunt of a high cost sewer system without the benefits of regional support."

Price-Waterhouse warned the Special Assistance Grants totalling \$684,100 may have to be paid back to the province since they were set up only to support a uniform regional rate structure.

The report states any home not connected to sewers should pay nothing, whether or not sewers run past the house. At present they pay a minimum sewer charge.

A larger share of the costs should be borne by commercial and industrial users, says the report, since residents contribute 77 per cent of the revenue but use only 61 per cent of the water.

Simplifications for the sewer surcharge rates are recommended in the Price-Waterhouse report by making rates uniform across the region by 1983; by establishing one rate for residents and eliminating the second level rate.

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Marilyn Brooks is the new Grade 8 teacher hired by McKenzie-Smith Middle School. Details are on page 3.

Money for the Cancer Society goes over the \$2,000 mark. Turn to page 6.

Region rejects Pomeroy plea to allow housing in Acton

By Jim Robinson

Halton Hills Mayor Peter Pomeroy's request that two housing developments be allowed to go ahead in Acton has been rejected by Halton Regional Council.

Mr. Pomeroy told councillors last Wednesday two Cedar Road Developments projects, totally 40 homes, would not prejudice the Halton Official Plan nor the Acton Urban Area Boundary, but would be strictly in-filling.

He said Regional planning Committee and staff rejections were "frustrating" and he asked "why can't we just do it?"

Halton Hills Councillor Roy Booth who serves as Regional Planning Committee Chairman said the newly-approved Halton Official Plan must be strictly viewed as a development guideline. He said it should be used to control growth.

To that, Mr. Pomeroy said "it's obvious this should go."

But Mr. Booth and staff have been under severe criticism recently from other councillors about sticking by the official plan and not making any more exceptions.

Leader of this group is Burlington Councillor Joan Allingham who said she would vote with the committee recommendation the two subdivisions not be included within the Acton urban boundary area.

"We can go with this and at least know where we

are going, or we can go with something else and not know where we are going," she said.

Mrs. Allingham said if an exception was made for Cedar Roads, the other developments in the area, including a shopping plaza, would also ask to be given the same treatment.

The problem is being caused by an arbitrary line drawn several years ago setting out the tentative urban boundaries of the town.

Currently this is being studied by a steering committee.

Regional Planner Rash Mohammed said the steering committee is working hard to complete its work of setting the final urban boundaries, but he said that might not be finalized for six months. He said until that time, he wanted the arbitrary line to stay where it is and be enforced.

He said changing the line now before completion of the urban plan would be "premature."

When asked by Regional Chairman Jack Raftis if it seemed likely the subdivisions would be included based on study so far, Mr. Mohammed said he could not make any comment as he did not know nor would he prefer to comment until the plan was finalized.

Paul Nielsen, president of Cedar Roads Developments was at the meeting where he appeared as a delegation to urge the council to turn down a Planning Committee recommendation that his housing plans not be included in the urban area.

Stephenson to hear plea for new Acton separate school

Spokesmen in favor of a new separate school in Acton will take their arguments to the top: Ontario Education Minister Bette Stephenson.

In a surprise change of mind, the minister decided to meet representatives of Halton's Separate School Board and the Acton Parents Association tomorrow (Thursday) at 4 p.m. in Toronto.

Parent association president Vince Whelan indicated he will take the opportunity to invite the minister to visit the century old Stone School which houses St. Joseph's School.

Board chairman Robert O'Brien, Acton-Georgetown Trustee Hartley Sherk and school board director Cliff Byrnes are also expected to attend the gathering.

The discussion is expected to focus on capital allocation of funds for an Acton school.

"The meeting will be a good opportunity for the minister to hear of the Acton situation first hand," Whelan said Tuesday.

The parent association president, however, is not optimistic about getting funds for a school this year.

The invitation to meet the minister was an about face from Queen's Park which earlier refused to discuss the matter of a new school for Acton because there are no funds available.

The Acton Parents Association has lobbied and pressured the Halton School Board for a new school for some time.

The board bought a five-acre site on the north side of Mill St. W. in May. The board, however, needs funds from the province in order to pay for a new building.

Parents of Acton children who go to St. Joseph's have said they believe they were misled by board officials who indicated that a new school for Acton was their first priority.

Meanwhile the Ontario Ministry of Education allocated funds for a new Oakville school, because, according to the ministry, the southern school was the board's number one priority.

Parents have letters from the board stating that Acton is the number one item on the board's list of priorities.

In the summer, parents association head Whelan reflected on concerns that the school does not meet up to date standards for health and fire safety.

Bishop Paul Reding of the Hamilton Diocese has given the local parents' group his support in their quest for a new school.

St. Joseph's School is the first Separate school in Acton. It was opened in 1977 after the Halton Board of Education found it could manage within the confines of Robert Little School.

Allocations for this year's capital grants have already been made by the province, however, there is a hint of an autumn review. The board hopes to gain the release of some dollars for the school.

St. Joseph's School has an enrolment of about 225 which is taught in five rooms in the main building plus three portables.

Women die in auto accidents

Two young area people were killed in separate automobile accidents over the weekend.

Dead are Elizabeth Webb, 15, of Eden Mills and Muriel Leitch, 20, of Hillsburgh.

Two other young people were injured in the single car accident that killed Miss Leitch during a thunder storm Friday afternoon.

Driver of the vehicle and brother of the dead girl, Francis Leitch, 18 of R.R. 2 Hillsburgh and 19 year old Melissa Sharp of R.R. 2, Acton were admitted to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, according to Guelph OPP. The police are continuing to investigate the accident.

Miss Leitch suffered "massive internal injuries" and was pronounced dead on arrival at the Georgetown hospital, said the investigating officer.

The 1972 Torino was westbound on the Esqueping-Erin township line between the Fourth and Fifth Lines at about 1 p.m., when it ran off the road during the rain, according to the OPP. The road at that point is known as "The Tunnel," trees creating a natural tunnel.

Investigation showed the auto rode along the edge

of the road for about 40 yards, then became airborne for about 30 feet, when it hit a tree.

Police said a nearby farmer came along and hooked a line onto the tipped car, to keep it from rolling over.

Ambulances from Georgetown were called on the scene.

Acton firefighters freed passengers Sharp and Leitch. The driver somehow got out by himself, police said.

Leitch was released from hospital over the weekend with minor injuries. Sharp is listed in stable condition with multiple fractures of the left leg, muscle and vertebrae damage.

Guelph O.P.P. indicated no charges would be laid. Elizabeth (Lisa) Webb, of Eden Mills was pronounced dead on arrival at Guelph General Hospital after she was struck by a car at 7:45 p.m. Saturday.

Walking north with a companion on the Eden Mills Road, Wellington County Road 29, Miss Webb was struck by a vehicle operated by Brent Tolton, 17, also of Eden Mills.

According to Guelph O.P.P. Tolton was at-

tempting to pass another vehicle, saw the pedestrians, moved right to avoid them, struck the second vehicle, bounced off it then struck Miss Webb.

Police said no charges would be laid.

Muriel Leitch, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Leitch of R.R. 2 Hillsburgh, had lived in Erin Township all her life and was a student at Erin District High School. She is survived by her parents and brothers David of Rockwood, Aleck of Kitchener, Francis and Ross at home, and sisters Donna of Georgetown and Kathleen at home.

Funeral services were held Monday October 6 from the Weddell-Butcher Funeral Home in Erin. Interment was in Coningsby Cemetery.

Elizabeth Webb was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Webb of Eden Mills and was a student at Centennial Collegiate Institute in Guelph. She is survived by her parents, sister Janet (Mrs. Ralph Macdonald of Guelph) and brother Ian of England.

Funeral service was held Tuesday October 7 at Eden Mills Presbyterian Church. Interment was in Eden Mills Cemetery.



Acton Firefighters help remove Melissa Sharp, R.R. 2, Acton, from the wreckage of a car last Friday afternoon. Muriel Leitch, sister of the driver Francis Leitch, died as a result of injuries suffered in the crash.