

# Santa arrives this Saturday

Downtown Acton will be ablaze with color and Christmas season sounds this Saturday afternoon when Santa Claus comes to town.

Acton Y's Men, with help from the Acton Business Improvement Area, Legion Ladies' Auxiliary, Acton Scout and Guide Mothers and Bell Canada are staging the annual Santa Claus parade.

The parade will assemble at McKenzie-Smith School at 1:30 p.m. and travel down Mill St. to Park Ave., go north on Park to Knox Ave. and end in front of Knox Presbyterian Church.

There will be at least 12 floats, of course including Santa's, in this year's parade. In the commercial category Indusmin, Acton BIA and Halton Hills are signed up. Two schools, Speyside and Robert Little, have entered floats and the Y's Men, Acton Lionesses and Acton Volunteer Firefighters have floats in the service group category.

Other floats include the Salvation Army, Acton Agricultural Society, Georgetown Agricultural Society, and Actario.

Parade organizer Jim Rivett reports there are three more possible float entries he is aware of and parade registrations will be accepted

right up to Saturday.

The float judges this year are Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed, Acton Citizen of the Year Arlie White and new Acton member of the Halton Board of Education Arlene Bruce.

This year three bands will help usher Santa into town. The Acton Citizen's Band, Guelph Salvation Army Band and the Georgetown Legion Pipe Band.

The Halton Hills Elkettes will march in the parade as well as the Acton Red Cross.

Rivett said while there will likely be more floats this year he is disappointed more schools aren't entering floats and, except for the Acton Salvation Army, church participation in the parade is "nil" this year.

Hot chocolate and cookies will be available after the parade at the Scott Hall for youngsters who march and Santa will go to the Murray Memorial YMCA building on Mill St. right after the parade. He will greet children there listen to their Christmas wish lists and parents are invited to bring their cameras and snap shots of their youngsters on Santa's knee.



Santa Claus arrives in Acton with his annual parade this Saturday afternoon.

# Assessment review report next month

The investigation of property assessment by a special council-citizen committee has been completed and a report should be filed with Halton Hills council within a month.

Chairman of the special committee, Acton Councillor Ross Knechtel, said in an interview this week the committee held its fifth and last meeting last week and should have a report to council in December. The committee report will deal with facts only and offer no recommendations.

Most thought the investigation was of market value assessment but, Knechtel said, the committee soon discovered it was probing equalized assessment and that market value assessment doesn't really exist.

He explained market value assessment, the term everyone uses, assumes that the assessment on a piece of property is directly related to the sale price it would fetch regardless of whether it is residential, industrial or commercial property.

Under Section 86 of the Ontario Assessment Act, which covers the new type of assessment Halton Hills is considering, assessment of all residential property is done using the same rules or factors, Knechtel said. He added the same set of rules is used by all commercial and industrial property too.

Knechtel noted under true market value assessment there would be tremendous shifts in the tax burden between classes of property. For instance, he thinks there would be a much bigger burden on industrial property and less on residential under true market value assessment.

Equalized assessment, the form governed by Section 86, won't result in large shifts of tax burden and assessment between classes of property.

If Halton Hills opts for assessment reform with Section 86, Knechtel suggested residential ratepayers will still carry about 70 per cent of the tax burden.

Knechtel said he feels massive shifts in tax burden and assessment between classes of property would be "difficult to justify."

He said the committee learned a lot during the five presentations they heard, including that they were really looking at equalized assessment and not market value assessment. The committee heard from outgoing Milton Mayor Don Gordon as well as a top Milton municipal staffer about the impact of equalized assessment on that town. They also heard from officials of Niagara-on-the-Lake and the provincial assessment office.

Equalized assessment contains components of market value assessment, Knechtel allowed, but what it would really mean to Halton Hills is that all property owners be assessed using the same set of rules or factors. He added several sets of rules or factors are in use in Halton Hills depending on which ward the property is in and when it was first assessed.

The special council-citizen committee was set up after council rejected equalized assessment last winter. Council heard complaints from residents of all areas, including a big outcry from the Bovis area of Acton, after rejecting assessment reform through Section 86.

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## Police continue suspect search

Police detectives continue to search for a man who has attacked two females here, followed some paper boys and lurked around a couple of local schools observing children. The fact there hasn't been an incident in Acton since November 15 hasn't halted the hunt.

Sergeant of detectives, Halton Regional Police, Ron Southgate, revealed this week police received a report last Wednesday night from a juvenile female who said she was indecently assaulted by a man while she slept in her apartment the night of Nov. 15, just a few hours after a woman was attacked by a knife-wielding man on Tyler Ave.

Southgate said investigators believe the same man who grabbed a 20-year-old woman on Tyler at knife point and tried to force her into his car is the same one who got into an unlocked apartment at 200 Churchill Rd. around midnight. He had no explanation why the juvenile girl didn't report the indecent assault to police until four days later.

Police this week released a description of the suspect in all the cases and appealed for information from the public.

The victim was attacked while sleeping and the assailant was scared off when a girl friend entered the apartment. The man didn't show the girl a knife but indicated he had one in his possession.

Police made an arrest in connection with the case Saturday night, but later released this suspect when evidence didn't pan out.

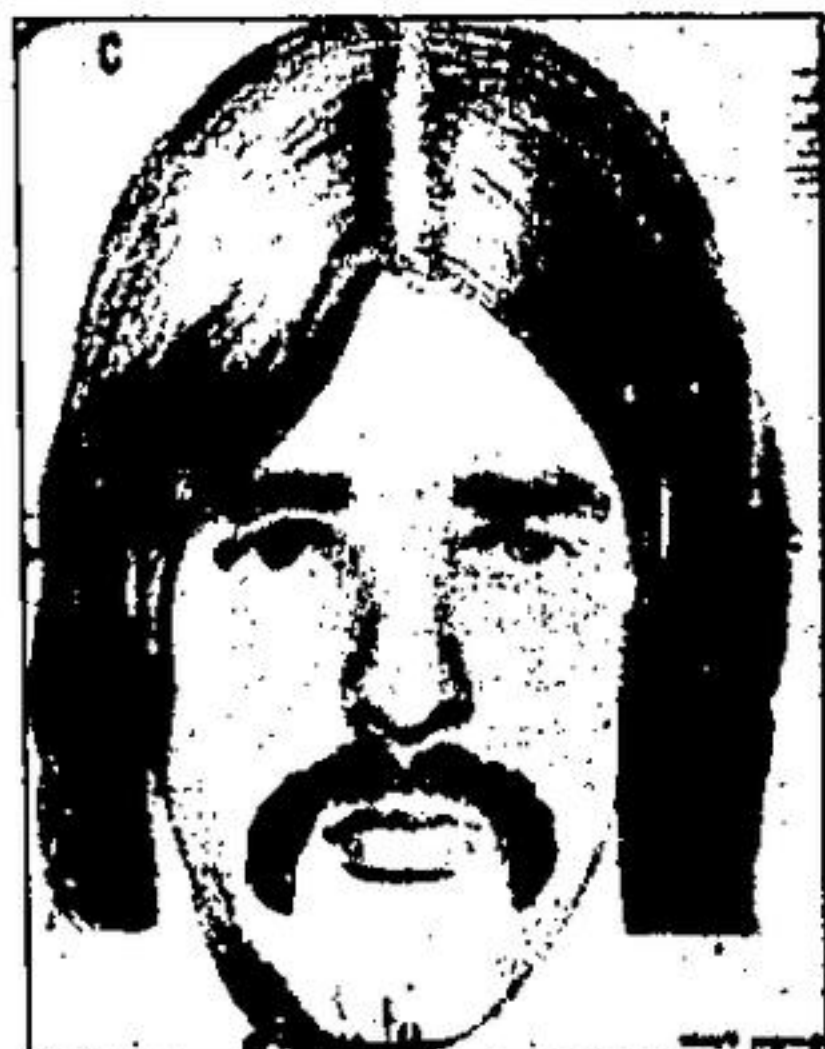
They released a description of the suspect who is male, white, 19 to 25 years of age, five foot, seven inches tall and of medium build. He is thought to have straight brown hair, and a moustache that curves down to the edges of his bottom lip. He speaks with an east coast accent.

When he attacked the woman on Tyler he was wearing a knee length black nylon parka and a beige knitted long scarf with tassels at each end.

The suspect's car is a four door North American built vehicle, full sized, either silver or blue.

Southgate urged citizens with any information to call him at 878-5511, extension 290. He said all information will be held in confidence and all leads checked out by the team of detectives.

Since they haven't received any new reports,



Police are searching for this man in connection with attacks on two women in Acton. Police say this is a drawing based on witness description, not a photographic likeness.

Police think the suspect either has gone underground or left Acton. He said detectives will continue to investigate in the hope of soon making an arrest.

There are differences in every description but descriptions of the man who was seen lurking around St. Joseph's and followed some children and descriptions of the man who attacked the woman and the female juvenile are "basically the same" so police now feel they are looking for one man in connection with both cases.

## No inquiry for Halton

There will not be an Ontario Government inquiry into fiscal problems at Halton Region, according to Inter-governmental Affairs Minister Tom Wells.

Wells, who had been asked by Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed to make a statement on requests from Burlington and Milton for an inquiry, said the situation does not warrant an inquiry at this time.

Speaking in the Legislature last Tuesday, he said Halton Council had moved quickly to make good the deficit which was pegged at \$700,000 in August.

According to the council, that amount is down to about \$140,000—which will be carried into the 1981 budget talks and made part of the regional levy.

Wells said the double Halton call for an inquiry does not meet any of the provincial criteria under which he as Minister would ask for a probe.

Normal criteria are considered a lack of action by a council to correct a problem, criminal activities, and maladministration.



Members of the Canadian Cancer Society Acton Branch Activity Group are busy these days preparing bales of crafts, knitting, baked goods, jams, preserves, coffee, tea and sugar for cancer patients at Princess Margaret and Henderson Hospitals. The group is accepting donations up until next Wednesday, December 3.

When the goods will be shipped off to the cancer patients. Seen here, left to right, are Irene McLeod, Dora Kennedy, Sue Sale, Jimmy Sale, Jean Leishman, Jean Hoops, Mary Mann, Isabel McDonald and Irene Terry.

Photo by GORD MURRAY

## Water-sewer rate up 25% Jan. 1 to solve \$500,000 deficit

By Steve Arnold

Halton homeowners are going to pay up to 25 per cent more for sewer and water services to cover budgeting errors made by the outgoing regional council.

Councillors approved a recommendation last week to increase the rates in order to cover a projected \$500,000 deficit and save themselves from possible lawsuits.

In a report to the councillors which he dubbed the "Fix It" approach, Acting Chief Administrative Officer Dennis Perlin said the deficit results from much lower revenues for the sewer and water systems than had been anticipated.

Problems with those services have been ongoing for much of this year after councillors approved the imposition of a sewer surcharge which resulted in heavier than expected conservation of water in the region.

Since sewer rates are based on water bills, if homeowners weren't using water they weren't paying as much for the sewer system and the revenue side of the ledger turned up short.

"There is a legal responsibility on all councillors, if they know there is a deficit, to take all reasonable action to deal with it," Perlin told members of the Administration and Finance Committee that morning.

In his written report he added "that legal and fiscal responsibility, if ignored, raises the spectre of possible personal liability for the members of the '79-'80 council."

Perlin explained that if the members of the outgoing council failed to take some action to deal with the sewage deficit, they could face lawsuits from several quarters.

Suits could come from members of the new council, to be sworn in Dec. 10, or from groups of citizens, he explained.

Perlin also said the retiring councillors did not have the option of adjusting the current mill rate to cover the deficit.

"That power is gone from this council, the new council would have to take that action," he said.

"It may be," his report continued, "that the '81-'82 Council may change or even reverse any action taken by this council, but then any carryover deficit will be assumed by that council and this council will in my opinion have done its job."

While some councillors have advocated abolishing the surcharge system and returning to sewer charges on the mill rate, Perlin said that wouldn't be a

good move right now.

When councillors last debated a motion to scuttle the surcharge they were stopped by a threatened lawsuit from Halton Hills, which enjoys extremely lower rates under the surcharge than it would under any other system.

"If there are any moves to quash the bylaws that would be necessary to go back to the charge-back system, we could be tied up in court for several months," Perlin warned.

That, he added would not only delay the settling of the regional budget for 1981 but would also stall similar efforts by the local councils.

The rate increases approved by the committee and council will mean another \$4 to \$6 every two months to homeowner, or \$25 to \$35 a year.

Council also approved the establishment of a committee to study the division of water-sewer services between region and local councils and alternative methods of financing the systems.

## Remind Acton children seek Block Parents' aid

Children should be reminded about Acton's Block Parents and to seek aid at a Block Parent home if they need help.

Pointing to the recent reports of women being attacked and children being followed and harassed, co-ordinator of the Acton Community Services Centre, Terry Grubbe, said she hopes all parents are reminding their children to seek safety at a Block Parent Home if bothered by a stranger.

Block Parent Homes display a red and white sign stating Block Parent in a front window.

Grubbe also urges Block Parents remember to display their sign when they are home.

Block Parents is a program sponsored by the Community Services Centre. There are signs at the entrances to Acton stating the community is a Block Parent Town.

More Block Parents are needed too, Grubbe says. Anyone interested should call her at 853-3310.

### inside

David McGilloway, talented center for the Acton Sabres may qualify for the internationally famous Guinness World Book of Records with the shortest time span between two goals.

McGilloway's record? He scored them both at the same time.

For details, turn to sports B1.

Jack Baftis is the first person to win a second term as Halton region chairman. More on page 3.

The Acton Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year program will become part of the Back to Acton Days celebration next year. Turn to page 3.

Peter Dunham has been re-elected president and general manager of Beardmore. Turn to page 10.

Rev. Walter Fosbury celebrated his 80th birthday on Friday. See page 9.

## Youth charged 26 break-ins

A 15-year old Acton youth has been arrested and charged in connection with a rash of break and enters in Acton and Georgetown during the past month. It is estimated he has stolen cash and jewellery worth \$10,000.

Halton Regional Police Staff Sergeant Ron Southgate said the juvenile has been charged with 26 entries and two attempts.

Detectives Keith Robertson, Bob Waller and Bill Riddle have been working on the case and eventually arrested the youth. Fourteen of the entries were made in Acton while 12 homes in Georgetown were broken into.

The suspect appeared in juvenile court Monday.



Mr. and Mrs. Golden Age

Bert and Irene Davidson delighted fellow seniors by being the only couple to dance at Thursday's Acton Legion-Acoto Rotary Golden Age Christmas dinner.