



Mrs. J. Opratka, Mississauga Regional Council Chairman for region 18 presents Acton Red Cross chairman Henry Kroes with the organization's charter at its inaugural meeting Monday evening at Christian Reformed Church.

# Acton's Red Cross officially born

by Helen Murray  
Six years of hard work culminated Monday evening with the official birth of the Acton Branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society. Local chairman Henry Kroes was presented with the Red Cross Charter by Mrs. J. Opratka, Mississauga Regional Council chairman for region 18, of which Acton is a part.

The story of the long haul to branch status is a bit confused, as Kroes and Georgetown branch president Erica Thompson differ on who came to whom for help. The result was the same in both books.

According to Mrs. Thompson, Kroes approached her organization for help in re-establishing the blood donor clinic in Acton. (Kroes says they approached him). From this, developed six years of sharing funds, campaigns, equipment, manpower, and kinship.

Acton became a "unit-operating service" with its own volunteers. It was the Georgetown members who were so helpful in Acton obtaining the charter, Kroes said.

Reviewing the past year, Alice Schreiber, Blood Donor Clinic chairman, explained that with the four clinics held last year 494 pints of

blood were collected. "We would like to see it higher," she said. Sponsors were Richard Telford, Optimist Club of Acton, and A & B Foodland.

Mrs. Schreiber praised Ruth Courtney of the Legion Ladies' who looks after refreshments for donors, and Mary DeHaan who has her own group of volunteers who telephone donors.

Clinics in 1981 are scheduled for March 25, June 25, September 24 and December 22.

The Acton and District Red Cross branch has 210 routes to cover at campaign time—the month of March. Some 190 volunteers knock on doors from Ospringe to Speyside, east to the Fourth Line and west to the Townline seeking donations. Last year they raised \$4,200.

Mrs. Opratka gave the volunteers some encouraging words. She pointed out Red Cross volunteers devote half-a-million hours a week to the cause. In Ontario alone there are 20,000 volunteers, with over 300,000 contributing blood, and another 300,000 participating in the water safety program. With this amount of support, she said, all should be encouraged.

Mrs. Opratka explained that 90 per cent of

Red Cross workers are volunteers, with only 10 per cent being paid for their services. About 50 branches receive the funds from the United Way, she went on, with about 74 depending on their own individual fund raising campaigns for money.

"When I come to a place like Acton, with all its volunteers, I feel a renewed energy," she said.

Words of congratulations came from: Peggy Balkind of the Acton Community Services Centre; Connie Niewhof; Lieutenant Lorne Pritchett, of the Acton Salvation Army; Constable William Parry, of the Halton Regional Police; David Hall, of the Optimists; Vic Bristol, of the Heart Fund; Alma Braida and Gloria Coates of the Acton branch of the Canadian Cancer Society; Bert Hinton of the Chamber of Commerce and the Halton Lung Association; and Alma Braida on behalf of the Lakeside Chapter of the IOOE.

Films and slides were shown outlining the various services offered by the Red Cross Society.

"From watching the movie," said Kroes, "I realize just how much we have to do and we haven't even got started yet!"

A certificate of appreciation was presented to Helen Murray, by Mrs. Schreiber, in appreciation of press coverage by both Helen and Gord Murray in the past six years in The Acton Free Press. Also thanked was Helen McLean, formerly of Acton, now of Milton, who "without her help, we wouldn't have gotten anywhere," Kroes claimed.

The charter reads: "On the application of Ontario division, Central Council of the Canadian Red Cross Society by virtue of the authority vested in it does hereby constitute the Acton and District Branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society with permission and authority to use the Emblem and Badge of the Red Cross and subject to the objectives and bylaws of the society to perform all acts consisted therewith.

"This Charter shall remain in force until such time only as it may be recalled by Central Council."

The charter is signed by Honorary President Edward Schreyer, Divisional President J.P. Richards, National commissioner H. Tellier and National president H. Lavelle.

# The Acton Free Press

An Inland Community Newspaper

One Hundred and Sixty Year - No. 29

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1980

Sixteen Pages - Twenty-Five Cents

## Councillors vote selves \$590 1981 wage hike

The mayor and council voted themselves a raise at general committee, Monday night.

The mayor's salary will be upped from \$15,000 to \$16,500 and councillors will have an increase from \$5,940 to \$6,530.

This pay hike will apply only in 1981. By a system of comparisons to other indices their salaries will be raised each year based on the formula approximating the cost of living index.

The actual percentage increase per year will be the lesser of the Canada Consumer Price Index, the average percentage increase in industrial salaries, and average percentage increase of seven cate-

gories of town employees.

The categories chosen as a comparison are laborer, facility maintenance operator, secretary, building inspector, town engineer, public works foreman and heavy equipment operator.

This is the same system used at Halton Region and the City of Burlington.

In addition regional councillors are paid \$9,974. Councillors serving on various boards and commissions are also paid usually on a per meeting basis.

The sole opponent of the raise, Councillor Ross Knechtel said he would like more information, and claimed no industry would approve raises without comparisons and more background.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy said he originated the mo-

tion and admitted discussion about council's remuneration is always unpopular. He said salaries should be reviewed after four years.

"There's no way anyone is going to establish what a council is really worth" he commented, and said councillors' pay ranges from \$4,000 up to \$12,000. The mayor warned councillors would take political flack and "everybody you meet is going to scream like hell."

Knechtel attacked the system of yearly percentage increases as well, saying it is wrong to set salaries for all-time based on "what we have at this time." He claimed it is irresponsible to pass a bylaw saying what council will make in the next five years.

## Knechtel boosts Section 86 but few support tax reform

If initial comments are a good indication it would seem there's little chance Halton Hills council will opt for property tax reform through Section 86 of the Assessment Act.

Monday night Councillor Ross Knechtel presented general committee with the report his special review committee compiled during the late summer, fall and early winter. Four councillors and four citizens sat on the study group.

The committee's report showed assessment would decrease for 3,310 pieces of property, increase for 3,950 and stay the same for 2,897.

All councillors praised the excellence of the report, while Knechtel said it couldn't have been compiled without the fine work by committee members and town staff.

Section 86 is often called market value assessment, but a more accurate word would be equalized assessment, Knechtel told the councillors.

He explained under section 86 the tax burden will shift around within classes of property, single family, apartments, industrial, farm etc., but not

between classes of property as would happen with Pure market value assessment.

If council doesn't opt for Section 86 there will be over 3,000 people in Halton Hills still paying more taxes than in fairness they should be just because their homes have been built since the province froze assessment early in the last decade.

He said Section 86 doesn't, in theory, result in the town receiving more or less tax revenue, although there is sometimes a drop in tax revenue the first year because of assessment appeals. The lost revenue is regained the next year through a higher mill rate, treasurer Ray King explained.

Queen's Park started out in the direction of full market value assessment, but backed off for both political and practical reasons, Knechtel explained. Under pure market value assessment there would be massive shifts in the tax burden between classes of property because in the past decade the value of single family homes has gone up far faster than the value of other types of property.

Under the present form of assessment different factors are being used in each of Halton Hills three former municipalities to determine assessment, hence three different mill rates. Section 86 allows for a reassessment of all property, something which hasn't been done in many years. Assessment has been done at different times, using different factors. Currently new homes are winding up with much higher assessments. Section 86 brings market value and other factors into the reassessment, Knechtel explained, which gives the entire situation "a sense of balance" instead of the huge increases and decreases in assessment which would be the result of pure market value assessment.

The same rules of assessment determination are applied for all properties in a class like single family dwellings, instead of numerous rules which is the

case now, Knechtel said. "We are just saying we will use the same set of rules for every single family home. Everyone is treated fairly using the same set of rules. We aren't doing that now. Assessment now depends on when a house was built so some are paying on a more expensive basis."

Knechtel said if Section 86 isn't adopted then the town must be prepared to tell people who are assessed on the "newer basis why they are paying more." He said it would be easy to maintain the status quo, but there will still be a lot of people who will know they are paying more than, in fairness, they should be. He asked how council was going to explain this unfairness, adding it can't be done because there is no answer why people with homes built since assessment was frozen should pay more when the town could easily correct the problem.

(Continued on page B 3)

## Parents protest kindergarten age

The province's decision not to give grants to Halton board of education children in kindergarten next year who were born in January or February of 1977 has sparked a protest in Acton.

Queen's Park has a policy on its books stating that only children who have reached age five by next December 31 may enter kindergarten this September. However, both the public and separate school systems have a long standing tradition of allowing pupils who have reached their fifth birthday by the end of February to enter kindergarten the previous fall. The province has told both boards if they continue this policy they won't receive grants for those students. While firm decisions haven't been made yet it would appear both boards will comply with the province's deadline and change their school starting birthdate deadlines effective next school year.

Janet Fleming, Cobblehill Rd., has asked all parents of children affected by this change to contact her.

She says she knows of eight children in local nursery schools who are facing a third year in that type of education and suspects there are more.

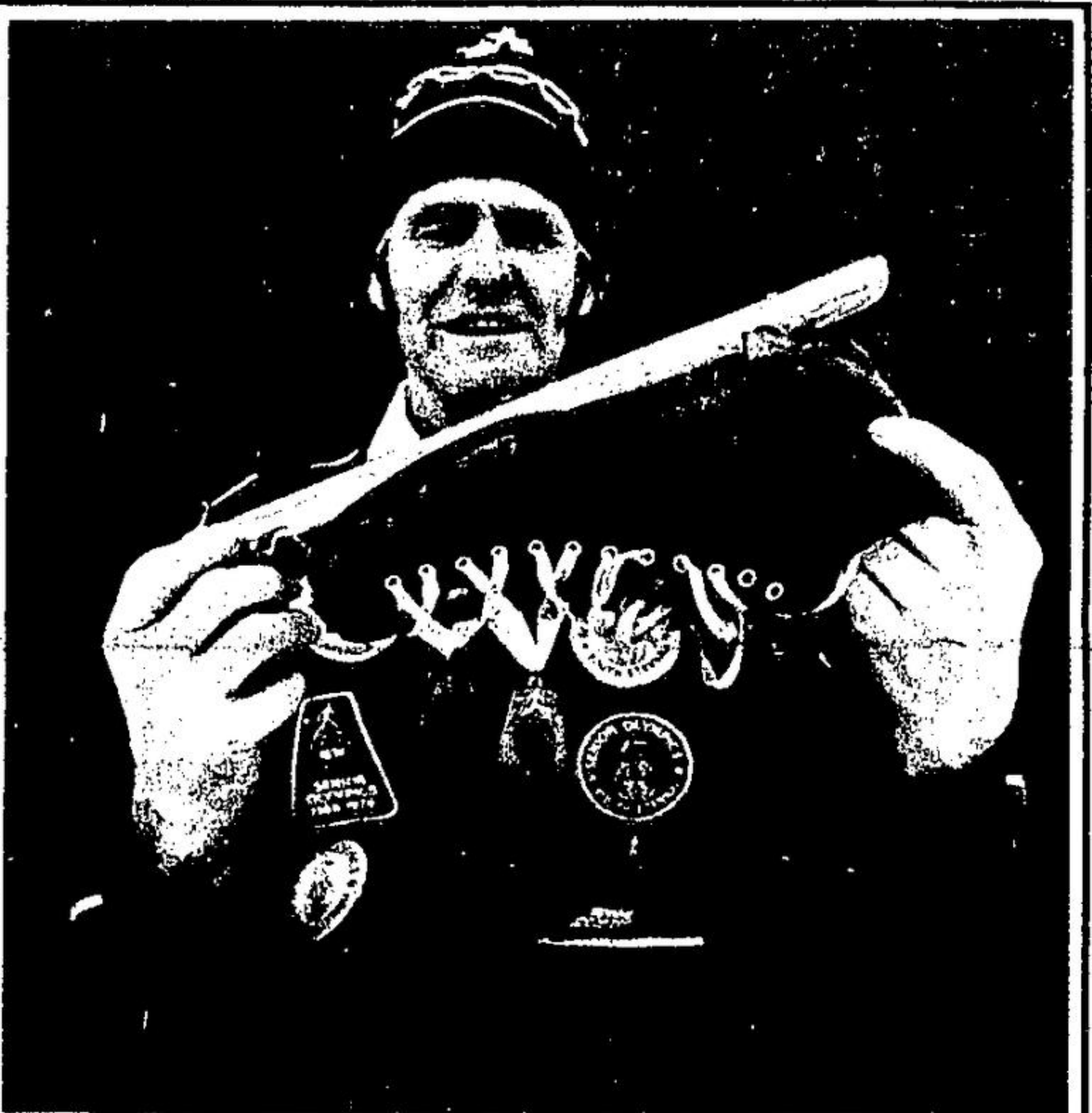
Halton Hills separate school trustee Irene McCauley says she knows of only one child in Acton who won't be able to go to St. Joseph's this fall because of the age deadline, but she has only heard from one family.

Protests over this regulation change are gathering steam in Burlington, Oakville and Milton.

Mrs. Fleming says she is setting out to try and determine how many children in Acton are affected so this information can be passed on to Trustee Arlene Bruce. "We need to know the numbers involved here," she said.

She'd like to see parents of these children get together and discuss "how we can approach" the

(Continued on page B 3)



Ted Barden, Eden Mills, is off to the Senior Olympics in New York where he will compete in four speed skating events. This year he hopes to skate 1,500 metres in less than three minutes.

### Seniors Olympics

## Other games people play

by Eric Elstone  
Ted Barden likes to win. He's been that way for much of his 65 years. He's got at least one more win in mind, to skate race his way over 1,500 metres of ice in less than three minutes.

Ted's chance comes next week when the Eden Mills resident will compete against the clock at Lake Placid in New York State during the 12th Annual International Senior Olympics.

This is the fifth year Ted has participated in the senior Olympics. He and his wife Evelyn usually compete, however, a bad fall will likely prevent Evelyn from skating this time, though, she will make the trip, says Ted.

The senior Olympics offer chances for people to compete in world class conditions. Seniors is a bit of a misnomer, in the phrase senior Olympics, for though many of the 50 or so competitors in speed skating are more than 50 years of age, a number of younger men and women—from 25 to 49 years, also compete.

If the image conjured up by the word senior does not ring quite true in the phrase senior Olympics, the second half certainly peels sharply because those "seniors" race on the same oval ice used in the 1932 Olympic Games; the very same slick Eric Heiden sped on to his five Olympic gold medals last year.

Speed skating is the only event offered in the east, according to chairman Alex White of Southampton, New York. The games started years ago he says in Los Angeles and many summer competitions—running, swimming, cycling—are held there. Skiing is held on the mountains of Washington or Oregon.

Senior Olympics is competition not recreation, although participants enjoy themselves. "Senior citizens take it extremely seriously," according to White. "Some skate year round and on outdoor rinks. They want those medals: gold, silver and bronze."

Ted already has some third place medals plus some ribbons. "I've played sports and been competitive most of my life. I don't like to be beat too bad. Most people like to win," says Barden. And Ted is like most people.

The speed skating is an extension of another activity which the Bardens enjoy: pleasure skating. Ted and Evelyn often are found by friends,

who also take to donning the blades, in North York, Guelph, Scarborough and Stratford.

"Some people go drinking every night, some dancing, some play tennis," says Ted. "This is what we do."

Since early December, however, Ted's had more in mind than pleasure skating. There are the games. Most of this winter's days finds him practising his stride on the old mill pond not far from his Eden Mills home. He used to operate and own the mill, which fire gutted a year ago, and the mill pond.

In the morning Ted shovels snow off the 125 metre or so oval he's got on the pond. After lunch he faces up his 17-inch long blades for yet another practice.

Gills... gills... gills sounds the keen, steel, keels in the frozen mill pond surface. Ted's goal of breaking the three minute barrier for 1,500 metres means he must propel his 160 pound, five-foot eleven-inch frame round the circuit every 15 seconds for 12 times. Even on a windless day, fabric of his blue track suit ripples away from his body as he goes into a turn.

If Ted is to beat the clock he has to shave 26.7 seconds from his 1980 time. In addition to the 1,500 metres, Ted will compete in the 1,000, the 500 and 200 metre races.

Stamina is the big difference between speed skating and hockey skating, according to Ted. The stride and turning are different and there are no quick stops in speed skating—"You go and go". In hockey, a player skates straight up, while a speeder leans forward so "there's not much of you catching the wind."

Asked if he thinks he is getting any better Ted says he doesn't know. For him the practices are to build up endurance. Instead of skating for five minutes, see if one can last 20 minutes. He says he sprints for two or three rounds while he's at it.

In any skating its the legs that count. Ted says that his are much different than when he first practised nearly two months ago. "They don't get tired and want to drop off."

Ted's optimism about this year's games shows up when he speaks, again of those legs. After skating for a while he says "I find I have a lot more ginger in them."

**inside**

Halton Hills Separate School Board hopes to have new plans for the new St. Joseph's School completed by the end of March. (More on page 3.)

Acton residents are considering a bylaw which would require the Halton Hills Board of Education to be on duty at the Halton Hills, Smallwood, Acres and The Woodlands schools.



Acton-Rockwood residents closed ranks behind Acton High School teacher Keith Black and his wife Rosemary when Halton's Board of Education threatened to fire him. Many residents travelled twice to board meetings in Burlington to demonstrate support of the Blacks.

See story on page 2 and letter and editorial page 4.