

## St. Joseph's design plans to province for approval

Design plans for the new St. Joseph's School have been sent to the Ontario Ministry of Education for approval.

Halton Separate School Board's property and planning committee approved the plans developed by a Hamilton architect last month and then passed them on to board administration staff for review and revisions.

Halton Hills Trustee Irene McCauley said this week the plans for the building weren't changed and only minor adjustments to the site plan were made by staff. A turning circle has been removed and there is now a circular driveway in front of the school.

Late last month the board passed bylaw number 36, authorizing the borrowing of \$75,000 for the purchase of the Mill St. West school site.

Also, McCauley said, a proposed development agreement between Halton Hills and the board is now in the hands of the board's lawyer for review. Staff is also examining the proposed agreement.

She said there has been no determination of the final cost for the school. The board received a grant of \$1 million from the province for 1982 for the school.

McCauley said she doesn't know how long it will take to secure provincial approval of the school design and the date for ground breaking at the site hasn't been set.

The plans call for a single level school with nine classrooms plus a kindergarten room. One room is for special education classes and there is a general purpose room or gym, music room, library, school office, principal's office, health office, staff room, student and staff washrooms, seminar rooms, guidance room, and several storage and maintenance areas.



The Legion Minor Hockey Association demonstrated its appreciation of Acton Legion Branch 197's support for hockey Saturday. The association presented members of the Legion's executive with a handsome plaque plus a montage of color photos showing all of this year's teams. Association chairman John Toebes, right, and vice-chairman Norm Merrin, left, presented the gifts to Legion sports officer Fred Allen and president Pat Walde. The Acton Legion has supported the house league hockey for at least 24 years.

## Bylaw kills the big top

Acton Business Improvement Area (BIA) plans to bring a big top circus to town next month were killed Monday night by a little known Halton Hills bylaw.

BIA official Ed Wood went to Halton Hills general committee asking for a recreation department decision not to allow the circus to be held at Prospect Park to be overturned.

After considerable discussion of the fact the BIA had explored using a number of sites for the circus on May 20 and recreation department concerns about soccer season disruptions and park damage Councillor Roy Booth asked if a circus could even be held under a town bylaw.

Most councillors seemed surprised there was a bylaw, a few thought it covered only Georgetown. Deputy-clerk Delmar French had to search out the bylaw, which was passed in 1975, covers the whole town and sets out a long list of regulations which must be met before a licence is issued for a circus or similar exhibit or carnival.

Councillor Dave Whiting suggested there was no point in giving further consideration to allowing the BIA to use the park for the circus because there wasn't much chance the circus could clear the numerous licencing regulations in time for the show.

## Easter REJOICE IN HIS MESSAGE



Let us praise Him as we find comfort and inspiration in His words. A very happy Easter to all.

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## Region deficits top \$1.1 million

Halton Region has piled up over \$1.1 million in deficits in the sewer and operating budgets over the past four years.

Preliminary 1980 audit figures show a \$451,238 shortfall in property tax services (all operations funded by tax dollars or the operating budget) and \$723,533 deficit in the sewer account, which is financed by charges to sewer users.

Last week new Halton treasurer Gerry Lawson presented an analysis of the region's year end positions stretching back to 1975 to finance and administration committee.

The report caused considerable confusion, but interviews with Acton councillor Dave Whiting, Halton Hills Mayor Peter Pomeroy and Lawson finally cleared the fog.

Whiting said it appears to him that the region has been "knowingly or unknowingly" deficit financing for the past four years, something which is illegal, and he says he has loads more questions to ask about the deficits. He also wonders why the province hasn't stepped in and why nobody put a stop to the financing blunders. After first examining the report he feared the region might have accumulated up to \$2.3 million in deficits, but that was because of the way the figures were presented and the fact he assumed the region wouldn't deficit finance.

Lawson explained deficits from one year must be carried on to the next and covered. However, as Pomeroy points out, Halton hasn't been taking in as many tax dollars as were needed for several years now. He prefers to say there has been a underlevy problem, not a deficit. The region has simply been spending more money than it was taken in.

The region ended 1977 with an operating fund deficit of \$57,000.

This was carried on to 1978 and another \$301,000 shortfall cropped up by the end of that year. So the region deficit in the operating fund had grown to \$358,000.

Again the deficit was carried over to the next year and in 1979 the deficit was actually brought down slightly, by \$15,000, to \$343,000, through increased revenues.

Carried over to 1980 the accumulated deficit grew again, this time by \$108,000 for a final operating budget shortfall of a little over \$451,000 after four years of errors.

But the deficits don't end there. Deficits in the sewer account stretch back as far as 1975, when this portion of the budget was still covered by tax dollars. At the end of 1975 the region had a \$328,000 sewer deficit which was chopped down to just \$11,000 by the end of 1976. In 1977 and 1978 the sewer account showed surpluses of \$160,000 and \$273,000 respectively.

However, at the end of 1979, the region found itself in a hole for sewers again, a \$438,000 hole. This deficit was carried over and another \$235,000 was added.

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Acton Firefighters battled a widespread grass fire for about two-and-a-half hours Friday. High winds pushed flames along the northside of the CNR tracks and by a number of properties. Flames skirted Halton Hills Collision and some homes. Around supper time a truck had to return because fire broke out again in one of the sheds.

Photo by ERIC ELSTONE

## Rural man objects to Ma Bell raising rates but not service

A RR2 Rockwood resident, Glen Pearce, is fed up with poor service and ever increasing rates from Ma Bell and has decided to raise his objections with the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Pearce has filed a four page brief with the CRTC outlining his problems with the 854 or Campbellville exchange.

He plans to attend regional CRTC hearings on Bell Canada's request for a 30 to 40 per cent rate increase next month and is seeking the backing of other Bell customers, particularly those living in north Nassagaweya, who are unhappy with paying more and more for service which doesn't improve.

Municipal councils are receiving copies of his brief and are urged to support his protest.

"I would suggest the commission (CRTC) entertain a concept of establishing and publishing some form of standard that the telephone company must measure up to in order to maintain its rates. This standard should be published so that there would be no doubts as to what is expected. We and the company would know what is to be expected in the service contract, and there would be no room for the current type of argument that implies: 1) that there couldn't be a problem because it's Bell Telephone equipment, and 2) that you must be exaggerating with the number of complaints you are lodging," Pearce writes in his brief.

Pearce finds the rate increase application "rather presumptuous" on the part of Ma Bell. "The company has convinced itself that it has the right to demand more and more and deliver less and less," he says.

No doubt Bell will say it needs the staggering increase to keep up with costs and provide better service. Bell may even need the money to pay for television commercials which praise the company's feats outside Ontario. Pearce says he finds Bell's boasting "to be on the border of obscene when one is forced to endure the slings and arrows of the outrageous Campbellville telephone exchange."

His brief traces a long line of problems he has en-

countered, and recorded in a diary, since moving to north Nassagaweya in 1968 and setting up his own business, Envirosearch, at his 15 Sideroad home in 1978. "At this point in time we are still having service interruptions and significant problems" using the equipment at his home and business which Bell owns and rents to him each month. He has had party lines, semi-private lines and private lines over the years he has had an 854 exchange.

He has spoken over the years at public meetings with two different Bell public relations officials and while the public relations continues "the service also continues, continues to decline."

For nine months his firm had repeated complaints from customers who said it was impossible to reach him because they'd dial his number and then the line would go dead. Also, when calls did get through, noise on the circuits made talking impossible. Bell dealt with the problem many times, but it wasn't solved until Pearce himself suggested when the line went dead the phone just wasn't switching over to the busy signal. Then Bell discovered the problem was in faulty equipment it had bought. During the nearly year long string of complaints, four to six a month, Bell was also busy asking for a hefty rate increase so it would have the money to provide better service.



Glen Pearce is pretty disgusted with phone service and is protesting to the CRTC.

Pointing to another example of poor service, Pearce writes his firm has gone through a "frustrating" two to three month period when calls on the Bell trunk line were continually interrupted, cut off, and the only response a dial tone. Besides having to replace calls, apologize to clients and call the operator to have billing corrections made "we had the frustrations of having to explain to operators that yes indeed, there was problems in Campbellville, that they were significant problems, that we knew what we were speaking of."

"We are faced with using a system that is frowned upon by maintenance employees of the telephone company who are forced to service it, a system that the maintenance and repair staff will openly admit is totally incapable of delivering decent service, a

(Continued on page 12)



Al Russell's Rainbow will be just one of a number of hot air balloons at this weekend's Balloon Fiesta at Blue Springs Scout Reserve. See story inside.

### inside

There will be a special program at McKenzie-Smith next week in memory of the late Gary Dawkins. More on page 3.

The Sprackman plaza issue has been sent to the OMB. Turn to page 5.

Back to Acton Days is June 27 and 28. Details on page B6.