

Board of Education

Decision '82

All-candidates meeting

# Rising taxes discussed

Both candidates for Acton's seat on Halton Board of Education, incumbent Arlene Bruce and former trustee Bert Hinton, are concerned about rising taxes and education costs, but they are offering voters different approaches to the problems judging by their comments at last week's all-candidates meeting.

**Arlene Bruce**

There are great demands on the school system, Arlene Bruce said, and the onus is on trustees to monitor spending and programs.

The Halton system is good, but everyone must "adjust" their expectations of the schools; not lower their expectations, but learn the difference between "essentials" and "desirables."

Halton hasn't been "wild" in its spending,

she said, pointing to very reasonable per pupil costs, compared to neighboring boards. The board has started the tough job of cost cutting, trimming \$100,000 this year and over the next three years chopping 25 per cent of the administrative staff. Cutting is being done by setting priorities; not chopping in areas which effect the children in the classroom but by restructuring the system to save money. Bruce urged the system not be set back 20 years by making excessive spending cuts in the schools.

Many education costs, Bruce noted, are simply beyond the control of trustees, such as fuel and water. For the first time ever the finance committee of the board is sitting all year long to get a better handle on spending. She predicted next

year's budget will be more "reasonable" and urged parents get involved in the schools; reminding them principals, teachers and trustees are there to serve them.

Bruce noted she worked in many capacities as a trustee during her first term on the board and she is "approachable."

**Bert Hinton**

Hinton told the audience he is no stranger to the board and is "assured" of a good working relationship with the Director of Education, Wally Beavor.

He called for the school system to "get back to basics", both in terms of spending and curriculum; adding it was long past the time for tough cost cutting. Education costs have risen dramatically through the past few years while enrolment

has been declining and system. Each board shouldn't be settling teachers' wages, but salaries should be negotiated at the provincial level, such as has been done successfully at the community colleges.

Hinton also believes principals should be given more authority and not just be "chain store managers."

Business ability to challenge wasteful spending is needed on the board and Hinton rapped Bruce for not speaking out against excessive teacher wage settlements as well as a lavish banquet and gift for the retiring director of education.

There's an "economy of scale" to Halton's student costs and it is "futile" to compare local costs to those of neighboring boards because Halton is a smaller area.

Besides his concerns about spending, Hinton also wants more "discipline, integrity and morality" reflected in the schools. He called for "proven new methods" to be added to the way children are taught, while keeping the "best" of the old



Arlene Bruce



Bert Hinton



Irene McCauley



Tom Simmons



Irene Wood

Decision '82

Separate school race

All-candidates meeting

## Stress communications

All three candidates for the lone Halton Hills seat on separate school board emphasized the importance of communication with parents and taxpayers in their remarks at last week's all-candidates meeting.

**Irene McCauley**

Irene McCauley said her reason for running remains the same as it was when she entered politics two years ago, to ensure quality Catholic education for the children. She told the audience she is quite aware of parents and taxpayers' concerns and is able to voice them.

The incumbent noted she has the time to visit the schools during the daytime to meet with principals and teachers as well as attend committee meetings and seminars on education. In addition she is able to work full time on ratepayers' problems and listen to their concerns to make sure there is a "flow of information."

She pointed to the introduction of summer school in Halton Hills and a separate school board meeting being held in Halton Hills this year as two successes of her first term.

When parents urged a fence be built at the site of the new St. Joseph's School to protect

children from Fairy Lake she went to bat and pushed for it, and it was built.

In answer to a question from a parent, McCauley told the audience lights are on order for the exterior of the building.

Working as Acton's trustee has been a "good exercise" in communicating.

**Tom Simmons**

Tom Simmons is concerned about good quality Catholic education, but at a cost the community can afford.

Nothing he is involved in the church and community, he said he will promote and encourage "straightforward communication." A trustee must be an "enthusiastic salesman" of Catholic education.

With a financial and administrative background, Simmons said he wants to see students prepared for the computer age and hopes to work on long range board planning to see that provincial grants are secured.

The candidate said he is concerned about taxes going up and ratepayers being "bled dry". He suggested the board will have to look at ways of cutting the "fat" from the system and spending only on things which "make

**Irene Wood**

Effective communication along with fiscal viability and program development are crucial issues in the 80's Irene Wood said. She wants to use her leadership skills to improve the management of the school system and move the board to a more effective cost efficient administration.

The flow of information must be improved and the separate school system should develop "sound" external relations with the rest of the community.

Research and development of programs can be used to raise the level of education offered by separate schools, Wood said, adding she wants to work to assist the board to procure more resources.

Study of a Catholic high school for Halton Hills should continue and she wants to reflect the "unique and dynamic" makeup of Halton Hills.

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