

Town, police investigating mysterious rock festival here

SAT. SEPT. 17th 6⁰⁰ PM

FARM HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

PRESENTS... **A THIRD COLOSSAL GATHERING OF FRIENDS**

MUSIC FESTIVAL

FEATURING... **FM WITH NASH & SLASH AND MORE.**

by Gord Murray

Municipal staff, the Town solicitor's office, and Halton Regional Police are all investigating a mysterious rock music festival apparently planned for this Saturday night on property in the area of Highway 7 and the Fifth Line.

At press time reports were that the investigation is continuing and progress is being made.

Mayor Peter Pomeroy said the municipality is now fairly certain the festival is being held in a large field behind a corn field on property at the northeast corner of Highway 7 and Fifth Line intersection. Farmers who rent the fields discovered signs of construction related to this event in the field Monday night. Police and Bylaw Enforcement Officer Jack Lusty were on the site Tuesday morning.

Lusty said they still hadn't determined who was putting on the show.

However, the mayor said, the municipality heard from someone Tuesday morning claiming they are connected with the festival and wanting to meet staff Tuesday afternoon to discuss permits.

Mayor Pomeroy said if someone wants to put on a festival in Halton Hills they shouldn't be so secretive, but follow the proper channels, that way authorities wouldn't be anticipating the worst.

He said he would be bringing the festival to the attention of councillors Tuesday night at a special meeting called previously to deal with the municipal complex property issue. He

added he expects they'll also hear from the Town solicitor.

Pomeroy said in his view this event must be considered "not desirable" in light of the fact the Town has gone through so much trouble and expense trying to find out what exactly is going on.

Farm House Productions is putting on the show according to the posters and tickets circulating now for a few weeks in the Toronto-Mississauga area, and now reportedly surfacing in the Halton Hills area.

However, Bylaw Enforcement Officer Jack Lusty revealed according to the province Farm House Productions isn't a registered Ontario company. Music industry sources have described the outfit as an "excuse for a party."

Tuesday morning the ownership situation and particulars about the suspected property sites on the northwest and northeast corners of the Highway 7 and Fifth Line intersections, were still being nailed down by authorities. Spokesman for a syndicate, Lyncean Investments, which owns the old dragway just north of the Highway 7 on the Fifth Line denied any knowledge of a rock festival on their land for the Town, police and this newspaper. They said they haven't rented the land and nobody is authorized to use it for any gathering.

Lots are now being sold on the property for an estate home development.

Besides the tickets which are popping up more frequently now but are

still supposedly difficult to obtain, and the posters, there's further evidence that the event is planned. A talent firm in Toronto, The Agency on George St., confirmed over the phone for both Lusty and this newspaper that FM and Nash the Slash, said to be two major Ontario bands are booked for September 17 at Acton Farm House (or Farmhouse). The "and more" on the poster is supposed to be three other live bands, according to rumor.

Tickets, which are being sold for \$7, are available in advance and also at the gate this Saturday.

According to the tickets, which seem to have originally been printed for "A Third Colossal Gathering of Friends Music Festival" to be held July 4 with no acts, location or price mentioned on the ticket, the event starts at 2 p.m., but the posters say 6.

The music festival has absolutely no official sanctions from the municipality, police or other authorities. Lusty said they are concerned about zoning and noise bylaw infractions and share police worries about potential traffic and parking problems. It hasn't been determined if there could be trespass violations involved in the event, and the possibility the whole thing is a scam hasn't been completely ruled out yet. Police are also concerned about alcohol and drugs.

When the dragway was running it was a constant source of headaches for neighbors for miles around who complained loudly to municipal

authorities for years.

With all the problems Halton Hills has been having in recent years with rural recreation centres and events, the municipal attitude is concerned about this planned festival. The Town is assessing numerous options in the hopes of either seeing the show cancelled or at least controlled by authorities. Certain permit fees should have been paid to the Town and details ironed out with officials. However, there has been absolutely no known contact between the people putting this festival on and police or municipal authorities.

Apparently more and more people, both locally and in Metro Toronto, Mississauga, etc., are becoming aware of this festival, but virtually everyone is being close-mouthed. Many people describe the event as a "private party", which doesn't wash with authorities. Prices aren't charged on invitations to parties, and besides the expected crowd is far too large to be viewed as a private gathering. A good job has been done keeping everything hush-hush and maintaining a shroud of secrecy about the festival and its sponsors.

Obviously this veil of secrecy has been maintained to hinder any municipal efforts to block the event. Municipalities aren't welcoming rock festivals, injunctions have stopped a number this summer, including one in Erin Township last month which had to be moved the day of the show to

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The Acton Free Press



A METROLAND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

One Hundred and Ninth Year—Issue 10

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Offer \$52,500 for Stone School

Halton Hills has offered Halton Board of Education \$52,500 for the Stone School. If the deal firms up it wouldn't close until next June.

As reported in last week's paper, councillors met in-camera last Tuesday night to discuss the Stone School purchase (The council meeting was held Tuesday night, several hours after the deadline for the paper).

After returning to public session, councillors passed a lengthy motion making the offer for the closed school.

The motion notes the board is "considering disposing" of the school, adding council directed staff to contact the board about the June closing date because of "municipal budget and grant consideration."

The board had indicated the June closing would be acceptable, though trustees suggested they'd like to hear an offer for the building.

The council resolution points out that formerly the board had a guideline "making available to municipalities surplus board lands at 70 per cent of the appraised value." However, last year the board decided to change its policy so that other levels of government would pay the same appraised value as the public; other governments wouldn't get a break anymore.

However, Halton Hills is making its offer based on 70 per cent of an appraised value. Reportedly the Town and board's appraisals are quite different in value. It hasn't been revealed which appraisal was used to determine the offer.

The Town offer of \$52,500 is for both the Stone School building and "all the lands surrounding same."

matter being discussed in-camera. He noted purchase of the school had been discussed by councillors in public in the past and the Town was the only potential purchaser right now, so there was nothing to keep secret. He added Acton citizens are interested in the Stone School issue, the possible purchase has been discussed with service club representatives, and people want to know what is going on.

The appraisals would be discussed in-camera, Mayor Peter Pomeroy observed. Only the appraisals were confidential, he said. Pomeroy predicted council would be passing a resolution dealing with the Stone School in public that night.

Later in open council, Councillor Ross Knechtel noted the deal has taken quite a bit of time and past comments led the Town to think the board was "playing games" and the board thought the Town was "playing games."

The Town must convince the board it is serious and sincere in making the offer for the Stone School.

Pomeroy said the delays and communication problems are as much the Town's fault as the board's.

He said the offer was needed now as a "negotiating starting place." The offer has a non-refundable deposit attached, Pomeroy noted, and this will help convince the board the Town is serious in its bid. He expected with a Town offer now on the table, a counter-offer will be forthcoming from the board.

Knechtel said he didn't think trustees appreciated the Town's budget considerations, they had expected funds for the purchase to be included in this year's budget. Trustees must also understand the deal hinges on the Town receiving grants.

He urged that Halton Hills school trustees be made fully aware of the Town's financial constraints, so they can support the Town's position at board.

Pomeroy said the trustees will be contacted and made aware of the Town's problems.

Councillor Pam Sheldon said she too was concerned that the board doesn't understand the Town's position. The trustees must not be left wondering what the Town is doing, but be made fully aware of the Town's position.



Fair days are upon us again and record crowds are expected for the 70th annual event. Once again the Acton fair promises to be a weekend chuck full of fun and entertainment. For details on the fair turn to page 6, as well as elsewhere in the paper. This is a shot taken from the top of the ferris wheel at last year's fair.

Hydro bill paying service in Acton will continue

by Helen Murray

Hydro customers in Acton and Esqueping can continue to pay their bills in the Acton office on Alice St.

In a recorded vote Friday morning, Halton Hills Hydro commissioners voted three to two to continue the service, even though only a small percentage of the customers pay their bills with cash.

In a report to the commission, Hydro manager Jerry Trudell said the cash taken in does not justify the maintaining of a person in the office to receive the bills as they come in. However, he admitted if the commission wished to continue the practice (of Acton bill paying), he could post a body in the local office to handle the job.

Last June, citizens in Acton and Esqueping were outraged when this newspaper reported a proposal by Halton Hills hydro staff that could see the phasing out of personal bill paying service in Acton. Customers would either have to go to Georgetown to pay their bills in cash or drop a cheque off in a letter slot at the Alice St. location. This method, however, provided no receipts, and those without cheque-return accounts would have no proof they paid their bills.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy wondered if there were any jobs in the present organization that could be complemented by Acton bill collecting. Trudell admitted that there was, but it would be simpler just to have the person working in Georgetown.

Pomeroy challenged if the people could not pay their bills at the town offices (as he had suggested), the person employed to collect the bills in Acton at the hydro office would also do something else to fill out the day.

Commission chairman Bill Smith said he wanted nothing to do with paying bills at the town offices.

Trudell said the billing computer would not be returned to Acton. Pomeroy said he was in complete agreement with this, "but

I'm trying to provide a bill paying service here."

Ab Tennant clarified that there was never any question of the Acton building being closed. The controversy and the changes only centred around the bill paying operations. The engineering department is located in Acton and will be until such time as the hydro is located in a municipal complex. Even at that time, he revealed, the meter department would be moved to Acton and maintained here.

Tennant questioned whether the engineering secretary couldn't handle the bill paying.

Trudell said she is by herself if everyone else is out on the job and her workload

already is pretty high.

Tennant challenged that it has already been shown the amount of bill paying "is peanuts". Trudell countered that there are a couple days a month when the volume is high and she would not be able to do it by herself. Tennant suggested someone from another department come in and help her on these days. Trudell admitted this was possible.

Pomeroy wondered if there was enough work in Acton to have a separate person handling the bills. Trudell said if the commission decided to keep the service in town, he would manage the manpower around it.

"We have always been very careful about

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Don't forget this Sunday to participate, sponsor a participant, or make a donation to the Terry Fox Run and keep this Canadian hero's dream alive. More on the Fox Run inside.

inside

The Miller fund is up by another \$200 this week. More on page 6.

There's going to be a by-election in Esqueping, turn to Newsmakers, and Dolly Moosden is the first candidate. see page 2.

Acton citizens are collectively paying about \$1/2 million more than they should be in taxes each year, according to Councillor Ross Knechtel. See page 6.

Former council candidate Dennis Devine pleaded guilty to theft charges last week. More on page B1.

The number of welfare cases has dropped in Halton. Turn to page B7.

When all we have a back in school special for parents?

Tragedy at rural home

A child's party ended in tragedy last Saturday afternoon when a four year old was found in the swimming pool of an RR 2 Acton home.

Craig Harvey Burt, son of Harvey and Doreen Burt, RR 2 Acton, was attending the party at a neighbor's Sixth Line home with his twin sister when his body was found in one metre of water in the swimming pool. Guelph OPP say the boy apparently fell unnoticed into the water and he was discovered around 5 p.m. He was rushed to Georgetown and District Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Craig was a kindergarten student at Brisbane Public School.

Besides his parents and sister Cheryl Lynn, Craig is survived by his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Burt, Erin Township, and Mr. and Mrs. Allan Harrop of Brampton. Funeral service was conducted at J.S. Jones and Son Funeral Home, Georgetown yesterday (Tuesday) afternoon.

Craig Burt