

ADD battles drunk driving, support growing

by Jeff Andrew

When a child is struck by a drunk driver it is often the policeman who must carry the shattering news to the parent's doorstep.

As a Peel Region officer, John Gray has had to perform this dreaded part of the job. But roles were reversed on Good Friday of this year. He stood in the doorway of his Brampton home and heard a fellow officer deliver the news to him. He and his wife Ruth learned their son Neil had been killed by a hit and run driver, believed to be impaired, that evening (the driver was later apprehended and charged).

"People who have had their child killed by an impaired driver will tell you they feel absolutely useless, unable to do anything," said Gray reflecting on the grief and sense of helplessness felt by the Grays and surviving son, Paul.

Stemming from the tragedy was born a drive to strike a blow against impaired driving in Canada, to end the helplessness of victims and survivors. And so it was the Grays helped found Against Drunk Driving.

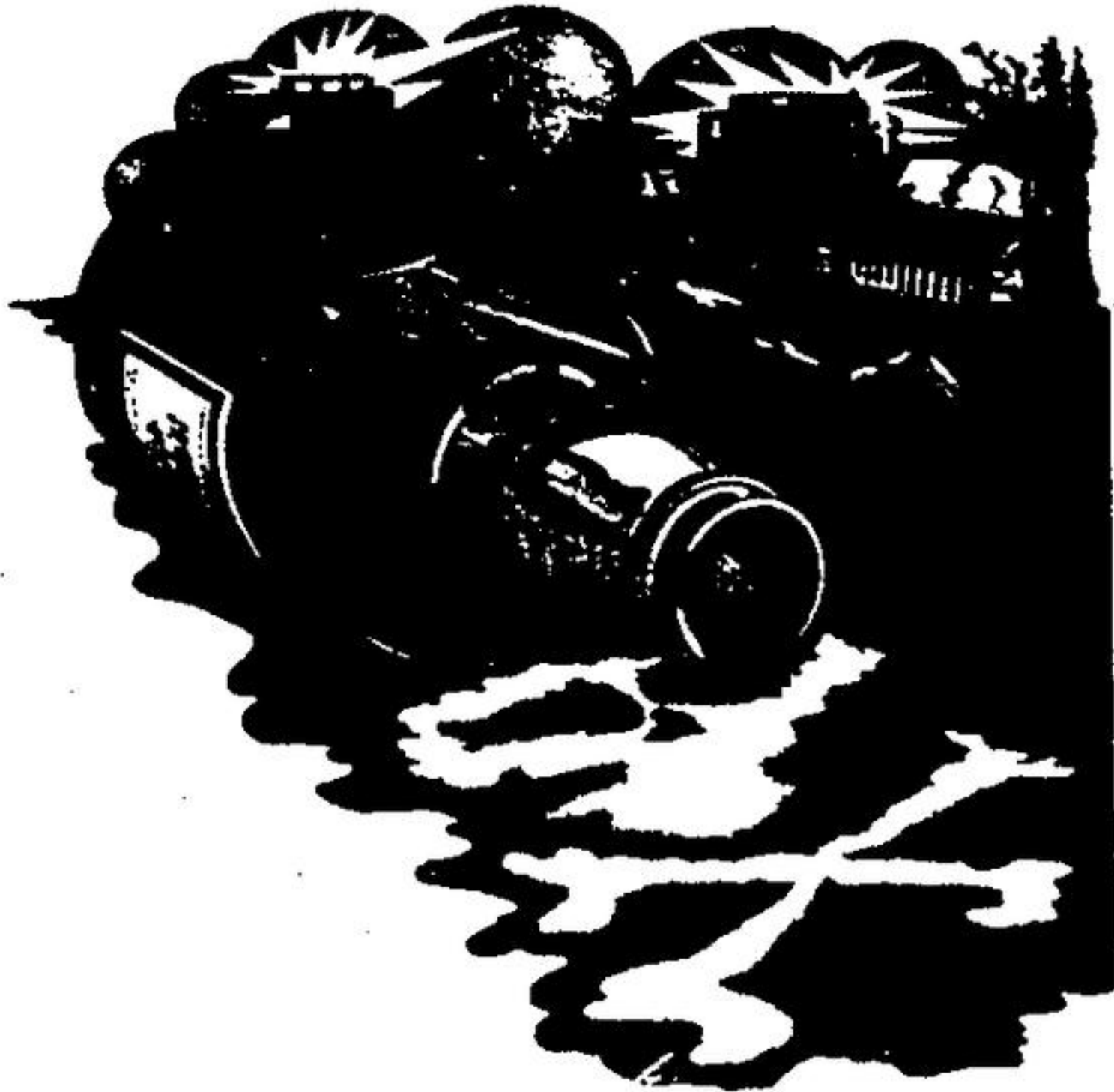
Founded in the spring, ADD is a grass-roots organization determined to tap the growing public frustration with the rising statistics for deaths and property loss due to drunk drivers.

John Gray is becoming a focus of national media attention as he and his wife and supporters doggedly build ADD's framework. Their efforts are paying off.

"We've got chapters right across Canada," he says, "and we're gaining members fast."

The word is spreading and so is the list of communities signing up for the fight—Nanaimo, Calgary, Saskatoon, Brandon, Oakville, Brampton, Itherville, Charlotteville.

Over 4,000 ADD bumper stickers have



been distributed nationally and Gray says they are popping up all over.

People who have been touched by the tragedy of impaired driving as well as those who have not are being recruited into ADD because of Gray's conviction, knowledge and reasoned approach. Letters of support, donations, supplies, computer time, anything people can offer to help, are bolstering the group's campaign.

At the heart of ADD are some well-defined objectives:

—a one year minimum sentence for a

first impaired driving offence.

—a five-year minimum jail sentence for a second or subsequent offence.

—life imprisonment for impaired driving causing death.

—a lowering of the legal level for impairment to .05 mg of alcohol per 100 mg blood as opposed to the current level of .08.

Gray says there is substantial medical data to support such a change.

—an end to plea bargaining by defence lawyers with Crown Attorneys.

—a lifetime licence suspension for any-

one convicted of an impaired driving offence.

They are severe measures but it is ADD's view that tough steps are the only solution to the growing problem.

In a recent ADD newsletter, Gray cites Ontario government figures indicating that in 1974, about 37 per cent of drivers involved in fatal accidents had consumed alcohol. By 1981 the figure was over 58 per cent.

ADD also aims to establish outreach programs to reform drunk drivers as a supplement to existing ones, but Gray says that unless tough sentences are meted out there will be no incentive to participate. "People who are convicted and let out onto the street have no reason to volunteer for the programs," he says.

Reforming those who drink and drive will have the bonus of providing ADD with potential supporters who can speak about the problem with experience.

Reformed drunk driver will be welcomed "with open arms," says Gray. "If we can win an impaired driver over to our side we will have the best tool we can ever have for our organization."

But now ADD is working hard at a public awareness campaign and a support and counselling network for survivors and victims of impaired driving accidents.

ADD has established The Neil Gray Memorial Fund. Money from that will finance newspaper, radio, and billboard advertising. Television time is too expensive, says Gray, but both national networks have zeroed in with either news broadcasts or documentary items.

Film nights and speaking tours are also central to ADD's strategy.

Friends of their late son have joined forces with them as well with a group called Teen ADD which aims to publicize in the schools the dangers of drinking and driving.

Part of their aim, says Gray is to counteract "lifestyle ads" used by beer and liquor companies to promote their products. Though he says statistics indicate most drunk drivers are in the 20-40 range, lifestyle ads reaching those at impressionable ages are part of the problem.

"Lifestyle ads have an effect," he says. "They tell us it is okay to drink beer and fly balloons, to drink and drive speed boats."

The underlying suggestion, he says, is that drinking does not impair your abilities, "when in fact one beer will impair your abilities to a certain extent."

ADD is not declaring war on drinking, however.

"If people want to get themselves blotto and destroy their brain cells that's fine," says Gray. "Our organization wants to tell them not to drink and drive."

Perhaps the hardest task ADD has taken on is counselling victims and survivors, but it is one the Grays have taken on with the compassion bred by tragic experience.

On a number of occasions they have gone to offer their condolences to parents who have lost children and Gray says the response is usually warm.

"We are able to share with people how we felt," he says, "and it makes all the difference."

As with the Grays, survivors often find that involvement in ADD fights the sense of helplessness that comes with grief.

"They tell me there is nothing more therapeutic than getting involved and finally doing something good," he says.

Gray says that ADD has members from Halton Hills but it is his hope that it, too, will join the list of communities forming chapters. Those wishing to contact ADD can write to 76 Tanager Square, Brampton, L6Z 1X2, or phone 848-5252.

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Region Briefs

Increasing Centre use

Acton Social Services and information centre saw a dramatic increase in use during the first six months of this year. The offices were used by various community agencies 303 times, up 95 per cent from 155 occasions the previous year.

"In general, it would appear that our move to larger, more visible quarters (on Mill St.) has not only increased the public's awareness of the centre and its services but also increased the usability for agency workers," reported the centre's co-ordinator, Peggie Balkind, to the region's Social Services Department.

Load restrictions

There should be a year round load restriction season implemented by Halton municipalities and the region, the Planning and Public Works Committee recommended Wednesday.

The move would permit any road in Halton to have load restrictions posted at any time when it is susceptible to damage from heavy traffic during freezing weather, when it is already in a weakened condition or when it is used as a detour and faces traffic which it was not designed to support.

Water, sewer bills

Residents of Halton Hills may face increases of 2.3 per cent in their water and sewer bills from the region in 1984.

For the average home owner that means a charge of about \$220 annually. The Planning and Public Works Committee approved the increases that put Halton Hills well below the average increases for other municipalities in the region. Burlington faces a 7.8 per cent increase as does Milton, while Oakville could see a 3.8 per cent rise.

The relatively small jump for Halton Hills is because the town paid higher annual charges compared to the others in 1983, and all are projected to face equalized rates in the coming year.

watermains delayed

A lack of information at the region could mean watermain construction for a Glen Williams Local Improvement Project could be delayed until 1985.

Halton was petitioned to construct a watermain from Confederation St. to the second bridge crossing the Credit River as well as one on Prince St. from Main St. to the cemetery a half mile distant.

An information night was held and input received from the public, but the region is still unsure of the exact limits of the mains requested by the residents and also lacks adequate assessment maps pinpointing the location of each homeowner.

The Public Works Department wants the region to shell out over \$60,000 next year to set up a laboratory for water quality testing.

Members of the Planning and Public Works Committee were told that Halton currently relies on the federal and provincial labs, as well as facilities at Hamilton-Wentworth region for testing. Because Halton samples take a back seat to the regular work of these labs, the region's citizens have had to wait up to three weeks to find out about the quality of their drinking water.

The region has been asked to provide for a chemist, a microbiologist and lab facilities.



The new proprietors of the Limehouse General store and post office are Shirley, Kim and Kathy Yates. The Yates took over the 125 year-old post office last Saturday.

Violet Stevens closes book on 14 years as postmistress

After 14 years as the Limehouse postmistress Violet Stevens has stepped down to allow the Yates family, from Toronto, to take over the business.

The Yates: Shirley, Patrick, Kim, Cathy and Charlie, took possession of the Limehouse post office and general store November 18 and it was business as usual November 19.

"It's our first try at a retail business," said Mrs. Yates, "and we've moved into the house beside the store."

"We bought the store," continued Mrs. Yates, "because I love old places and this is one of the nicest villages I've ever seen."

The Yates are the eighth family to run the Limehouse post office since it opened in 1837.

Historically, the post office has an interesting background. In 1837, it was operated from the old hotel which still stands beside the general store today as a residence. At that time the hamlet was called Fountain Green and had only 17 registered land owners to its credit.

As soon as the post office opened, the first postmaster, John Newton, changed the village's name to Limehouse.

In 1877, the post office was moved to its present site, but it burned down in 1888. The following year a resident, John McDermid, rebuilt the post office within a general store

and that post office has remained virtually the same since.

The fire that destroyed the post office back in 1888 could have gutted the whole village if it weren't for the quick action of the Georgetown, horse-drawn, fire engine, which arrived on the scene just before the flames spread further.

The Limehouse post office has had a number of postmasters in its 125 year history. After John Newton left in 1887, his son James took over until 1920. The Johnson family ran the office for the next 15 years and in 1935 Frank Benton took over. In 1943 Isabel Benton took control and ran the business for the next 24 years. In 1967, Aurel Bourque stayed only a year as did James Duggan in 1968. After Duggan, Violet Stevens became proprietor of the Limehouse post office and held the position until November 18 of this year.

A Limehouse resident, Eva Patterson, who was born and raised in the area, said, "As long as I can remember Limehouse, the post office has always been there." Eva also noted, "They (postmasters) can tell you mostly anything you need to know about what is going on in town."

Hopefully, through snow, sleet, rain or fire the Limehouse post office will continue to prosper under the Yates as it has for the last 125 years.

Hydro finalizes purchase of extra Acton property

Halton Hills Hydro manager Jerry Trudell plans to visit Bower Ave., Acton, residents individually to discuss plans to develop land to the north of the homes.

Friday at the commission meeting Trudell reported the purchase of lands north and east of the hydro building on Alice St., Acton, from Metroland Printing and Publishing for \$37,000 has been finalized.

Trudell explained the lands will be developed as part of hydro's works department operation in Acton.

Design work on fences and other aspects of the expansion are being prepared now. Hydro can build anywhere on its new lands except in the floodplain beside School Creek. He said most construction would take place at the rear of the new parcel of land. Plans for use of the land will fit with

Credit Valley Conservation Authority guidelines and CVCA and Town planning department approvals will be needed, Trudell noted.

Hydro hopes to get started on development of its new property with clearing of the land by early January.

Some neighbors are encroaching on the new hydro lands with gardens, etc.

Commissioner Murt Allison suggested the commissioners meet with the Bower Ave. neighbours, but his colleagues felt if Trudell met with them first and reported back it would be better. If there are problems then the commissioners will become involved.

Trudell promised he'll meet with each neighbouring property owner to discuss hydro's plans. He will advise them they can come to a commission meeting too if they wish.

Hydro budget is up 9.5%

Halton Hills Hydro's budget will go up approximately 9.5 per cent for 1984, but manager Jerry Trudell notes only about one per cent of the increase goes for running the utility, most of the increased spending goes to Ontario Hydro.

He explained Hydro's charge to the local utility will range from 8.2 to 8.4 per cent.

Trudell noted Halton Hills Hydro sets a budget based on its expected costs for running the system. Then Ontario Hydro takes that budget and adds to it the cost of buying power and calculates what the new electricity rates should be in Halton Hills.

For 1983 the commission projects revenues at \$11,089,000 and \$9,254,000 of that is spent purchasing electricity from Ontario Hydro. Total operating costs for this year are expected to hit \$11,547,792. In addition the 1983 capital cost is projected at \$409,000, leaving Halton Hills Hydro with a surplus of approximately \$32,000 to carry over to 1984.

For 1984 Halton Hills Hydro is planning on receiving \$13,116,412 in revenue and winding up with a surplus of \$42,000 at the end of the year.

Cost of buying power next year has been pegged at \$9,994,320 while operating costs will amount to \$2,494,589.

The commission also plans to spend \$310,000 replacing old overhead wires; \$39,000 on underground power systems; \$25,000 updating substations; \$38,000 replacing metres; \$65,000 updating transformers; \$38,500 on new trucks and cars; \$52,000 developing recently acquired property at the Acton hydro office; \$12,500 on tools and \$7,500 on office equipment. Another \$363,000 is pegged for installing hydro services in new subdivisions in Halton Hills in 1984, but Halton Hills Hydro will recover this cost.

The total budget for next year has been set at \$13,073,309.

Province will provide 60% of \$60,000 tourism study

Ontario Minister of Tourism and Recreation Reuben C. Baetz, announced his Ministry is prepared to provide up to 60 per cent of the funding (to a maximum of \$38,000) for a tourism development plan for the Regional Municipality of Halton.

The Regional Municipality of Halton, will assume responsibility for the remaining 40 per cent of the cost of the study estimated to total \$60,000.

Halton chairman Jack Rafis said that "the consultant selected to undertake the study would give careful consideration to

existing tourist attractions within the Region including the Kelso Conservation Area in Milton, the limestone kilns in Halton Hills, Gairloch Gardens in Oakville and the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington. These are but a few of the lovely tourist attractions that can be used in developing the most appropriate which for the promotion of tourism in the Halton Region."

A study steering committee has been formed and includes representative from Halton agencies.

Corn fetches higher price

Local corn growers are making from \$50 to \$65 more per tonne for their crop this year than last despite late planting.

A bumper crop in the United States last year held prices to as low as \$35 per tonne in Canada. In reaction to the glut, President Ronald Reagan instigated a Payment in Kind (PIK) program.

Crop farmers participating in the

program allowed some of their fields to be idle in exchange for portions of the 1982 crop still in storage. What the president had not counted on was a drought and low crop yield this year in the U.S.

The result has been good news for Canadian farmers. However some farmers did not plant corn this season. An extremely wet spring kept machinery off the fields until the first and second week of June.



Workers are making real progress at reconstructing the old railway bridge in Limehouse. Paving is expected to take place soon, possibly this week.