

Halton's farmland loss contrary to Ontario trend

Halton Hills council will receive a report from the regional planning committee that shows farms in Halton are decreasing in size and number, contrary to the provincial trend.

The report, second in a series of six investigating agriculture in the region, was released at regional planning committee last week and will be sent to the four Halton municipalities, provincial ministries and the Halton Federation of Agriculture for comment.

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Prepared by Robert White, a regional planner, the report says Halton has been losing considerable amount of improved and unimproved farmland. Between 1966 and 1971, 14 acres-per-day of farmland was

lost, but Mr. White was unable to tell the committee how that farmland was lost.

The report says that Esquesing ranked third behind Nelson and Trafalgar townships in the number of farms in 1971 but by 1971 had risen to first by virtue of more rapid rate of decline in the other two townships.

"In contrast, Nassagaweya had the greatest rate of decline in farmland and ranks last in farm numbers..." the report

says. The decline curve of Nassagaweya farms has flattened, "which may indicate a stability of the remaining farms."

In reply to criticism that the figures in the report were based on 1971 census data, Mr. White said 1976 data would be available in May or June of this year.

Coun. Ben Ciprietti of Burlington offered an amendment that urged the province to give top priority to encourage farming to keep farmland in production and to give farmers a tax break, but later withdrew his amendment because the committee felt it should not interfere with the farmer's business.

One-third of Halton farms provide 90% of production

Only a little more than one-third of all farms in Halton accounted for 91.84 per cent of the total produce sold in 1971, says a report on agricultural resources presented last week to regional planning committee.

Figures for 1976 won't be available until at least June. There were 1,108 farms in Halton and 584 or 54.6 per cent sold \$21,292,020 of product. Total value of products sold was \$23,192,510.

The average size of the four classes of farms in acres is 63.72, 96.28, 119.6 and 176.56 respectively.

Of a total area of 126,912 acres of Halton farmland, 97,539 acres represented improved farm land.

The average dollar return per improved acre is \$19.45, \$50.64, \$72.47 and \$387.7 for the four classes respectively.

Of the 675 commercial farms, 75 were in fruits and vegetables, 225 in swine and beef, 125 in dairy, 50 in poultry 25 in sheep, 50 in cash crops, three in mushrooms and 122 in miscellaneous farming.

In 1971, Esquesing Township had 43,938 acres of farmland, Nassagaweya had 19,697, Oakville-Trafalgar had 39,192 and Burlington-Edison had 24,084.

The report showed the average capital value of farms in the four classes as \$75,085, \$10,528, \$114,703 and \$219,347 respectively.

"Farmers have made it clear they are not waiting for handouts," Oakville councillor Archie Donaghy told committee. "We should be careful in making recommendations."

Milton Mayor Don Gordon cautioned the committee as well not to get too involved in farms. "Farmers are chesed-off at government intervention," the mayor said. The committee should remain in planning, but assist farmers.

There are four economic classes of farms - those earning less than \$2,500 per year and therefore not considered as commercial farms (433), those earning between \$2,500 and \$4,999 (146), those between \$5,000 and \$9,999 (145) and those earning above \$10,000 (381). Average sales per farm is \$817.39, \$3,966.58, \$7,065.79 and \$55,474.01 respectively.

4-H meets

By LINDA EDWARDS
Clothes for Leisure

The Night Owls, 4-H Homemakers Club No. 2, held their third meeting on Monday, Feb. 14 at 7 p.m.

Janet Hicks pleased us all by inviting us to her house on Achievement Day for a slumber party. We will be wearing the garments we are making.

We then proceeded to be taught by Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Thomas how to do various seams such as plain seams which is for a garment which is not strictly tailored. A french seam which is used for closing raw edges on light weight fabric and makes a neat finished appearance. A flat seam which is used for seams of pants and tailored patterns and gathered seam for ruffles and top stitching which can be used on semi-tailored patterns.

The Night Owls held their fourth meeting on Monday, Feb. 21. The girls were shown how to put a fringe to a hem by Mrs. Edwards and Mrs. Thomas. The trims and seam samples the girls do will be placed in their notebooks and be shown at Achievement Day on April 10.

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority has approved a 1977 budget of \$2,154,394. Direct levy to the eleven municipalities within the watershed will amount to \$541,823. Grants from the Ontario government through the ministry of natural resources will complete the 1977 budget.

CVCA budget approved

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VON faces deficit of \$10,960

The Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) Halton Branch, is waiting final approval on the preliminary grant from the region. The grant request has been increased \$50 from last year to cover VON expenses said Don Ross, treasurer for VON Board at the annual meeting Wednesday night.

Income for 1976 totalled \$238,000 however the expenses incurred for the year were \$249,000 creating a deficit of \$10,960.

Last year, the Halton Region donated a grant for \$8,000 and United Way donated \$6,500 in grants. Patients, local government, home care programs and paramedical services help supply the \$215,000 needed for VON nursing fees.

The 1977 budget for VON has been drawn up allowing for a \$20,000 deficit.

One of the largest expenses for the nurses is automobile expenses. The Georgetown Lions Club has donated an automobile valued at \$3,000.

One of the changes introduced in the Halton Region was the amalgamation of the Oakville and Burlington VON offices into a more central location, providing more space and supplies.

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PANCAKE DELIGHT
David English enjoyed his fill of pancakes and sausage at St. John's Church on Shrove Tuesday. The pancake supper was held by the Women's Guild. The Men of the Church did the cooking.

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Mountsberg maple syrup time again

One of the first signs of spring here in Halton is the appearance of fresh maple syrup. During the past three years the Mountsberg Wildlife Center has hosted the Halton Region Conservation Authority's Annual Maple Syrup Demonstration.

This year the Operation Pancake has expanded so that it can accommodate more people and provide better and faster service. Also a greater variety of products will be available for sale including an cookbook with recipes for Maple Sugar.

HALTON HILLS RECREATION and PARKS NEWS & VIEWS

The next three columns will provide a description and brief history of the three arenas in the town. This week we will look at the area's oldest and most recently renovated.

The Georgetown Memorial Arena was originally opened in 1923 and after being closed last year for eleven months for structural repairs, it was officially re-opened on December 29, 1976.

The arena contains snack bar facilities, four dressing rooms, referees room, first aid room, skate sharpening booth and equipment storage for minor hockey and figure skating. The upstairs hall which is being used as a gymnasium measures 65 feet long by 40 feet wide.

The ice surface is 175 feet long by 70 feet wide, with 600 permanent theatre type seats and the ice is supplied by a 50 ton ammonia-brine refrigeration system.

The facility is open an average of 18 hours a day with approximately 400 people per week visiting the building. At present the arena is operating with a full schedule of Junior B hockey, figure skating, minor hockey, public skating, and casual rentals. During the summer months roller skating, ball hockey, wrestling and some special events will be offered.

The arena is located at 42 Mill Street in the Georgetown area of Halton Hills and is managed by Doug Vivian and staff Bob Paul, Randy Weldon and Steve Buck.

A reminder that the Learn to Skate and Power Skating programs held at the Gordon Alcott Arena will be registering at the Recreation Offices during the week of March 13th 1977, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. The Learn to Skate program is offered to children under three right up to adults.

Also, a new program, Golf, will be registering Tuesday March 8th, 7 - 9 p.m. at the Gordon Alcott Hall. During this time a professional from Toronto will be on hand to watch and correct your golf swing, and videotape it so that you can watch what you're doing correctly and incorrectly. It is also rumored that a film on the Master's tournament will be shown.

Remember to visit the Sports Travelcade when it is in town this weekend. It will be parked at the Gordon Alcott Arena on Saturday and Sunday and at the M.Z. Bennett School in Acton on Monday and Tuesday.

You can also participate in any one of the free clinics available, thanks to the Ministry of Culture and Recreation. Further information is available in this paper in an advertisement.

Remember to call or write. We welcome your comments.

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RED CROSS Information Sheets

March is Red Cross Campaign for Funds month. Halton Hills residents are advised by the Red Cross to keep the Information Sheet, delivered by mail handy by the phone. These sheets list all available Red Cross services and their phone numbers. Georgetown district residents, business, professionals and industry, canvassed by mail, are asked to please make a donation (with address given for receipt) to P.O. Box 106 of the Georgetown and District Red Cross Branch. If not canvassed by March 19th, please send your donation to the Red Cross in Georgetown. "Homemaker Service" telephone number to be read 878-5626.

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Each week the word Wintario will appear in several of the advertisements on this feature. Simply read the ads carefully and write down the names of the advertisers in which the word appears along with your name and address and mail to Wintario Editor c/o The Herald, 103 Main St. S., Georgetown. From the entries received each week a draw will be made and the winners notified.

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