

The Herald Second Front

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The full-size paper reaching more than 12,600 homes in Halton Hills



The group above takes a breather from roller skating to put up their feet. In the group are Dave Matthews, Karen Weatherall, Martin Swinkls and Rob Sanford.

ROLLER SKATING

By George Evashuk
To the uninitiated there's not much difference between roller skating and skate boards other than they stand on skateboards while there is a roller skate on each foot, a kind of mini-skateboard, if you like.
But differences there are and the major one is that roller skating nowadays takes place in a roller rink where young teens meet and hold hands while the loud music makes conversation impossible. Any paved hill in Halton Hills, and there are plenty, is all right for skateboards.



Sonja Pettingill laces her roller skates.

To settle the burning question - "Which is better, roller skating or skateboard?" The Herald visited Georgetown - Memorial Arena where there is roller skating three nights weekly.

"Skate boarding is more fun," said Gary Slavin, 10. If that's how he feels, then how come he's on roller skates? "Just to try it," he replied, "but I don't like it."

And despite being surrounded by scores of roller skates, there were a surprising number who agreed with Gary.

Dave Matthews, 15, likes skate boards better, "because it's more fun," he said. "You don't have to go to an arena."

Fourteen-year-old Martin Swinkls also prefers skateboarding because "you can do tricks."

"Skateboarding is better because it's easier," said Rob Sanford, 14. "You don't have to put them (roller skates) on and it's easier to stop."

But predictably, there were many who preferred roller skating like Jodie McQuarrie, 17, who has been roller skating since age 12.

"We all come every week," she told The Herald. However, Jodi added that she hasn't really tried skate boarding, "but for kids, it's the only thing they have."

Karen Weatherall, 14, said, "Roller skating is the best. I don't even know how to skate board."

Seleina Aldham thinks roller skating is better because "it's a lot more fun", as does Teri Ferris, 17, who prefers roller skating, "because I'm better at roller skating than at skate boarding."

Sonja and Christa Pettingill come to the roller rink because there is no place near their house in the country to roller skate or skateboard. Roller skating is "easier," said Christa. Her sister Sonja observed that skate boarding is "mostly for the little guys, 10 or 12. They've got to try something." But, Sonja concluded, "skateboarding takes more talent."



Narrow passage.



Let's go this way.

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GVAS seeks volunteers

By GEORGE EVASHUK

Herald staff writer

A few years ago when Georgetown was much smaller and no one had ever heard the name Halton Hills, there were over 100 men on the roster of the Georgetown Volunteer Ambulance Service (GVAS).

Today, as the town stands on the brink of a population explosion, which will begin when some politician pulls the plug or hits the switch to get the expanded sewage treatment plant going in the fall, that roster is down to 46 and the GVAS has a discreet recruitment program underway.

"How's it been?" The Herald asked John Lightowler, secretary of the 20-year-old service. The GVAS are especially desirous of recruit shift workers who could be on duty days, Mondays to Fridays. "Got any takers?"

Lightowler sank a little

deeper into the couch in the comfortable basement of the GVAS's new home, the old fire station at Chapel Street and Guelph Street. He pointed across to a reclining rocker where 18-year-old John Buchanan relaxed.

Buchanan, a recruit with six days service under his belt, was riding the 'd man that night with Doug Herrington, a 20-year-veteran, and Paul Bennett. In a day or two, or perhaps that very night if there was a call, he would suddenly be given the nod to go ahead while one of the other two stepped back into third man, a "brutal introduction perhaps," Lightowler said later, but certainly one for which Buchanan or any volunteer has been prepared.

Buchanan said he had been to a couple of accidents where he watched the GVAS in action. He got interested and knowing the deputy chief, Eric Stone was enough to tip the

scales. He had his application in on his eighteenth birthday. In his first six turns at duty, he went on six runs.

To become a member of the service, Buchanan, or any volunteer for that matter, needs to hold or acquire by the end of this year a Class F driving permit, Lightowler said. He's also got to have a first aid certificate but if he hasn't the GVAS have qualified instructors.

But those are just the preliminaries. What's also needed, Lightowler said, "is enthusiasm." A strong stomach helps, he added, then laughed, "but not really." Your mental state, which under ordinary circumstances might be shocked or horrified at an accident scene, "turns off," he said. "It becomes a job. You got a job to do and you do it."

"The messy things are few and far between," he said, and are "overrated."

It is also good to be an up-standing citizen but the most important thing to have is the ability to be calm, to think before you do, he said. All that's needed to be able to work when your adrenaline "is going full bell...and you get a little tight."



Rather than exciting, Lightowler described the feeling under pressure as "quite frightening," mostly fear of the unknown as the ambulance approaches the scene, "but as soon as you see it—it clicks—as if someone had turned on a switch. You work automatically. You don't get involved in anything else going around."

The volunteer, be he driver or attendant, and the roles are reversible, has total concentration on the job at hand—trying to get the vital signs of respiration, pulse and blood pressure, all going before the run to a hospital anywhere in a 50-mile radius. If there is any blood loss, the rate and volume of loss is noted for the doctor's information. "The more you can tell him," Lightowler said, "the better."

Oftentimes, it is quite a chore to get an injured person to the ambulance for the hospital trip, especially if they are at the bottom of a ravine, trapped in a car or in the penthouse of a high-rise, and that's why volunteers need to be familiar with the assortment of crowbars, fire axes, chains, ropes and portable resuscitation equipment in the ambulance.

Lightowler took the occasion to enter a little plea from ambulance attendants to the builders of houses and apartments with elevators. Some new houses have doors which are not wide enough to admit a stretcher, he said, and nearly all elevators are not roomy enough to take a stretcher full length. If they were, it could

mean the difference between a two-minute trip to the lobby via the elevator or 10 minutes down the stairs and around the banisters on the corners, he said.

In 1976, the GVAS responded to 745 calls, an average of about two a day. They carried patients on 630 of those calls. If they are at the ambulance hall, they have comfortable quarters including a couple of bunks where a shift worker could catch 40 winks if the house is too noisy with the kids—and their papers are plugged in charging.

If it's a slow night, they take their papers home with them and leave them by the bed and if it goes off, they'll drive to the hall and take off from there.

The occupations of volunteer ambulance attendants includes real estate agents, garage mechanics, accountants, factory workers, fire fighters, machinists, engineers, aircraft workers, marketing specialists and clergy men. Lightowler is hoping that merchants will let their clerks go in the middle of a day as most runs last about an hour and if not the clerks than the merchants themselves, like it used to be years ago.

One category of person who has been overlooked is women and there is nothing to bar housewives or nurses or any other women from being ambulance attendants, Lightowler said.

At least one woman has served as an ambulance attendant.

He agreed that having women apply would "certainly be a sign of the times."



John Buchanan, who has been a member of the Georgetown Volunteer Ambulance Service, for only two weeks, washes down an ambulance. Both the ambulances have an extensive checklist the volunteers follow at the beginning of each 12 hour shift.



Doug Herrington, who has been a volunteer on the ambulance service since it started in 1957, checks out the interior of an ambulance.