

YOUR MORNING SMILE

"I've been stumped - by one word for two weeks, "the crossword puzzle fan told his friend. "How about fortnight?" was the un-helpful hint.

the HERALD

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The big paper with the big circulation read first by everyone. Reaching more than 13,350 homes in Halton Hills

Milton site likely

Women's hostel plans move ahead

By MAGGIE HANNAH Herald staff writer The need for a hostel in Halton to temporarily shelter abused wives and their children has been proven and the search is under way to find a location for this shelter it was revealed last week at a meeting of the board of directors of Halton's Women's Place.

Board chairman, Terry Grubbe said, "The facts show a definite need in the area for abused wives to have a place to go with their dependent children in times of distress."

Proof of the need was found in a feasibility study done by students hired by the Halton Hostel Steering Committee and paid for by grants from the

Secretary of State and Young Canada Works Program. The four month study, which was released Tuesday included interviews with social agencies and professionals as well as the public. It was endorsed by the Children's Aid Society, public health officials, local social planning councils, Police Chief Ken Skerrett and numerous area politicians.

"I believe the hostel will finally become a reality. We're aiming for an opening date in 1979 and we're very hopeful we can get started," Mrs. Grubbe said.

Board members are so confident of their eventual success that they are already hunting for a suitable location, preferably somewhere central, pro-

bably around Milton and have found one that building committee chairman Louise Hebbe terms "ideal."

STAFF RESIDENCE

It is a former staff residence for Halton Centennial Manor and it is presently up for grabs because it has been empty for several months. The two-story building contains 15 bedrooms, a large kitchen, laundry facilities in the basement and a huge basement room that could be used as a playroom for children. It also has a separate apartment which could be used by hostel staff.

"It's super and would be ideal for our needs. It's already zoned and is close to all the necessary facilities," she said.

It is only a mile from the hospital, less than a mile from the court house, right beside stores in the plaza and right next door to a bus stop where school buses pick up children. It is also close enough to use family counselling facilities without requiring duplication of existing services.

While the building is not up for sale, only for lease, Mrs. Hebbe said, the committee was given a very warm, but non-committal reception from Halton Centennial Manor administrator Jack Charlton when they inspected the premises. It will be leased fully furnished and requires only minor work to bring it up to present building code standards. This includes installing fire and smoke detectors and rebuilding crumbling balconies and fire escapes.

The committee is preparing a

letter to Mr. Charlton for presentation to the board of directors in January stating their needs and requesting the right to lease it.

GROUP HOME

At least two other groups are already looking at it, however. Halton Recovery House wants it and the Sheridan Youth Group are reputed to be the favoured prospective tenants. They would use it as a group home for youngsters in trouble with the law and in need of a shelter during a rehabilitation type period.

Tentative plans call for a hostel staff of about 3 people and an annual budget of \$135,000. Mrs. Hebbe said. Provincial and regional social services would offer financial help once the proposed hostel is operating but not before.

Original hopes that a Canada Works grant could be obtained to give start up funds were dashed with recent government budget cuts. Now the group is looking to foundations and private donations for these funds.



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Halton Hills' first family, Mayor Peter Pomeroy, his wife, Judy, and their daughters, Janis and Jill, will be spending Christmas at home with family and friends this year. A family Christmas seems to be in the cards for most people

contacted by The Herald as to their plans for the holiday season. For a glimpse of the holiday plans of some of the town's well-known people, see the story on page 11. (Photo by Lori Taylor)

RIVER RUN SALE FALLS THROUGH

Attempts to salvage something from the project after L.J. DeCato went bankrupt and the River Run housing development on River Drive had to be closed down have fallen through says a principle second mortgage holder.

Murray Gruesson of Garthdale Investments, the company that originally owned the River Run property, said attempts to sell the company and get another contractor to continue the development have not been successful.

The bank has issued a power of sale, he said, and it is open for public bidding. There is, however, a reserve bid on the property so the lowest bidder may not necessarily get it. Bidding is to close in mid January.

"Someone will pick it up and it will continue," he predicted, "but we won't be involved."

Mr. Gruesson would not say how much money his firm lost through the bankruptcy.

Huge, new Acton plaza could still be built

By PAUL DORSEY Herald staff writer

A strong reprimand from "one of the better plaza builders in the country" and the overwhelming results of an Acton housewife's amateur survey has prompted town council to once again send a proposal for a multi-million

dollar shopping plaza back to its planners for further consideration.

Jerry Sprackman, owner of Landawn Shopping Centres Ltd., appeared as surprised as anyone at council's Monday night meeting when June O'Rourke, a lifelong Acton resident, came forward with the

preliminary results of a survey she is conducting among the community's shoppers that support Mr. Sprackman's proposal to build a large shopping centre on Acton's easter boundary.

Of 315 Actonians interviewed thus far, Mrs. O'Rourke reported, only four have indicated that they do not want such a plaza built in the community. The rest apparent oppose the decision of the town planning board, which last week rejected Landawn's plans for an 8.7-acre plaza that would include a large Zehr's outlet, possibly a Canadian Tire store and several small retail stores.

RESULTS COINCIDE

The results of Mrs. O'Rourke's survey coincide with those of a professional survey being conducted this week by Landawn consultants, one of whom told council Monday that figures from the first day show 55 shoppers in support of a "modern Zehr's store" at the proposed site just outside Acton and only seven opposed.

Mr. Sprackman announced that the consultants' survey will continue through the week regardless of council's action.

Also on hand to support the plaza proposal was Acton re-

tailer Jake Kuiken, head of the community's Chamber of Commerce, who recalled that Acton offered more shopping facilities also on hand to support the plaza proposal was Acton retailer Jake Kuiken, head of the community's Chamber of Commerce, who recalled that Acton offered more shopping facilities 15 years ago when he moved there from Strathroy than it does today, even though the population has increased by nearly 3,000 residents since then.

"We need more retail outlets," Mr. Kuiken told council, "whether it's a new plaza or more stores. I think the downtown section has everything to gain."

Concern over the possible economic effects the proposed plaza might have upon Acton's downtown merchants was the chief reason behind the planning board's rejection of the plaza plan last week. The planning department expressed doubt that the community could support both a downtown core and an outlying plaza.

Mr. Sprackman, however, was strongly critical of the board's decision, claiming that

This Week

Remembers Italy

Ninety-year-old Eugene Braida, a long time Acton resident says he loves Canada but he also loves the land of his birth, Italy. Mr. Braida talks this week with Herald staff writer Maggie Hannah and recalls his early days in Halton along with his hard working days in the Cobalt mines. Page 13

High school page returns

The Georgetown and District high school's monthly page makes its December appearance in this week's Herald. Page nine

Star Wars the rage

Star Wars toys are the rage this Christmas with local gift buyers. Page 11

Swimming Rebels second

The swimming Rebels finished second at a boys meet in Scarborough over the weekend. Page 33

Meet the coaches

This week The Herald presents a new feature, "Meet the Coaches". Meet the Novice Reps Charlie Hanman. Page 35



Portending what may become quite a career in aeronautics, Karen Ramdohr, seven, of Stevens Crescent (shown here with her four-year old brother, Brian) inadvertently made something of a dent in the history of flight with her 48-hour balloon "excursion" to far-away Rhode Island. (Herald photo)

BALLOON SAILS 500 MILES

Seven-year-old Karen Ramdohr of Stevens Crescent in Georgetown got to share some Christmas spirit last week with a family she's never met who live more than 500 miles away.

Karen, the daughter of Christos and Carmel Ramdohr, was watching Georgetown's Santa Claus Parade Dec. 2 from the sidewalk outside Fobert Real Estate on Guelph Street when she was awarded for her patience in waiting for old St. Nick with a pair of helium-filled balloons. A Fobert employee was spreading the Christmas cheer by handing out the balloons to youngsters in the vicinity.

Karen later decided to free the balloons, but not before

she had attached a small tag bearing her name and address along with an invitation to whoever finds the balloons to let her know how far they got. Much to her delight, the finder quickly complied.

George Farrelly wrote to Karen last week to report that he'd come across the two balloons while driving along Route 101 near North Seltuate, Rhode Island, some 530 miles from Georgetown.

Mr. Farrelly, a resident of Cheparkel, Rhode Island, said he had spotted the balloons lodged in a tree near the highway, a lucky thing, he said, since North Seltuate is predominantly a rural area where the balloons could easily have been lost and

never seen again. Mr. Farrelly added that his three-year old son had a good time playing with the balloons after he'd retrieved them from the tree and brought them home.

A quick check with the atlas and a glance at the date on Mr. Farrelly's letter revealed that the balloons had taken less than 48 hours to cross Lake Ontario, New York and probably Connecticut before coming to rest in Rhode Island.

North Seltuate is about 15 miles west of Providence, the state capital, which is itself situated on Rhode Island Sound, an inlet of the Atlantic Ocean. Providence is directly across the state border from Massachusetts.

Stag organizers face charges

Two of the organizers of the Georgetown Volunteer Firefighters' Association charity stag are being charged with violating the Liquor Licencing Act, but no criminal charges have been laid against the other organizers or members of the audience in connection with alleged obscene acts which police say occurred at the stag.

Constable Les Graham of Halton Regional Police said Don Maveal and Bruce Lewis will be charged under the Liquor Licencing Act because the organizers failed to ensure that the sale of liquor at the

stag was done with the proper permit.

Constable Graham said the firefighters has assumed that because the stag was held at the Georgetown Golf and Country Club, which is a licenced premise, the association did not need to seek another permit. In fact, the only way the association would have been permitted to sell liquor on the premises would have been if the golf and country club had purchased the liquor and the sales had proceeded through their cash.

Continued on page 2

Smallwood camp

Fairy Lake plan concerns Acton residents

Concerns expressed by Acton residents and property owners over the proposed expansion of the Smallwood Acres campground on the shore of Fairy Lake has prompted the town planning board to request an environmental assessment from the provincial government.

The town was asked by the ministry of industry and tourism (MIT) whether it had any "legal objections" to the issuance of a permit that will enable the campground owners to add 25 new campsites without services in a one-acre "overflow" area.

Presently, Smallwood Acres features 45 campsites with electrical, water and sanitary hook-ups, 120 with just the sanitary hook-up and 10 with

no services. When the MIT's request for comment was placed before the planning board last Tuesday, however, councillors Roy Booth, Ed Wood and Walter Biehn all revealed they had been contacted by several Acton parties who generally wished to have the matter held over until they could determine what the expansion entails.

Coun. Booth pointed out that the town has no authority to challenge the expansion from a legal standpoint, and if the permit is granted as requested he has no right to try and block the expansion. He speculated that the matter could have been tabled pending comment from those concerned except for the fact that the MIT's request for municipal input

arrived in October and ministry officials are likely awaiting the reply.

Coun. Wood reported that the Beardmore Tannery, which has a controlling interest in Fairy Lake, had contacted him to query the proposal and also wished to have the board's decision delayed.

Coun. Booth introduced an amendment to a suggested recommendation which he said will ensure the concerned parties a chance to address the proposal. If the board were to simply delay its own decision, he noted, the MIT would likely go ahead and grant the permit notwithstanding any comments the town chooses to make.

The amended recommendation, which was approved by the board, acknowledges that

the town has no legal objections to the issuance of a permit, but points out that there is "great concern" over the possible environmental impact the expansion may have upon Fairy Lake and the surrounding area. The amendment requests that the permit be issued only on condition that an environmental assessment is conducted and that the concerns of the Halton Hills Fire department are resolved.

Planning director Mario Venditti informed the board that Fire Chief Mick Holmes has expressed concern over the availability of a reserve water supply which the firefighters could tap in the event of a fire in the expanded campground. One possible solution, Mr. Venditti said, would

be the installation of an underground water collection system such as the one used at the old Toronto International Dragstrip east of Acton.

Coun. Booth explained that his amendment would require the province to conduct an environmental assessment that otherwise would have to be handled by the town at great expense of time and money. All concerns from the public sector, he said, could be referred to the MIT and properly heard there.

"The important wording here is 'environmental assessment', because that automatically requires public participation," Coun. Booth assured the board. "This matter really has nothing to do with us. We'd be wasting our time and the

ministry's if we were to have all the delegations here. It wouldn't do any good. Why should we go to the expense of doing the studies when we could have the ministry handle them and have the whole province, rather than just the town, pay for them?"

Councillors Ross Knechtel and Harry Levy agreed that the MIT should be informed immediately of the town's feelings. Any citizens or other affected parties who still wish to address the board can do so later, they said.

"I don't think any of these people are really opposed to (the expansion)," Coun. Wood said. "They're mostly concerned that there are decisions being made they know nothing about."

Merry Christmas from the Herald