



FIRE POSTER WINNER

Ten-year-old Ed Stanley of Georgetown was one of six young Halton residents applauded by members of regional council last Wednesday for their prize-winning entries in the region's annual Fire Prevention Poster Contest. The Joseph Gibbons Public School student was one of four youngsters whose posters were singled out for honorable mention, while first place

honors went to Natalie Jenner of Oakville and Torben Jensen of Milton. (On hand to watch Ed receive a special plaque from Halton Hills Mayor Pete Pomeroy (right) were Ed's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Stanley of Jocelyn Crescent, and Larry Brassard of the Halton Fire Prevention Committee (left).

(Herald photo by Paul Dorsey)

Region freezes staff after lengthy debate

A lengthy debate at last Wednesday's meeting of Halton regional council has resulted in a freeze being placed on regional staff increases. Council further authorized its department heads and chief administrative officer Ernie Reid to relocate employees in different departments as the need arises and in accordance with the employee's respective areas of expertise. The proposal to freeze Halton's municipal staff complement at its present level of 665 employees was not without its

dissenters, including those who argued that provisions should be made for the future reduction of staff if certain jobs become unnecessary or redundant. Last Wednesday's debate centered, however, on the contention that staff complement cannot be frozen until work priorities and future staff requirements are properly assessed.

REDUCE FLEXIBILITY
Council members such as Bonnie Brown of Oakville arg-

ued that the move to freeze staff would reduce the region's flexibility in dealing with new problems as they arise. Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett pointed out that, as workloads increase in one area, staff members will have to be relocated from another area of less priority.

Burlington Coun. Pat McLaughlin joined regional chairman Jack Rafitis in supporting the staff freeze, contending that the relocation of employees would likely be restricted to top level staff and that

common sense would be the guideline.

Coun. Walter Mulkewich of Burlington attempted to amend the freezing motion so that a study would first be launched to determine the probable effects the move would have upon regional levels of service, financing and workload. The amendment was defeated, however.

Council approved the staff freeze by a 16-7 recorded vote that generated some debate in itself as a result of Mr. Rafitis' apparent disregard for the rules of procedure recently revised by the region.

ILLEGAL VOTING

Mr. Rafitis asked those in favor of the motion to answer in the affirmative as their names were called out by the clerk, but several councillors, including Oakville Mayor Barrett and Milton Mayor Don Gordon, illegally responded twice, the second time for colleagues who were out of the room at the time. Burlington Coun. Vern Connell signalled his approval from the door of the council chamber as he was about to leave, contrary to the rule of procedure which stipulates that council members must be in their proper seats when voting.

Mr. Rafitis declared the vote 17-7, thus representing the full council membership, but an angry denunciation of the procedure by Oakville Coun. Terry Mannell prompted him to seek a second vote. The result of that poll was 16-7 in favor of the staff freeze.

Mr. Rafitis was further criticized for casting his own vote on the issue, which the rules of procedure dictate must only occur when a tie-breaking vote is needed. He chuckled that his aim was to try and "show some leadership."

Labor board upholds firing of counsellor

The Ontario Labor Relations Board has upheld the dismissal of Nellie Pitt, president of the Association of Employees for the Mentally Handicapped at Countryside, from her job as a counsellor at the residence.

Members of the newly-formed union had claimed that the 49-year-old Mrs. Pitt, of Acton, was fired from her job because of her activities in helping to set up the union. She was dismissed by the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded Aug. 16.

In hearings by an Ontario Labor Relations Board tribunal, it was found that there were numerous disagreements between Mrs. Pitt and her superior, Jenny Kuiken, then director of Countryside.

There was almost continual friction because of disagreements concerning the treatment of people in the care of Countryside, and the running of the residence, according to a

decision by Gail Brent, board vice-chairman.

Despite negotiations for the union's first contract being held during the time Mrs. Pitt was fired, the Labor Relations Board is satisfied that she was dismissed "because of her performance of her duties as a counsellor, and because of her apparent failure to co-operate with Mrs. Kuiken," as stated in a written report by Mrs. Brent.

The board's ruling concluded that no other considerations affected the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded's decision concerning Mrs. Pitt. Edith Hillman, president of the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded told the board that the association thought the union was an excellent idea because there were almost continuous problems at Countryside between the staff and the administrat-

ors. Mrs. Hillman could see no truth in the union's allegations that the association wanted to get rid of Mrs. Pitt because of her union activities.

At the time Mrs. Pitt was dismissed from her job, Jake Kuiken, Mrs. Kuiken's husband, had been a member of the governing board of Countryside. Mrs. Kuiken was replaced as director of Countryside Nov. 30 by Patti Wilson.

The Association of Employees for the Mentally Handicapped at Countryside was certified as a union last April and represents the seven employees at Countryside on Trafalgar Road in Hornby. Countryside is run by the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded, and there are 16 mentally handicapped adults living at the residence.

Unionized employees at the residence have not yet reached their first collective agreement with the association.

Interested in the ecology? Regional planners need you

Halton region is looking for four or five volunteers to fill vacancies on the 20-member Ecological and Environmental Advisory Committee (EEAC) a body which made extensive contributions to the formulation of the region's new official plan and continues to assist the regional planning department in implementing its policies.

Advertisements have appeared in the press inviting applications to be forwarded to the region prior to Feb. 28. The ads stipulate only that the applicants should be Halton residents who are prepared to spend a minimum of five hours a week on EEAC business.

EEAC chairman Dr. Peter Rice told The Herald this week, though, that in retrospect, he would have preferred the advertisements to be slightly more specific. While the ads do mention that persons who have backgrounds in environmental work will be given preference, he said, EEAC is particularly interested in finding volunteer members with engineering backgrounds.

BALANCE EXPERTISE
A plant pathologist at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, Dr. Rice explained that EEAC consistently seeks a balance of expertise among its members so that as wide a variety of experience as possible is available for the committee's work.

Formed almost three years ago, EEAC spent most of its regular monthly meetings and additional special sessions and field excursions until recently assisting the region's planning department in developing policies for the new official plan.

With the completion of the official plan in September, however, the duties of the EEAC shifted toward preparations for the plan's eventual implementation. The document is now in the hands of the provincial minister of housing, awaiting final approval.

Dr. Rice reported with pride that the Halton official plan's

"environmental component" with which EEAC was primarily concerned, is envied by planners in neighboring regions. He called it "second to none," in Ontario.

Another major contribution to regional planning that the EEAC has made was the identification and designation of some 38 Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA's) across Halton last year. In a carefully-prepared 260-page report the ESA's were described as "land or water areas containing natural features or ecological functions of such significance as to warrant their protection in the best long-term interests of the people and environment of Halton region".

LOCAL MEMBERS

Subdivision plans and other development proposals are routinely brought before the EEAC for review in light of the new official plan policies, to which the region is closely adhering despite their present non-legal status.

Such proposals as rezoning applications and severance appeals sometimes require EEAC members to personally view the sites in question. On such occasions, specific projects may be "farmed out" to ad hoc committees established for that purpose, Dr. Rice said.

GOOD RAPPORT

Stressing that the EEAC is strictly an advisory group, Dr. Rice expressed pleasure with the "very good rapport" the committee enjoys with regional council and particularly with regional staff. Council, he noted, is entitled to ignore or reject any EEAC recommendations as it sees fit.

Among the recommendations which will be forthcoming are those calling for the appointment by council of several new members, candidates for which are to be chosen by the EEAC itself.

Those appointed will serve

terms of indefinite length and will be expected to attend a majority, if not all of the approximately 16 meetings held each year by the EEAC. Meetings are held during the

third week of each month at the region's new headquarters on Highway 25 in Oakville. There is no service compensation, other than mileage allowance.



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Aircraft contracts to local firms

From the Ottawa Bureau of The Herald

Varion Associates in Halton Hills has won \$3,405,686 in contracts with Lockheed Aircraft Corp. for products associated with the delivery of 18 Aurora CP-140 long range patrol aircraft.

The department of supply and services explained that the company agreed to provide the manufacturer with high power amplifiers and microwave tubes during the supply period which ended late last year.

At the same time, the department announced that two

other Halton Hills industries signed Lockheed contracts. Cercor Inc. was paid \$4,000 to produce castings while Pamco was paid \$762 for automatic dialers.

In total, the industrial offset program from the \$1.03 billion Aurora project generated \$938 million in business for more than 200 Canadian subcontractors. Of that, \$588 million was associated with construction of the 18 CP-140 aircraft, while \$350 million was to be spent on related anti-submarine warfare or military transport projects.

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