

A know-it-all is one who pretends to know something about everything but really knows nothing about anything.

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## Pre-dawn blaze leaves two dead

# Arson is suspected in fatal Acton fire

By LORI TAYLOR  
Herald staff writer

Police suspect arson as the cause of an early-morning fire on a farm south of Acton Good Friday in which two people died.

Two bodies found in the debris after the fire have been tentatively identified as Mary Jones, 82, mother of the property owner David Jones, and Brian Jones, 10, his son. A post-mortem was to be performed yesterday at the Cent-

re of Forensic Sciences in Toronto to make a more positive identification, but the results were not available at press time.

Firefighters arrived on the scene minutes after receiving the call at about 4:30 a.m. Mrs. Doris Jones, wife of the owner, managed to escape from the house, and ran out to the highway, where she flagged down a passing motorist, who drove her to a neighbors' home to call the fire department.

Mrs. Jones suffered minor burns, and was admitted to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital for treatment.

**BLOCKING DRIVEWAY**  
When firefighters arrived on the scene, they found a car parked across the laneway, blocking their trucks. A spokesman for the fire department said one of their men had to climb under the car and disconnect the drive shaft to move the car out of the way. Both the house and the barn on the property were fully ablaze when the firefighters arrived.

Mr. Jones was at work in Toronto at the time of the fire. Another son Allan, 18, was also in Toronto at the time. The family had lived on the farm for 1 1/2 years before the fire. Mrs. Jones is said to have been awake at the time the fire started. She heard a loud noise, and when she went to investigate, the fire was sufficiently well underway to make it impossible for her to go to the assistance of her mother-in-law and son.

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office and detectives from District 1 (Acton, Georgetown and Milton) of the Halton Regional Police Force are investigating the cause of the blaze. Dr. Ivan Hunter of Milton is acting as coroner, and Barry Powell is conducting the investigation for the Fire Marshal's office.

**POLICE SUSPICIONS**  
Police declined to disclose the line of their investigation or what led to suspicions that the fire was caused by arson, but Sgt. Keith Robertson said he expected a breakthrough in the investigation by the end of the week.

Damage in the fire is estimated as being in excess of \$100,000. Firefighters were on the scene for 11 hours, and the fire was so fierce that they couldn't get inside the farmhouse for two or three hours. The town of Halton Hills provided a Gradall and a backhoe to assist in the search for the bodies.

The laneway to the property has been blocked off with a car since the fire and signs have been hung on the locked gates warning off those who might have wanted to take a closer look. Relatives have been on the property since the fire, chasing away sightseers, and clearing out the burned-out buildings.

## Region raises Acton taxes \$40 for 1979

By PAUL DORSEY  
Herald staff writer

The expansion of Acton's sewage treatment plant last year has been blamed for a 47 per cent increase in the community's mill rate for 1979, part of a \$36.7 million budget approved by Halton regional council last week.

The cost of expanding the sewage plant, for which funds were debentured, as well as its operating costs for the past year, have been tacked on to Acton's region tax bill for 1979, creating what regional treasurer Don Farmer called "an extremely large increase in the mill rate," the largest in the region.

The overall regional budget of \$36,703,014 represents an increase over 1978 of approximately eight per cent in budget dollars and about 5.8 per cent in the average mill rate. The latter has been offset somewhat in some areas by changes in population and assessment and reserve funds carried over from previous years.

### LOCAL TREASURERS

The final mill rates for each area municipality are to be set by local treasurers based on budget requests from the region.

According to Mr. Farmer preliminary estimates, Georgetown ratepayers can expect a 1979 mill rate of approximately 20.69, reflecting a 3.74 mill or 22 per cent increase over last year.

Acton's mill rate will rise by 9.4 mills or 47 per cent to a new rate of 29.5 mills.

For general regional purposes, Halton Hills taxpayers, will be required to contribute about \$1,262,375, up by 17.3 per cent over 1978. Added to this amount are sewer servicing costs totalling \$214,999 in Acton a 91.1 per cent increase over last year, and \$434,283 in Georgetown, up 46.2 per cent.

The overall tax hike of 28.7 per cent means the average Acton ratepayer will be charged an additional \$40 this year while those in Georgetown will pay about \$22 more.

A number of factors were taken into consideration when the taxes were being calculated for Halton Hills, an area which faces "a very difficult situation," according to Mr. Farmer.

With a rise in population of only "60 or 70 people" during 1978 and a corresponding assessment increase of less than two per cent, Mr. Farmer said, Halton Hills faces a larger tax increase than any other area municipality in Halton.

A sewer surcharge representing 80 per cent of the amount of Acton water bills and about 50 per cent of those in Georgetown, along with expansion costs to sewage plants in both communities, served to double Acton's mill rate and boost Georgetown's. The Georgetown rate is lower this year because much of the costs were accommodated last year and interest earned from reserve funds that were set aside in 1975 is being included.

Mr. Farmer speculated that mill rates will rise again next year, but by then, the municipalities in south Halton will be

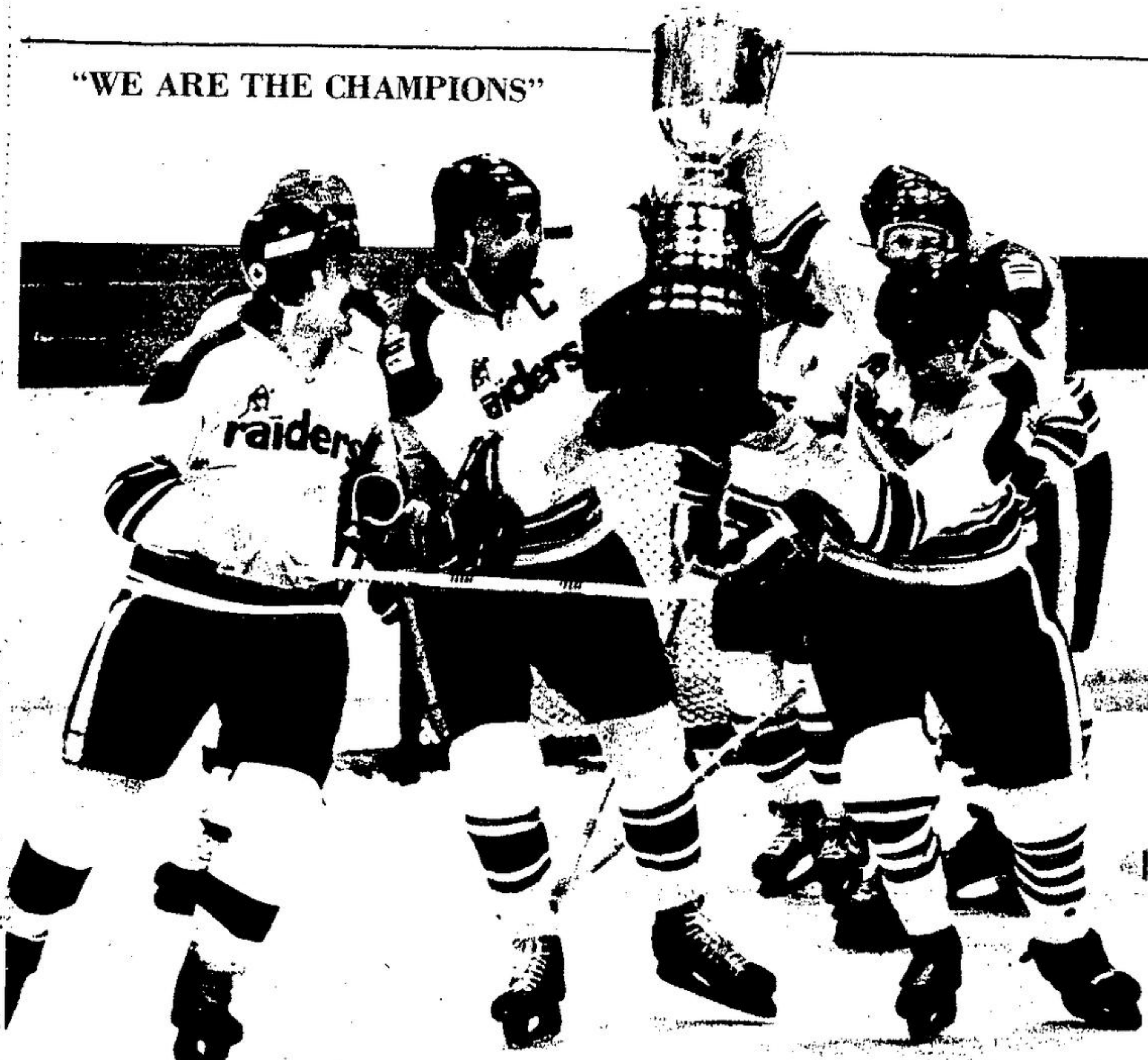
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## 12,971 ELIGIBLE GEORGETOWN VOTERS

According to preliminary lists, 12,971 Georgetown residents will be eligible to vote in the Current federal election.

There are another 63,376 voters in Brampton plus other eligible voters bringing the total number of eligible voters in the Brampton-Georgetown riding to 75,347.

People not finding themselves on voters lists, which will be mailed to urban voters for the first time, have until May 4 to appeal by contacting the chief returning officer at 791-7030.



"WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS"

The Georgetown Raiders celebrate with the ceremonial skate around the ice after winning the OHA Intermediate "A" title Saturday night at Alcott Arena. The Raiders' 7-4 victory gave them the final over the Port Elgin Sunocoos four games to two. Georgetown will now battle five other teams at the Eastern Canadian Championships at Timmins. That tournament gets underway tonight.

The three recognizable Raiders from left to right are Juri Kudrasovs, Ray Tonelli and John Boyce. For more on the Raider win see Sports Week. Raider coach Gerry Ingalls says that win or lose in the Raiders' battle for the Hardy Cup this will be his last year coaching hockey. For more on that see Sports Beat. (Herald photo by Tony Panacelli)

## This Week



### Tough training

Becoming a pilot takes a lot of training, but there are a lot of rewards, too. Bill Jerrard, in this week's Halton's People, describes his job as a pilot for Air Canada, and the training it took to get there.

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### The Word is back

"The Word" a page of news and views prepared by the students and staff at Georgetown and District High School makes its first final term appearance in this week's Herald. GDHS students give their impressions of a few international field trips in the latest edition.

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## Sports groups plan protest, oppose town's arena rent hike

By PAUL DORSEY  
Herald staff writer

The furor that has arisen over town council's decision to increase ice rental rates at Halton Hills' three arenas is being transformed into an organized protest that could call into question the entire spectrum of municipal spending.

All sports and recreational groups affected by the recent decision to boost rental rates next September are expected to be represented by a joint delegation that will confront council to officially protest the move, probably early in May.

Faced with an ever-increasing operating deficit at Georgetown Memorial Arena, Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena and the Acton Community Centre, council voted last month to increase rental rates by as much as \$10 an hour in some cases and to levy an additional 10 per cent tax on

the admission charged by some sports groups.

**IMPORTANT ROLE**  
Assuming an important role in the controversy brewing over council's decision is the newly-formed Halton Hills Sports Council, which is aimed at initiating and developing athletic activities in the area.

Sports Council spokesman Bryan Turner told The Herald this week that the organization has already begun gathering information about municipal spending by council in general and by the town recreation department in particular. Many questions and concerns have been raised by Sports Council members and supporters. Mr. Turner said, about the allocation of town funds to various interests and activities.

The Sports Council will hold its next meeting May 6 at the Cedarvale Community Centre,

where the organization's continued involvement in the ice rental rates issue will be discussed. The ice rates question could become the first major issue tackled by the council, which currently claims local soccer, football, softball, tennis and cricket groups among its members and anticipates a forthcoming alliance with the town's hockey groups.

### GEMINIS' DEBTS

Mr. Turner said the new rental rates, which become effective Sept. 1, could mean the end of the Georgetown Junior B' Geminis' financially-troubled history. Already saddled with debt, the hockey team will be among the groups required to pay \$44 an hour, or \$10 an hour more than this season, to use Alcott Arena. Also, like the Georgetown Chrysler Intermediate A Raiders, the Geminis will have to give the town 10 per cent of their

nightly gate receipts. The Acton Junior B Sabres are in a similar situation.

Raiders' president Bob Hooper estimates that the new rates will cost his team \$100 an hour during the regular season, with the 10 per cent of admission receipts added to the \$44 per hour rental fee. Unless council can be persuaded to reduce its charges, he said, the Raiders may have to increase their own admission charges and possible discontinue the practice of admitting senior citizens free of charge. One way or another, he told The Herald, additional revenue will have to be found.

Mr. Hooper conceded that the town may indeed have been forced to increase ice rental rates in order to meet rising operating costs at the arenas, but questioned the need to charge the hockey teams share of their gate receipts as well. The Raiders, he said in a column in last week's Herald, "depend heavily" on gate receipts to cover their own operating costs.

Another reason cited by both Mr. Turner and Mr. Hooper for their opposition to the rate increase is the suddenness with which it was approved by council. The fact that the new rates gained council approval immediately following a closed-door session last month continues to cloud the issues surrounding the increase.

### RENTAL RATES REPORT

The town's recreation director, Glen Gray, explained this week, however, that the decision appeared to have been made "in camera" more "by accident than by design". Council was about to consider a report on the rental rates prepared by Mr. Gray when its attention was drawn to a con-

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## Police commission drops sweatbox van

The Halton Regional Police Commission plans to replace the patrol van which figured prominently in the so-called "sweatbox trial" which took place earlier this year, but only after consultations with experts on specifications for the vehicle which would prevent a repeat of the incident.

The police commission has requested a report from the Ontario Police Commission, and also from Professor Alexander Allan of the University of Toronto on the specifications for insulation, ventilation and seating which would pre-

vent a repeat of the conditions which caused one prisoner to faint and others to show signs of heat exhaustion after being transported to Metro West Detention Centre from the Milton provincial courthouse August 14, 1978.

Two Halton Regional police officers were acquitted of charges laid in connection with the incident, after expert testimony demonstrated that the van was not suited for carrying large numbers of prisoners on a warm day because of a poorly designed heating system and an inadequate ventil-

ation system.

Professor Allan was one of the expert witnesses called on to testify at the trial. He is an associated professor of mechanical engineering at the University of Toronto.

Commission chairman Harry Barrett said the commission expects to receive the specifications in two or three weeks, and will then issue tender calls for the van. Bids have already been received on tenders issued for 29 new police cruisers and a van which will serve as a mobile identification unit.



## PM IN BRAMPTON

Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was in the local federal riding last week as he accompanied Brampton-Georgetown Liberal hopeful Ross Milne (right) on a tour of Shoppers' World Mall in Brampton Thurs-

day. The Prime Minister delivered a fiery, anti-Joe Clark speech to the large crowd assembled at the mall's theatre. For details of the speech see page 18. More election news, page three.