

Region and federation meet with ministry on sludge sites



KINDER - GRAD

Myles Moore congratulates his daughter, Lori-Lynn, after she participated in a graduation ceremony at Holy Cross School Friday. Lori-Lynn and over 20 other youngsters graduated from kindergarten into grade one in full regalia.

and number of graduates was matched only by the number of proud parents with cameras ready to take pictures of their son or daughter. (Herald photo by Lori Taylor)

Summer fun underway for Halton Hills kids

By LORI TAYLOR
Herald staff writer
Summer fun for Halton Hills children may have begun unofficially the day school ended, but the official Summer Fun '79, with recreation programs organized by the town and the Y begin July 9.

This year, instead of a playground concept, the children will attend camps centered around themes, with sports, music, art, drama and outdoor activities at Camp Prospect.

There will be three different music, art and drama (MAD) centres, and two sports centres. The MAD centres will be at Joseph Gibbons School, Robert Little School and Centennial Middle School. The sports centres will be at Georgetown District and Acton High Schools.

The playmobile will be operating again this year. It will be spending Mondays in Glen Williams at the town hall, Tuesday at the Norval community centre, Wednesday at the Hornby Community Centre, Thursday at Limehouse School and Ballinacri, and Friday at Speyside Public School.

The MAD Centres will provide activities in music, art and drama, ranging from singing, playing instruments, finger painting, and candle making to skits, mime, puppets and print making. The centres will operate from 9 to 4 daily and are geared for children 5 and over.

The MAD Centres will operate three two-week sessions. Fees are \$10 per week per child, with \$8 for each additional child in the family.

SPORTS CENTRES
The sports centres at the high schools will also operate with three two-week sessions, each with a separate theme. The theme of the first session is the Olympics, and the session features horse-back riding at 2CR Ranch in Norval. There will also be hockey instruction at Gordon Alcott Arena and swimming every day with basic swimming instruction. Operation Acton will be giving workshops on fitness and nutrition in each session.

Each session will feature skills instruction in four different sports, including soccer, volleyball, badminton, basketball and gymnastics. The theme of the second session of

the sports centres is Wheels, with some roller skating, among other activities, and the swimming program this session will include basic diving instruction. The theme of the third session will be Water, and it is hoped the children will be able to go swimming and canoeing at Prospect Park.

The sports centres are organized for children aged 7 and up. The same fees apply as those for the MAD Centres, but the children can register for all three sessions for \$30.

Children can register any time, but the sports centre is filling up, and the rec department is suggesting registering as soon as possible.

CAMP PROSPECT
Camp Prospect is a day camp operating for three sessions in Acton with the first session running from July 9 to 20, the second from July 23 to August 3 and the third from August 7 to 17. The themes of the camps will be Space, Africa and Indians, and council rings, which are attended by parents, will be July 17, July 31, and August 14.

Each session at Camp Prospect will include a sleep-over at Blue Springs Scout Reserve. Activities will include archery, canoeing, swimming, hiking and camp crafts. Children must be 7 or over to attend, or have completed grade one.

The fee at Camp Prospect is \$35 per two-week session, per child and \$31 for the second child. Registration for the whole summer is \$87.50 per child, and \$72.50 for each additional child in the family. A bus service will be provided free of charge for children going to Camp Prospect, but children attending sports centres and M.A.D. centres will be asked to pay 10 cents per one-way trip.

Buses will run between 8 and 9 a.m. and between 4 and 5 p.m. starting at Centennial School and going from there to Cedarvale Community Centre, Georgetown High School, Joseph Gibbons, the 4th Line, Acton, Acton High School, Kingham Drive, Storey Drive, Prospect Park, Robert Little School and Acton High School. The route will run in reverse in the afternoon.

The recreation department is also offering a leadership program for young teenagers 14 years and over. The course will involve three weeks of theoretical training and five weeks in placement in various recreation department programs. The official deadline for applicants has passed, but applications for the program

are still being accepted. The Credit Valley Artisans will be offering courses in weaving and pottery, each for

six weeks. The weaving course is for children aged 9 and up, and runs for six weeks, with a fee of \$15. The pottery course is for children 6 and older, and runs for six weeks.

The Y will be operating a day camp for boys and girls, 6 to 11 years old, a youth camp for children 12 to 14 years old and a kinder camp for children aged 3 to 5. Information on Y programs is available by calling 877-6163.

By PAUL DORSEY
Herald staff writer
Officials of Halton region and the Halton Federation of Agriculture will confront the province's ministry of environment next week over charges that the ministry's incompetent inspection procedures for sludge disposal sites have resulted in the contamination of area rivers.

Halton Region Conservation Authority general manager Murray Stephen submitted a lengthy list of complaints to regional council's special liaison committee Thursday which raise serious questions about the disposal of sewage sludge on Halton farms. One councillor called the situation "a potential time bomb."

Mr. Stephen wrote to environment minister Harry Parrott following an incident last Feb. 23 in which sludge contaminants found their way into Burlington's Sheldon and Twelve-Mile Creeks. Mr. Parrott declined to pursue Mr. Stephen's suggestion that the responsible parties should be prosecuted under the Environmental Protection Act.

CRITICIZE STANDARDS
Last week's committee meeting gave Mr. Stephen an opportunity to officially criticize ministry standards for sewage disposal while ministry officials listened silently across the table. Representatives of the ministry, region, conservation authority and federation of agriculture will meet Friday to discuss concerns prior to next Wednesday's confrontation before the region's public works committee.

Noting complaints have been on the increase since 1967, Mr. Stephen condemned existing procedures in the licensing and monitoring of sludge disposal operations on some 1,150 acres of Halton farmland as being "far from adequate."

Responding to a March 2 report that sludge spread over a Burlington farm was seeping into Twelve-Mile Creek, Mr. Stephen said, the environment minister blamed the mishap on "unseasonably warm temperatures and heavy rainfall."

Mr. Stephen pointed out that temperatures and rainfall at the time were "no different from what could be expected during that season."

Contributing more to the incident, he contended, was the use of rolling pasture land as the sludge disposal site and the absence of a sludge storage facility which is required by the contract signed by both the region and the truckers who haul and spread the sewage.

Although ministry guidelines allow sludge spreading during the winter in the absence of a storage facility, Mr. Stephens said, they also require the hauler to take precautions against surface run-off.

FEW COMPLAINTS
Contrary to Mr. Parrott's remark that there have been few complaints about the Burlington site in question, Mr. Stephen said there is a long record of "occurrences" which should fit into any "quota system" the ministry maintains on site investigations.

As well as being slow to react to contamination reports, Mr. Stephen charged, the ministry fails to monitor disposal operations, in some cases allowing sludge to be

spread two to eight inches thick over farmland.

The Burlington site in question was coated by the tar-like sewage sludge to a depth of five inches during most of the winter, according to Mr. Stephen. The resulting run-off and seepage led to coliform counts in Sheldon Creek some 200 times higher than the level at which public health dangers can be expected.

Mr. Stephen noted that inadequate disposal procedures and the mishaps they can cause are weakening the confidence which farmers and other landowners have in the practice of sludge spreading. As more owners come to view the sludge as an "environmental detriment" rather than an alternative to fertilizer, he said, the region will find it more difficult to locate new disposal sites.

Mr. Stephen referred to a similar incident in Georgetown where concerned citizens reported that haulers and land tenants were allowing sludge from the community's landfill site to be improperly spread on farmland during winter months. Contaminants ultimately found their way into Sixteen Mile Creek through a drainage ditch, he said.

SELECT SITES
Mr. Stephen contended that the region has a "moral obligation" to monitor disposal operations by examining selected sites, analyzing the sludge and supervising its extent and rate of application. "I don't honestly know if there are any real dangers," he commented. "There may be even be benefits, but in my opinion, the benefits should be on the land and not in the water."

"The way sludge is being handled in Halton makes it a potential time bomb," Coun. Terry Mannell of Oakville said. "The sooner we get the proper people to do it, the better for all concerned."

Coun. Russ Miller of Halton Hills confirmed Mr. Stephen's warnings about the danger of losing the confidence of area farmers and landowners. He referred to a Halton Hills farm where sludge has been spread for the past five years, "but every time a dam breaks," he said, the "million-dollar farm" next door gets flooded.

Coun. Laurie Mannell, also of Oakville, thanked Mr. Stephen for finally providing him with the support he has been seeking for the past decade in his complaints about improper sludge disposal procedures. Without official supervision for its sludge spreading, he said, the region will be forced to find more expensive alternatives to field disposal.

Halton is allowing haulers from neighboring Peel region to dump sludge on Oakville farms which the city intends to develop, Coun. Mannell pointed out. If tests are correct in saying that farmland is rendered useless for agricultural purposes by the sludge, the ramifications may be even more serious for residential uses, he said.

Coun. Miller added that the ministry and region may not be the only ones to blame for the problems that have arisen. People who rent rural land in some cases care little about its contamination, he said, and permit improper sludge disposal to continue unreported.

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