



Fireworks and fun are the two main ingredients that have made Georgetown's Bang-o-rama one of the most successful annual celebrations to be held locally. The Optimist Club funfest returns May 18 this year with a bigger agenda just brimming with things to do.

Major horse show among new attractions

Bang-o-rama fun returns May 18

What started out as a traditional fireworks display commemorating the Victoria Day weekend has, in the space of only five years, become an ambitious, multi-faceted blend of rodeo and carnival, community fair and athletic competition.

But whatever Bang-o-rama has become, the sponsoring Optimist Club of Georgetown continues to offer the ever-popular show for only \$1 admission per person (50 cents for children under 15 years). The big event takes place Monday, May 18.

This year, the event has improved tenfold with the addition of a WHA-approved horse show that could keep

the crowds at Fairgrounds Park entertained all day by itself. Instead, there'll also be recreational games, a talent contest, a garage sale, the fun-filled midway, a children's art show and lots more.

In the evening, the much-anticipated fireworks display will be set to music this year: Audi and Gord Henry have been booked to provide some country music during concerts beginning at 6 and 8 p.m., and the Acton Citizens Band will entertain at 5 and 7 p.m. The gala fireworks show, as usual, begins at dusk.

Another big attraction this year will be the chicken barbecue that starts at 11

a.m. At that same time, the \$1,000 added, WHA-approved horse show kicks off in and around the track, with 15 different events lined up for equestrians of all interests. Entry fees for participants are \$4 for seniors (payback \$70 and \$90 added per class) and \$2 for youths (\$25 and \$25 added per class).

Classes in the horse show are youth horsemanship, pole bending, youth pole bending, ladies pleasure, youth barrel race, ladies barrel race, flag race, trail, open barrels, open Western pleasure, pickup race, youth Western pleasure, bride path back, keyhole race and open western reining.

For more information

about entering the horse show, call Optimists Brian Butler at 877-8591 or Dave Coulter at 877-1397.

The schedule for other Bang-o-rama events is as follows:

- bright and early at 8 a.m., the big sales get underway - a mammoth garage sale and a shrub and flower sale; both continue until 6 p.m.
- at 9 a.m., employees of Fairmont Amusements throw the switch to start up the many midway rides, always a delight for children, and the try-your-luck concessions, always a challenge for the older onlookers; the midway churns throughout the day, finally closing up at midnight.

- also at 9 a.m., the pony rides begin, and who knows any youngster that wouldn't appreciate a ride on ol' Lightning?
- from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., visitors of all ages can try their hands at bingo, horse shoes and lawn darts, each of which requires a little skill but invariably offers a whole lot of fun.
- at noon, the decorated bicycles will roll around the park, with owners of the best decorated bikes receiving prizes.
- between noon and 4 p.m., a track and field competition affords all elementary school children an excellent chance to develop or demonstrate

their athletic abilities.

- 1 p.m. has the children's art contest and 2 p.m. marks the start of the talent contest; get out that old gutbucket guitar and practice up your "Red River Valley".
- Then comes the music at the grandstand, and then - you guessed it - the Optimist's annual gunpowder plot - a blaze of sparkling color and the shattering explosions of fireworks working their magic.
- Organizers, with good reason, are - ahem - optimistic about the weather, but point out that any rain May 18 will postpone the Bang-o-rama until the following Saturday, May 23.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1981

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FREE PARKING

Ratepayer urges assessment debate

Section 86 decision has Actonians upset

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

"Council has failed to show concern for what's fair," an Acton resident angrily charged last Tuesday night as councillors began feeling repercussions from their recent rejection of equalized assessment in Halton Hills.

"You owe it to the taxpayers in Acton to re-open discussions on Section 86," Rosemary Road resident Rick Smith told council, proposing a "pros and cons" panel debate on the controversial scheme aimed at ironing out property tax inequities among the town's four wards. "Then council can have one final vote and it either goes or it doesn't."

One of about 30 people who packed the council chamber

and spilled out into the corridor, Mr. Smith warned that the town's refusal to switch to equalized assessment may force the province to "do it for you."

Unwilling to reconsider the Section 86 decision that night, council did, however, support a recommendation from Coun. Terry Grubbe of Ward 1 asking the town's treasury department to determine whether or not it would be "feasible" to examine the Halton Hills assessment rolls, launching tax appeals for homes considered to be unfairly assessed. Because the province has been in charge of assessment since 1970, appeals would be conducted through its own regional assessment agency.

Although some figures claim that as much as 75 per cent of

the province's municipalities may switch or are at least contemplating a change to Section 86 assessment, town councillors two weeks ago rejected the proposal 6-6. A number of councillors feared that Section 86, while stabilizing tax rates on newer properties, would dramatically escalate taxes on earlier model homes located in the older areas of Acton and Georgetown, homes which may be owned by fixed-income senior citizens.

If the province is allowed to pass Section 86, Mr. Smith claimed, the town will hurt "the very people you're trying to protect", adding that the equalized assessment scheme might be phased in gradually over the years to cushion the impact on the owners of older

homes.

Mr. Smith pointed to a \$700 increase in property taxes within a 10-house area on McDonald Boulevard. An older home down the road assessed in the early sixties pays property taxes of approximately \$259, but a newer house pegged to a 1970 assessment on the same street is charged \$974 worth of taxes.

"Taxes vary between \$175 and \$1,000 in Acton; therefore, we feel we're being cheated. We have no hospital, no ambulance service and an old arena. Yet, we pay high taxes."

Rural residents get even less, he added, noting that residents living along Stewart-town's Young Street have no garbage collection or sewers, and live along unpaved dirt roads where drainage ditches have remained unfinished.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy maintained that while the present system of assessing houses for tax purposes remains unfair, Section 86 is not the solution. Instead, he explained, the provincial government needs to implement fuller tax reform, assessing properties by more equitable criteria.

"I want complete tax reform," he said. "I am prepared to debate (Section 86) in the future if I believe in it any more than I do now. Politically, it's a suicide case and I'm not going to support it until I have more information."

One of the pro-Section 86 councillors, Coun. Harry Levy said fellow councillors who oppose the Section 86 scheme should "feel like ogres", a comment which drew a favorable response from many members of the audience. Mayor Pomeroy cautioned the gallery from attempting to "twist arms" on council by showing their approval or disapproval of members' statements.

Another Rosemary Road resident, Bill Johnson, admitted that Section 86 is "not the cure-all for our ills", but said the reasons which led to the defeat of the proposal by council "doesn't lend credence that it is not the answer."

Meanwhile, Acton residents are also concerned that Acton's lagging industrial base is forcing people to leave the community or steer away from it entirely, Mr. Smith said. An expanded industrial assessment would help keep taxes stabilized but large scale development of Acton's industrial parks has been stalemated while the community's urban boundaries are fixed, partially according to what additional growth Acton's sewage treatment facilities can safely handle.

"Industry has to want to locate there," Mayor Pomeroy said, explaining that Acton's geographical location "is that much farther away from the market".

Expressing caution about voting for the "unknown", Ward 2 coun. George Malby reiterated that he will not support Section 86 if it, once again, came before council for a decision.

"You don't just stick your hand in the hole and hope that the snake won't bite you," he said.



GONE FISHIN'

While moms fished for good bargains, youngsters fished for prizes during the Elkettes bazaar held Saturday in Holy Cross Church auditorium. Helping young angler Sonia Bonta, age 2, snag the big one are (left to right) Leslie Bick, Coreena Robertson, Tammy Gower and Theresa Tripp. The Elkettes are a majorette troupe sponsored by the Halton Hills Elks Lodge. (Herald photo)

New publisher appointed to Herald

Paul Taylor has been appointed publisher and general manager of the Halton Hills Herald. It was announced today.

He replaces Bill Evdokimoff, who is resigning to pursue other interests.

"I'm really pleased to be moving to Halton Hills," said Mr. Taylor. "It's an attractive part of the province, close to Toronto, but retaining its own identity and building its own future."

"The Herald will continue to grow with the community it serves and the future looks most promising for both."



Mr. Taylor comes to Georgetown from Niagara Falls, where he has served as circulation manager for the past four and a half years. Originally from the Woodstock-Paris area, Mr. Taylor started his newspaper career in 1958 and has also worked at newspapers in Woodstock and Oshawa in Ontario and Penticton and Kamloops in British Columbia.

Mr. Taylor's wife Gloria, son John, 17, and daughter Janet, 15, will be joining him in Halton Hills in the near future.

Board has until June 15

Teacher's strike again a possibility

Halton's 1,700 secondary school teachers will strike June 15 if the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation is not satisfied with the Halton Board of Education's decisions regarding pay increases, retirement gratuities and staffing increases.

President for OSSTF District 9, Ron Ness, said last week that the board has shown an inability to come to terms with OSSTF demands in the past year, a year in which the union observed board attitude and behavior.

At the close of negotiations last year, education relations commissioner Martin Teplitsky warned that unless both sides changed their ways, Halton residents would face a lengthy strike. Finance Committee Chairman Bill Herd said that "I believe we're on the road to certain disaster."

"Relationships between the board and OSSTF are deteriorating," Mr. Ness commented at a board meeting in Burlington Thursday. "The board does not see our negotiations as a major concern."

Director of Education Em Lavender formed a committee last fall to study various approaches to collective bargaining. But although the committee's short-term recommendations were approved by the board Thursday, Mr. Ness said that he felt little progress had been made in negotiations.

"The approval of the short-term recommendations will only make a difference in how we approach the board," Mr. Ness said.

"Whereas we were prepared

to take an adversary approach to put across our demands, we are now taking a problem-solving approach which will include productive dialogue with board members."

Mr. Ness said problem-solving "may be harder, but with this approach you can't stall. You have to face all the problems without resorting to caucuses. People feel better with the end result, and it builds relationships."

Mr. Ness stated that June 15 is a final deadline for settlement and that no meetings would be considered after that date.

"There will be a training session for members of the negotiating committees to learn problem-solving and conflict resolution May 8 and 9."

"I'm hoping that board members will become believers after the training session," he stated. "The gist of OSSTF work has been done. The concepts that we want to bring to the negotiations have been identified and negotiations will begin immediately."

OSSTF will hold a preliminary meeting to deal with noncontentious issues and to find a common ground between the two groups April 28.

"We have a long way back to where we were. It's not going to be easy," Mr. Ness warned.

The fire prevention message has had moderate success in Halton Hills, the town's fire department concluded in its year-end report submitted to the general committee Monday night.

"Fire and emergencies still occur," the report states, "but it is our belief that the people in general are becoming more aware of this aspect of life and are taking fire safety more seriously."

Commending the public as well as the town's news media, teachers, police department and scouting and guiding groups for their co-operation with and support of the fire

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TRIBUTE FOR SENIOR COUNCILLOR

Happy birthday, Ross! Mayor Pete Pomeroy (left) and Ward 2 Coun. Terry Grubbe paid special tribute to fellow councillor Ross Knechtel prior to Saturday's Rotary Club "Bowl-A-Thon" to raise money for the library-cultural centre, honoring the Acton Reg's 70th birthday. Later, local politicians joined other groups on the lanes, helping to raise about \$2,000 for the library project expected to open officially next fall. See story and photo, page A5. (Herald photo)



WHERE THE LIGHTS ARE ALWAYS BRIGHT

The Georgetown Choral Society performed Sunday evening to a crowd of about 300 in the Holy Cross Church sanctuary, choosing pieces from hit Broadway musicals. Bruce Armstrong (centre) was special guest soloist during the avidly received performance featuring the music of Lerner and Lowe, Fats Waller and Gershwin. See page A12.