

Inter-governmental bureaucracy threatens Halton juvenile aid centre



MIGHTY MUSHROOM

Marian Beattie made an unexpected harvest Friday morning when she found this 10-pound puff ball growing in the front yard of her Draper Street home. Mrs. Beattie said she has often picked tiny puff balls growing in the yard but that this is the first time she's found one of this size. Mrs. Beattie said she plans to eat the mushroom. Bon Appetit!

(Herald photo)

Y's PD days bound for Ontario Place

This fall, the Georgetown and District YM-YWCA will again be offering its PD Day Trips, with the first trip being held Sept. 8.

The Y will be travelling to Ontario Place and will have an opportunity to visit the Children's Village, the Cinemasphere and the Children's Theatre. Children from five to 12 years are encouraged to participate in this trip.

Cost for the day is \$12 per child and \$10 for each additional child in the same family.

Extended care will be available from 7:30 to 9 a.m. and from 4 to 6 p.m. and will cost \$2.50 extra per child. Children are asked to bring lunch and drinks and should dress according to the day's events.

Volunteers are always needed for the PD Day Trips. If you are interested in assisting, contact the Y at 877-6163.

Registrations are now being accepted for the trip to Ontario Place. Space is limited, so pre-register early at the Georgetown Y at 89 Mountainview Road S., 877-6163.

Council okays bikers' event in area forest

The Halton Off Road Riders Association will be allowed to use part of a forest near the Hilton Falls Conservation Area in Milton for a special motorcycle event Nov. 8.

Despite concerns from some councillors last Wednesday that the "observed motorcycle trial event" sponsored by the organization and sanctioned by the Canadian Motorcycle Association should not be held in a public forest, most representatives agreed that the event will have little effect on the surrounding terrain and wildlife.

Burlington Coun. Pat McLaughlin pointed out that the event was approved by the region's environmental advisory committee and that regional staff will attend the motorcycle trials to ensure the committee's guidelines are maintained.

In observed motorcycle trials, riders must slowly cross a track 60 to 100 feet long while being closely watched by judges. Touching the ground with the feet while crossing the course adds penalty points. The event will feature 12 to 15 observed points on the course as well as three or four laps.

Oakville Coun. Ann Mulvale agreed with Coun. McLaughlin, adding that the event isn't likely to attract spectators other than members of the Association and their families.

"I would suggest to you that some of us may have some prejudice to people who have motorcycles," she told council. But Milton Coun. Bill Johnson, upset that his town council was only recently informed of the Association's plans, suggested that abandoned wayside pits and other leaseable open space be used for the event instead.

The local fire chief has a special interest in the activities which take place in the

forest, Coun. Johnson said, and the town should have been made aware of the Association's plans.

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Tight-fisted ministerial policies and misunderstandings between regional councils could force the closure of Peel and Halton's only pre-court care centre for juvenile delinquents.

Already facing tough budget restrictions from the province's community and social services ministry, officials from the Sheridan Youth Association Centre were unsuccessful Wednesday in getting an immediate \$10,000 grant from Halton region.

Instead, Halton councillors agreed with a recommendation from the health and social services committee which suggested the region should only give money if there was also some financial support from Peel.

But, Association executive director John Cox told The Herald Thursday, Halton's neighboring region wanted to help but had no more money for charitable appeals this year. The conditions attached to Halton's proposed grant, he added, indicate misunderstanding about how the Association is funded.

Even though the Association, located adjacent to Centennial Manor senior citizens' home in Milton, serves both Halton and Peel, it is fully funded by the social services ministry. However, this year's \$304,000 budget, tentatively presented by the ministry in April, may not be enough and, unless additional funding is found elsewhere, the centre may begin a gradual closure in November.

Mr. Cox and Youth Association president Bryan Clarke are currently negotiating with the ministry's child services division for an additional \$12,000, but both officials are concerned that conditions included

before the money is given threaten the quality of service the Association offers. The ministry's own consultants have concluded that the Milton facility is the best in Ontario.

Further negotiations Wednesday afternoon with the ministry's Ron Childs, head of children's services for southern Ontario, reached no decision, Mr. Cox said.

Last year the ministry raised the Association's budget, realizing that salaries for its eight full-time staff members had fallen behind those available at similar facilities in the province.

As part of conditions for getting the additional \$12,000 from the ministry, Mr. Cox said the Association may be forced to impose a salary freeze and further thin out the number of staff working during each of the centre's three daily shifts.

At any time during the centre's seven-day work week, there may be 10 youths, between 12 and 16 years old, awaiting a court hearing. They can be kept at the centre for about a month but the average stay is 11 days.

Although over 60 per cent of the referrals to the Centre come from Peel Region, Mr. Clarke stressed that the facility is intended as a "joint venture". Youths from Peel or Halton aren't treated any differently depending on grants received from each region, he said.

There were 252 youths who stayed at the centre last year, and "there promises to be more this year," Mr. Clarke added. About 87 per cent of all juveniles arrested in Peel and Halton are sent to the centre where they can get some schooling while waiting for court appearances, be behaviour-assessed and get advice on the legal system and lawyers. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Cox told

reporters following Wednesday's council meeting that if the Association was forced to close youths would have nowhere else in the regions to go for care and they would be sent to facilities in more distant communities at considerably more expense to the taxpayer.

While he said regional council appears to misunderstand Peel's responsibility in aiding the Association Mr. Clarke agreed with its position that the onus for funding is squarely on the shoulders of the provincial government and not the municipalities. However, in order to cut costs by imposing a salary freeze and trashing the Association's "merit" system for granting raises to its employees, the ministry is forcing Sheridan to comply with "less than adequate" standards.

"We will not provide a standard service," Mr. Clarke said.

It's the first time the Association has had to approach outside agencies for additional funding. It is ineligible for United Way money largely because it receives most of its funding from the government and public appeals are time-consuming and difficult for Association staffers who have to look after the youths.

Despite charges from some councillors that ignoring the Associations appeal for immediate money is "irresponsible" to the youths staying at the centre most members agreed with Halton Hills Coun. Dave Whiting's position that Peel must contribute as well before Halton releases the \$10,000.

"It would be short-sighted to rest our decision on what Peel has done," Burlington rep Dave LaCombe said. Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett claimed that the Association was not in jeopardy until mid-March, about two weeks before its new budget would be presented.

"They're not desperate at this time," he said. "We have to give Peel time to come to the pumps".

But the procedures involved with closing the Association would be more time-consuming than that, Mr. Clarke pointed out later. The agencies involved with the Association — the Children's Aid Society, police and the courts — would have to be notified and referrals made elsewhere on behalf of the youths.

The ministry and the region should be building its juvenile services up and not down Mr. Cox warned. Within the next two years, the federal government is expected to pass a new Youth Offenders Act of which the "Secure Services Policy" will likely increase the Children's Aid Society's and courts' referral of young offenders to facilities like the Sheridan Youth Centre.

Seek cost sharing

Regional council wants the province to force municipalities sharing the services of such facilities as the Sheridan Youth Centre in Milton to pay for part of their costs, too. More facilities like the centre and Halton Women's Place are needed in the region, council maintains, but the province's community and social services ministry should insist that if they are going to be used by nearby municipalities a cost sharing arrangement should be worked out with the region's neighbors.

While the Sheridan Youth Association continues to negotiate for additional funding for its Milton centre with the province's community and social services ministry, the region intends to make it clear to the government that it has already overpaid parts of its daycare and general assistance budgets. Overexpenditures due to the increasing demand for private home daycare can be met from other areas in the daycare account, but juvenile commitments and part-time salaries have put considerable stress on the general assistance budget of which the province pays half. In an effort to avert a crisis, regional council has agreed to formally point out the situation to the ministry's Ron Childs, area manager for children's services.

About the Hills

Winston gets his Way

As long as the region of Halton agrees, Halton Hills has no qualms about renaming the Sixth Line north out of Norval. Its southerly portion is more commonly known by Peel and Halton residents as Winston Churchill Boulevard and now the town of Caledon wants to name the entire stretch after the most famous of Britain's modern prime ministers.

Any comments?

Approval of the town's long-awaited licensing bylaw has been deferred until Sept. 21 to get additional comments from businesses which will be most affected by the new regulations. The bylaw, which will cover everything from licensing bicycles to "adult entertainment" parlors, has been circulated to a number of agencies, including the town's two business improvement areas and Halton region. However, the recent mail strike postponed some of the comments anticipated and bylaw sub-committee chairman Dave Whiting said the extra time should allow all affected parties to present their views.

New face at region

Once again underlining its faith in recommendations made by a recent study into the region's administration, regional council has hired an assistant for the chief administrative officer. After sifting through about 150 applicants, the administration selected Joanne Brown, a 28-year old graduate of the University of Manitoba with arts and education degrees. A former teacher and recently a member of a management consulting firm in Toronto, Miss Brown started work at the region Aug. 4 and was introduced to members of the region's health and social services, public works and administration and finance committees last week.

Locate in Halton

Halton region's newest industrial firm is Power Vac, which will locate on Burlington's South Service Road, the region's business development department has announced. The new branch facility will service residential and commercial markets in Halton and Hamilton with asbestos removal and air handling systems. Its residential operation could help reduce allergic effects and reduce the chance of household fires, according to sales manager Jerry Ladoucer.

Norval rezoning

Town council has rezoned land familiarly known as the Norval school property at the end of Mary and Draper Streets to ensure its use as open recreational space. The rezoning basically complies with a request from the Norval Community Association to have the land listed under the town's "open space" category rather than its current "residential general" designation. However, the planning department suggested that council rezone the land to "residential general-special zone" because the open space designation would not permit the Norval community centre building and would mean the land could be used for any number of things, including a zoo and a golf driving range. The new zoning also means that the property value of the lot will drop.

Meeting social needs

One item certain to receive a considerable amount of attention in the region's five-year corporate plan is a recommendation from the health and social services committee to develop a comprehensive human services scheme. Among the items which the committee would like to see included in the human services plan are the intent to increase co-operation between the regional boards of education and the social services department, bolster care for the elderly, encourage more affordable housing, consider treatment centres for distressed adolescents, expand family planning clinics to north Halton and Oakville and even obtain audio-visual equipment for the health and social services departments. Council has called on chief administrative officer Dennis Perlin to study the costs of the human services plan and present a report prior to the 1982 budget discussions.

Dial one number

Along with studying proposed improvements in the region's human services package as part of Halton's five-year corporate plan, the region is also considering a general information telephone number for health and social services. The idea was suggested by the Halton District Health Council and will be considered by council's public information sub-committee, formed earlier this summer to examine ways in which the public may be better informed about how the region functions.

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