

# Fourth arcade opening concerns police

The local arcade business is booming, and so are break and enters, but most parents praise co-operative owners

By ANI PEDERIAN  
Herald Staff Writer  
How is Halton Hills taking the video games craze? On the chin or in the belly?  
With three arcades in Georgetown and one in Acton, Halton Hills is not exactly crawling with the amusement centres which are causing great headaches in nearby Orangeville.  
Although there may be only four local businesses with more than four video game machines each—the criteria for being classed as an arcade, according to town bylaw—there are several businesses with at least one machine around to amuse their patrons.  
Local reaction to the machines is mixed. Parent



and authority groups object to them, yet praise the owners of establishments in which the machines are found, calling them very co-operative.  
Reaction to the machines seems to be expressed most visibly by the monetary success of the arcade business.  
"Business is very good," the Arcade owner Danny Edwards said. His Georgetown business has been on the corner of Mill and Guelph Streets since 1967 and almost never lacks for customers.  
The community, especially teenagers, are heavy supporters of the video game machines with their quarters. However, Mr. Edwards and the owner of Games People Play in the

Halton Hills plaza, Lucia (Lu) Oram, say adults and couples also frequent their establishments.  
When new bylaws were passed three weeks ago governing the operation of local arcades, Mayor Pete Pomeroy said his office was surprised to receive several phone calls supporting the centres.  
"TOO MUCH"  
The bylaws were passed in response to parental concern. Because the majority of arcade customers are young people, video games rooms have aroused a lot of negative criticism in Canadian communities. Parents are worried their children are spending too much time and money in arcades.  
John, a 15-year old high

school student, was spending all his free time and weekly allowance of \$12 at a video games arcade in town until recently.  
His mother Joan told The Herald that her son had worked his way through \$100 feeding his habit and wouldn't come home until the arcade closed for the night.  
"I had to go pick him up sometimes after 10 p.m., because he was afraid to walk through the parking lot for fear he'd be beat up," Joan said.  
All her nagging didn't do any good and any extra money he was given would be swallowed up the same way at the machines.  
"No matter what money you gave him, it was gone by the next day," Joan

said. "Sooner or later they see the light and realize it's a waste of money."  
MASTERED  
Once John had mastered all the games, he found going to the arcade boring and no longer felt tempted to go there breaking the habit himself. Joan said her son now does his homework and has dropped his daily visits with the video machines.  
Halton regional police are also seriously concerned. Juvenile Officer Sgt. Rick Kivell told The Herald that the number of break and enters would decrease noticeably if the town didn't have arcades.  
In talking with juveniles charged with criminal offences, Sgt. Kivell said he's been told that the money

made through crimes has often gone into arcade games.  
"There's a definite relationship there," Sgt. Kivell said. "Kids are stealing in part to go into the arcades."  
Other negative criticism levelled at the games comes from Bethel Christian Reformed Church pastor John Cooper. The church on Highway 7 on Acton's outskirts is almost directly opposite the seven-month old arcade called The Garage. Mr. Edwards' oldest son Mark owns and runs The Garage.  
"It's like a hangout," Pastor Cooper said. "The electronic age is with us and people are ensnared by these people who are

doing it for profit rather than for the development of human beings. I see it as a misuse of ingenuity."  
Pastor Cooper said it isn't necessarily a particular age group which is attracted to the arcades but more a personality type.  
NO CONTROL  
"It attracts people who don't have control in their lives," he said. "At least by these mechanisms they can deal with a problem and appear to be in control of these instruments."  
Pastor Cooper's parish was concerned about the "dangers" they believe the arcade presents to youngsters and considered appealing a Halton Hills committee of adjustment.  
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Reed says we suffer for deficit

## Provincial budget 'grossly unfair'

By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer  
Provincial treasurer Frank Miller's budget, unveiled Thursday night, is "grossly unfair and punitive to people of modest means," Halton Burlington MPP Julian Reed told The Herald Monday.

Trustee angered, page A9



JULIAN REED

Mr. Reed, who joined 32 other Liberal members in a boycott of Legislature proceedings over the weekend, charged that the Conservative government has made more items subject to sales tax to pay for a deficit caused by the

purchases of Suncor Oil shares and a special government jet.  
In addition, he said, the government is paying out large amounts of interest by holding onto its "land bank", a reserve of government-owned property, some of which is located in Milton.

The provincial Liberals returned to the Legislature at 6 p.m. Monday night and, although joined by the New Democratic Party, failed to block first reading of proposed amendments to the Retail Sales Tax Act.

Among the items which may now be taxed are school supplies, personal hygiene and household cleaning items, candy and snack foods, some labor services and building materials for municipal, school board, university, hospital and volunteer group projects.  
"Virtually the only

bright spot in the entire budget," Mr. Reed said, "is the expanded exemption on alternate fuel vehicles and conversion kits."

While such an exemption existed prior to the new



FRANK MILLER

budget, it has been enlarged to include the purchase of vehicles or conversion kits which can use either fossil fuels, propane,

hydrogen or alcohol and includes electrical cars and trucks as well. Mr. Reed, formerly the Liberal party's energy critic, now shadows the natural resources ministry.

Mr. Reed maintained that the \$5,000 interest-free loans which the budget offers first-time home buyers isn't likely to spur construction starts in the housing industry because the province already has a record-high inventory of houses which aren't selling. The \$75 million program would provide 15,000 loans, each interest-free for ten years.

There are other ways of getting the government out of financial difficulty, Mr. Reed said, suggesting that the province should unload its \$650 million share of Suncor Oil Ltd. and get rid of the \$10 million jet it purchased for government business last year.

These items, he said, along with the land bank, "nearly equal" the province's \$2.2 billion deficit. "We never did have the bucks to buy them," Mr. Reed said. "It was all out of the deficit and we think the government owes the people of this province an explanation."

He argued that the government has done nothing to help homeowners deal with high interest rates through "emergency" legislation and doubted the two-year tax exemption handed to small business will be of much assistance either.

The tax break doesn't go far, enough to help businesses in financial trouble, and will only be of some advantage to small businesses which are doing well this year.

In a press release issued before the Liberals returned to the Legislature, party leader David Peterson said the walkout was an "extraordinary action to register the strongest protest possible against an unjust and contradictory budget." Mr. Reed said calls to his Toronto office have been 80 per cent in favor of the Liberals' tactics to draw attention to the budget.

He sympathized with school trustees who say the budget has put an intolerable squeeze on their already limited resources by taxing school supplies and said the provincial government is really practising a form of "double taxation", forcing residents to pay for additional school and municipal needs through the sales tax as well as the municipal levy legislated by the Education and Municipal Acts.

General debate on the budget was expected to begin yesterday (Tuesday) and Mr. Reed promised that the bill amending the Retail Sales Tax Act will be thoroughly scrutinized by Liberals, who will try to offer alternatives.



## HENISS SCHOOL'S STUNNING RETURN

Again attesting to the promise shown by their performance at last October's opening of the Halton Hills Library-Cultural Centre, students of the Alda Ligita Heniss School of Classical Ballet dazzled another full house in the John Elliott Theatre with their annual recital Sunday night. As well as the lengthy "Earth Rites" presentation (above) choreographed by Heniss School instructor Hope Calvin, students of all

ages danced brilliantly to the music of Tchaikovsky, Mozart and others, blending ballet with modern jazz and tap dancing. Several Georgetowners were among performing students from the Brampton-based school.

(Herald photo by Harald Bransch)

## Halton Hills Hydro on the move

Halton Hills Hydro is moving its outside crews, superintendents and operations department from Georgetown to Acton.

The move was announced Friday by commission chairman Ab Tennant.

He said 16 people will be moving from the Geor-

town offices on Mill Street to the Acton building, which has been used as a billing office for the last one and a half years following the amalgamation of Acton, Esqueping and Georgetown Hydro commissions.

Expected to be completed by June, the move

was inspired by a shortage of space at the Georgetown offices.

"The Georgetown building is busting at the seams, as far as the office operations are concerned," Mr. Tennant told The Herald.

Following the move, the Georgetown building will

only contain accounting, and management offices.

Bills can continue to be paid at both offices.

The Acton building has a larger yard for the Hydro trucks. Besides, Mr. Tennant said, there is a possibility the back lot

Hydro trucks at the Georgetown office will be expropriated.

"It depends on the growth of the area how long this (division between the two offices) will last before we have to get new buildings," Mr. Tennant said.

## Bang-o-Rama is back!

By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer  
Organizers of this year's Bang-o-rama are confident that added attractions will bring 12,000 people to Fairgrounds Park Monday, 2,000 more than last year.

The event, sponsored by the Georgetown Optimist Club, will celebrate its sixth anniversary this year, and while there is more entertainment, Bang-o-rama's emphasis on youth remains as strong as ever.

Funds raised at the gate, which opens at 8 a.m., as well as money earned from concessions and refreshment stands will be used for the club's various community projects.

This year, Bang-o-rama chairman Norm Guthrie told The Herald, the event which has come to symbolize the excitement and festive nature of the day—the elaborate fireworks display at dusk—will feature an enlarged ground-level program.

Admission prices remain reasonable. For \$5, an entire family can get in and absorb the electrical atmosphere as long as they want. Single adults will be asked to pay \$2 and kids under 16 will be charged 50 cents.

Thrill-seekers will certainly want to browse around the numerous games and rides provided on the Fairmount Amusements midway. There are about ten different rides this year, Mr. Guthrie said, including two new nerve-challenging, teeth-

chattering ones. Meanwhile, the usual games of chance and skill will beckon.

Events get underway with the Optimists' mammoth garage sale—a chance to pick up some treasure which was, moments earlier, another man's junk. The pony rides have returned this year, joined by "mini-car" rides and both events are expected to begin at 9 a.m., running until 6 p.m. The midway will also begin at 9 a.m.

At 11 a.m., the bike decorating contest will be reviewed and the judge's decision announced. A contest for kids' art begins at 1 p.m.

All elementary school-aged youngsters are invited to participate in the Bang-o-rama track and field competition running throughout the afternoon. At 4:30 p.m. a stage erected near the centre of the Bang-o-rama action will be the site of the Optimist Talent Showcase, again planned with the youngsters in mind. There will be a second showcase for Halton Hills' young entertainers between 6 and 7 p.m.

Previous Bang-o-ramas suffered late afternoon lulls after most of the games stopped and there was still time before the night activities began.

But not this year, Mr. Guthrie assured. Instead of packing up and heading home until the fireworks are underway, residents, he suggests, should stick around to cheer along town councillors facing the

CFGM Swallows in a "slow pitch" baseball game. If fortunes can be read in baseball bouts, maybe this one will reveal who will strike out in next fall's election.

Early evening events include a visit from the Christian Bikers Association of Georgetown. Members will provide

some musical entertainment and show off their finely-tuned, classic motorcycles.

Erin's Jeff Barry Country Band will take to the stage at 7:15 for those who want to kick up the dust a little. The fireworks program will follow sometime after 9 p.m. Horse-lovers will likely

be engrossed by the Bang-o-rama horsemeshow, which will feature some of the town's best riders, as well as visitors from outside the area. The show begins at 10 a.m.

Plan to enter the park hungry. The local Optimist Club will have its own concession booth running, churning out hot dogs and burgers. They've called for help from neighboring Optimists to operate other food stands.

It will be impossible to find a corner of Fairgrounds Park without the scent of something cooking and one of the biggest culinary attractions of the day will be Maple Lodge Farms' barbecued chicken. The Norval company has taken the responsibility of keeping coals glowing from 11 a.m. to dusk and families will find it hard to resist the meals which will come of the enormous firepit skewers.

By 9 p.m., crowds will start congregating at the back of Fairgrounds Park in anticipation of the fireworks display. Mr. Guthrie emphasized that safety is extremely important for the people handling the fireworks; but it should not be overlooked by the gallery watching the show.

It's illegal, he said, for youngsters under 16 years of age to play with sparklers and they won't be allowed in the park where they could pose a hazard to other viewers. Events around the fireworks display



## PUT ON A HAPPY FACE!

Getting a happy face Friday evening at Howard Wrigglesworth Public School was Grade 1 student Joshua Markus. Lori King gave Joshua generous smears of the white paint, and transformed his natural smile into a huge red grin. The happy faces were part of the activities amusing students and parents who came out to support the school's spring fair.

(Herald photo by Ani Pedorian)



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