

Playing pinball with arcade craze

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ruling in February that permitted The Garage to operate in a commercial zone.

Problems were arising with youngsters going to the arcade across the street instead of to Sunday School as their parents expected them to do. However, Pastor Cooper said the church decided against appealing the town's decision.

"We aren't giving up but resigning ourselves to what was not really properly in our domain of responsibility," he said. "People are free to do wrong. We are anti-legislating morality."

Pastor Cooper said he hasn't received any further complaints from parents about their children playing hookey from Sunday School since the controversy came up in February. The children have been made to see the inferior value of such an amusement place, he said.

ADDICTED
There's a danger of psychological enslavement to video games, Pastor Cooper said, but the point is debatable. Sgt. Kivell believes young people can become addicted to the machines, going on to criminal activities to support their habit.

Mr. Edwards and Mrs. Oram think otherwise. "Video games are as addictive as an ice cream cone on a summer day," Mr. Edwards said. "Everybody has something that they like to do." "If you've got enough willpower, you can stop," Mrs. Oram said. "It's up to the individual."

Georgetown District High School vice-principal Bill Tom says arcades aren't really to blame for young people who choose to spend all their free time and money there.

"The fact is that the individual hasn't enough self-discipline to put priorities in his life," Mr. Tom said. "There'll always be these temptations in life. The pool hall was always a temptation for young people today."

He said school officials are responsible for what happens on school premises and not for what happens in the community unless what is taking place outside becomes a severe problem. Society has to decide if arcades present too much temptation for the average student to counteract, Mr. Tom said.

PLAY HOOKEY
Asked if the video games room within walking distance of GDHS has created



problems among students, GDHS principal Don Baker said he couldn't draw any direct connection between students playing hookey and the arcade.

Bylaws control a national 'fad'

Although often compared them, "penny" arcades today aren't the dark, smoke-filled basement poolrooms of yesterday. Well lit, clean and strictly supervised, they aren't the dens of vice which parents and women feared back in the 1950s.

Yet today, many parents and women in particular still fear them. The majority of coin droppers are male and nearly all complaints about the video game rooms come from parents.

In response to those complaints, the town of Halton Hills passed a number of bylaws that went into effect three weeks ago.

Arcades must be in a commercial zone at least 1,000 metres from residential or school property. They must be well lit and clean, with noise and loitering controlled.

Bylaw enforcement off-

there have been no complaints about skipping classes.

Acton High School principal Betty Moore said she hasn't been approached by parents about students playing hookey, being late for classes or not doing their homework because of the arcade, she said.

However, the case is different for Acton's McKenzie-Smith Middle

School principal John Simpson. He told The Herald that 80 per cent of his students use the nearby video games room, The Garage.

"We are having problems with kids who are using the arcade," he said. "We have had some students banned from it because of persistent lateness arriving from lunch

opposed the resolution because putting an age restriction on clientele is against the newly-passed federal charter of rights.

"Arcades will be here for awhile," he said. "Then they'll quietly calm down and not be used as much. It's a fad."

He said he expects small stores in Halton Hills will put in video machines as supplementary fund-raisers until the video craze dies down.

Municipalities are concerned about the video game arcades that are springing up all over Ontario.

Controller Esther Shiner said the psychologists would all have different opinions and Alderman Mike Foster said video games will soon pass from fashion. "It's a fad. It isn't a national crisis," he said.

hours."
Grade 6 students are more often seen at the Arcade than Grade 7 or 8 students. Money earned through babysitting or from doing chores is spent on the machines along with allowance money from parents, Mr. Simpson said.

Only in one case was a youth caught stealing in order to have money for the video games, Mr. Simpson said.

Tackling problems blamed, whether justly or unjustly, on the arcades, are not only parents and school administrators, but also arcade owners.

Halton Hills has a unique system of co-operation between arcade owners and parents and principals. Owners, eager to have community approval for their business, try to meet the requests of these two groups.

"We do have parents more or less blaming us for their children spending too much money, but I say

it's up to the parents to keep their own reins on their children," Mrs. Oram, a mother of five, said.

She said when parents ask her to keep their child out of her arcade, she agrees to do so.

LUNCH HOUR
"If a child is there past the lunch hour, he's put out," Mr. Edwards said firmly. "And the place is usually cleared between lunch times."

"In fact two parents phoned me and asked me for my co-operation. I will back the parents up," Mr.

Edwards said. "Smoking and swearing aren't allowed in his establishment," he said. Mrs. Oram doesn't have such rules at Games People Play but she operates her business on a system of respect, giving it to customers and expecting it in return.

"I enjoy most of the kids that come in. A lot of them tell me their problems," she said.

None of the school administrators had any complaints about communication or co-operation difficulties with the arcade owners.

"The owner of The Garage has been most co-operative with us. They get the kids out and call us about once a month to see if there are any problems," Mr. Simpson said.

Bylaw enforcement officer Jack Lusty called the owners very responsible people.

High in their praises, parents and the schools appreciate the helping hand the arcade owners extend.

So far, the blows are being borne on the chin. Parents will let us know if things go beyond an acceptable limit.

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Crossword Puzzle Answer on Page C7

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Crossword Puzzle Answer on Page C7

ACROSS
1. Land of the Hoopmen
2. Gnat
3. Trust
4. Public notice
5. Outline your
6. First
7. Fox
8. Costume
9. Limer
10. Individual
11. Concentrated
12. To work persistently
13. Musical note
14. Prophet
15. Eggs
16. Awarding part of a prize
17. Preparation
18. These office
19. Girl's name
20. Indefinite article
21. Bathed (past)
22. Ho
23. International Meteorological Society (1863)
24. Bone
25. Litter
26. Labels
27. Has been
28. Crossword clue
29. Sheepshead

DOWN
1. Girl's name
2. Italian river
3. Malady
4. College degree
5. Parent
6. Part of pair of trousers
7. Inhabitant of U.S. state
8. Dowry
9. Native of a Greek island
10. Alternative vote
11. Correspondence although
12. Huge part
13. Proliferated
14. Mythological girlhood
15. Face
16. Profit
17. Dance step
18. Benesque
19. Pronoun
20. Football pose (two-arms)

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