

Arts Council forms special committee to investigate, lobby

# Group tackles arts centre problems

By ANI FEDERIAN  
Herald Staff Writer

In an at times heated discussion, Halton Hills Arts Council members agreed last week to establish an ad hoc committee made up of performing and visual arts members to tackle problems with the new Cultural Centre.

Georgetown Little Theatre member John Roe made the suggestion at last Wednesday night's annual meeting after complaints that there is nothing on paper regarding user rates at the Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre.

He requested that a public statement be made by town council or John Elliott Theatre manager Hank Huhtanen about how

the rates are set. Renting theatres in Bramalea and Oakville means "you rent the works", whereas in Georgetown the centre is charging for "extras" like spotlights, Mr. Roe said.

"Why do they charge for the extra equipment and how do they arrive at it?" he wanted to know. Visual arts members complained that they have trouble making arrangements to rent the gallery. One woman said she had to blast Mayor Pete Pomeroy in order to get any action.

Mention was made of the benefit fashion show held recently by the Georgetown Hospital Auxiliary. They were originally quoted prices beyond their funding ability for the

theatre rental. A subsequent call quoted lower rental fees when the non-profit aspect of the show was stressed.

"If it's going to be too expensive for the groups to use, why do we even bother trying to build a centre?" asked one woman.

Mr. Roe said there was a need for a committee to present Arts Council members' grievances to the town.

"It points out the fact that we're all being kept in the dark and it's better for everybody if they're informed," he said. "In coming together, there'll be strength."

While the original suggestion was for two sub-committees, one for

the visual arts and the other for the performing arts, Arts Council past president Gretchen Day suggested one committee.

"Don't forget the Arts Council hasn't the membership or the time," she said.

Ian Oldaker proposed the motion "that an ad hoc committee be formed to broadly consider the needs of the arts and to report to the Arts Council at their June 8 meeting."

He said the new committee's priority would be to examine the use of the centre.

When contacted by The Herald, theatre manager Hank Huhtanen expressed surprise that rental rates are an issue with Arts Council.

"I can give them a copy (of the rates) if anybody wants it," he said.

The town set the rates before the centre opened, Mr. Huhtanen said.

He said there are three rates for the theatre rental. The first is for local community groups, and non-profit groups from Halton Hills. The second is for non-profit groups not affiliated with Halton Hills, and the third rate is for out-of-town groups and for professional companies out to make a profit.

As for extra charges, Mr. Huhtanen said the only "extra" groups are charged for is the "follow" spotlight. Most groups don't use it, he said, and the only reason they are charged for it is because it was paid for by taxpayers. If the group hasn't an experienced person to operate it, the town will supply an operator, but will charge for his services.

A piano soon to be added to the centre would also have been charged for as an extra, Mr. Huhtanen said, if it came from taxpayer funds. However, as it is now being donated,

groups will only have to pay if they want to have the piano tuned.

Rental costs for the theatre have been called "dirt cheap" by the majority of callers inquiring about rental rates, Mr. Huhtanen said.

"I think that the facility is beautiful for the price," he said.

Right now, the theatre manager is working on proposals for future changes to be presented to parks and recreation director Tom Shepard this fall.

"It's been a rough season, nobody knew the answers," he said.



AH, RENEE!

Recording star Renee Martel was the special guest of "Club Troubadour" at Sacre Coeur Church in Georgetown Saturday night. The popular Quebec chanteuse entertained about 100 members of the French Club, which sponsored her visit to the community. She has been singing since she was five years old, following in father's (Marcel Martel) footsteps.

(Herald photo)

**HALTON HILLS ARTS COUNCIL**

## Think Summerfest!

"In the good old summer time." If you think I'm rushing the season, I'm not. Summer arrives in Halton Hills Saturday June 19. That's the date set for Summerfest '82.

Summerfest is the Arts Council's contribution, to Pioneer Days in downtown Georgetown. The Arts Council sponsors the Arts and Craft Section of the festival. Come and browse. You will be amazed at the diversity of talent to be found in our community.

Not only will there be opportunities to buy finished work, there will also be the chance to see many artists at work, as they demonstrate their craft. This is a fun day for the whole family. Come on out and support your community and its artists.

Last year the Arts Council held an Old Time Music Hall, Cabaret and Dinner as part of the Summerfest Festivities. It was a smash hit with all who attended. So due to popular demand we present the second annual Old Time Music Hall, 7 p.m. at Sacre Coeur Hall. For information call Ruth McMulkin 877-4607.

"Help!" We need your help. The Arts Council is trying to compile a comprehensive Directory of the Arts for Halton Hills. The main problem seems to be the modesty of our local artists. Perhaps the best way is to have friends of talented people pick up a form at the Library and convince the artist,



### HOP ABOARD!

Much to the delight of dozens of children at the Martin and Downs Circus Friday, the intermissions in the twin performances featured elephant rides aboard Judy and Sahib, the Craig Hollywood Elephants who highlighted the big top events. Also featured in the show were Lucky the Llama, Molly the Mule, Bowman the Camel and plenty of acrobatic performers of the human variety.

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