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ABOUT THE HILLS

Hollow ecology concerns

Reconstruction of Mountainview Road has the region's ecological and environmental advisory committee concerned.

They're concerned over the potential impacts such work would have on the environmentally sensitive areas in the Hungry Hollow ravine.

The committee recommends the sensitive area be fenced off and dedicated either to the Credit Valley Conservation Authority or the Town of Halton Hills.

They would like to see the fencing up before any grading or construction takes place by Enterap Limited, a developer proposing to build a 1,015 unit subdivision south of Hungry Hollow.

Methane gas study

The Ministry of the Environment is going to pay for the \$11,300 study of the closed sanitary landfill in Acton.

An agreement has been made up with the ministry, which the Halton regional chairman and clerk are expected to sign today (Wednesday).

Located near the Churchill Boulevard apartment buildings, the former landfill is being studied for methane gas accumulations underground and the quality of the liquid oozing up at the site, which is called leachate.

Regional council hired Gartner Lee Associates Limited of Markham in June to carry out the study.

Y pre-school activities

The local YMCA is offering a variety of pre-school programs this fall.

The Cookie Monster Club, Playschool, Crafty Capers, the Tickle Trunk, Creating Together are all full of fun and adventure for the 2 1/2 to 5 year old.

Enroll now! Programs begin Sept. 23 at the Y, 89 Mountainview Rd. S., 877-6163.

Widowed meeting

North Halton Hospice is holding its monthly meeting for widowed people Sept. 22 at 1 p.m. Brunch will be served at the Heritage Inn, Milton. Everyone is welcome.

For more information call Elizabeth Kiddie at 878-1952.

Fashion, bridal show

Halton Hills Christian Women's Fellowship invite all women to attend a fashion and bridal show by the Clarke House of Caledon at St. George's Anglican Church Hall on Monday, Sept. 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Joceline Tate, an experienced counsellor will provide the music and enlarge on the 'Bridal Theme' as she shares some insights into marital relationships. Cost \$5. Tickets 877-1550.

Environment award

An award of merit is being conferred on the Georgetown Water Pollution Control Plant operations staff.

The award is being given by Environment Canada to regional staff for maintaining a high quality climatological record for over 20 years.

The award of merit is one of Atmospheric Environment's highest awards to climatological observers.

Bob Rolfe, who has been lead hand operator at the Georgetown plant for the past 23 years is expected to accept the award at today's (Wednesday's) regional council meeting.



PSYCHIC RESPONSE

Carole Matthews

Dear Carole,
Enclosed is a photo of myself, a Gemini born in 1962. I am wanting to pursue a career in journalism. Do you think this will be my niche in life? I am determined. I read your column and enjoy your advice to others; perhaps you can help me?

Arlene from G.T.

Dear Arlene,
You have a very good future in journalism and I suggest you pursue this to the fullest. There will be many courses you will be taking but follow through. You have a great ability. Good luck.

Carole

Halton's emergency men

Our region's crack tactical, rescue unit

By SANDY CAMPBELL

When a Georgetown youth was reported running through Cedarvale Park with a rifle Sept. 5, a special police unit was called.

The crack team, trained in emergency situations, were able to talk to the youth and persuade him to surrender without firing a shot. When apprehended the youth had a 303 Lea Enfield rifle, a bayonet and an army-type helmet.

Our special police unit is called the Halton Tactical and Rescue Unit. A team of 16 officers living

in Halton come together during emergencies involving suspects with weapons.

They have been together since 1980, responding to about a dozen calls every year. Half of these calls are in the less populated north. In all that time, they have never fired a shot and always succeeded in apprehending the troublemaker. Hostage taking is a typical emergency.

Staff-Sgt. Eric Bullock is the 58-year-old commander of the squad. He teaches his squad tactics.

"Calls usually involve drunks, men threatening to kill their wives. They're mostly gun calls," he said. "We assist uniformed officers in any high-risk situation."

People involved in drugs, particularly at the higher levels, often have weapons, and the tactical squad is prepared to assist, he said.

When the volunteer squad was formed in 1980, about 50 men applied. After fitness and psychological tests the 50 was reduced to 16.

"Everyone is tested to

get on the department and tested again for the Tactical and Rescue Unit," Staff-Sgt. Bullock said.

The physical standards of the unit include running a mile and a half in under 11 minutes and being able to do 40 push ups and 40 sit ups, one exercise after the other. An officer must also be able to swim. Fitness is tested every other month, Staff-Sgt. Bullock said.

"A policeman is a single individual who has to work alone. Put him on a team and it takes some rearranging of priorities," he said.

Before joining the unit, officers must complete six weeks of training at the Canadian Forces Camp Borden base. There they are trained by the OPP.

Once a year, officers of the unit return to Camp Borden where they work

on shooting, hand-to-hand combat, maneuvers, swimming and the confidence (obstacle) course.

"Some days we go from sun to sun," team member Constable Brian Smith said.

Officers are chosen from all areas of the region. Although most of them live in the south, many work in the north. Four members who work in Halton Hills are Jack Poot, Danny Cousins, Jim Valad and Daryl Elsworth. Georgetown native and resident Scott McLaughlin is also a member; he works in Milton.

Officer McLaughlin said that he and most of the men are on the team to stay fit and for the camaraderie. He does not consider the job more dangerous than his regular duties.

"We're better trained, equipped and we know

what's happening before we arrive at a site," he said.

There is not a big turnover of men on the unit, Officer McLaughlin said. Only five new men have joined since 1980.

"I'll stay with the team as long as I can pass the physical," he said.

Jack Poot is in his 40's and is the oldest member of the team. He plans to remain a member until he is 49, the police force's retirement age.

The oldest member of the team is actually Staff-Sgt. Bullock, 58, who trains and educates the team with the help of unofficial team leader Bill Henshaw.

Staff-Sgt. Bullock has had an interest in guns for 30 years.

In 1973 he attended the Smith and Wesson Armory School in Springfield, Massachusetts. Between



SGT. BULLOCK

1970 and 1979 he attended lectures and seminars on hostage taking and tactical maneuvers.

"At that time there was no school," he said.

Staff-Sgt. Bullock was one of the original members of a regional S.W.A.T. program operating between 1974 and 1976. Poor organization killed that team, he said.



Shooting is a big part of every practice and a variety of firearms are used. One Tactical and Rescue Unit member said team members shoot 15 to 20 per cent better than regular policemen.

Stories, photos by Sandy Campbell



Firing from a variety of positions is standard practice. Team member and Georgetown native Scott McLaughlin takes aim.

Last resort for squad is an ordered assault

By SANDY CAMPBELL

Herald Staff

Training is an important part of the Tactical and Rescue Force. They meet once every three weeks for a day of working out, practising old techniques and learning new ones.

"We practise on conditions as close to actual conditions as possible," Staff-Sgt. Bullock said.

Part of that training is practising assaults on abandoned buildings.

"We use abandoned and burned down homes. We can't use a place more than five times because by then everyone (team members) know it," Staff-Sgt. Bullock said.

In any emergency, the standard procedure used is first to set up a perimeter to contain the criminal. Once that is done, the unit attempts to negotiate.

"Nine out of 10 times that works," Staff-Sgt. Bullock said. "The last resort is an assault ordered by the on-scene commander."

"After someone is apprehended, we disappear. We don't want the men (officers) in the courts, he said. The regular police take care of the paper work and the press, the staff sergeant explained.

A 100 per cent clearance rate and never having to fire a shot are two facts the unit are proud of.

Staff-Sgt. Bullock noted the difference between Canadian and American units.

"The United States teams are regimental. The men are usually from the Armed Forces. In the U.S. they have problems with shooting because of the military backgrounds. Shoot as much as you can until you get 'em, is their style," he said.

Shooting is, however, a big part of the Regional Tactical and Rescue Unit's training.

"We shoot to disable the person, hit him in the middle of the body because it doubles him over and leaves him incapacitated," Staff-Sgt. Bullock said.

Guns used by team members include Remington 12 gauge shot guns, Remington's 308's with a scope, and AR 15 semi-automatic assault weapons. Each officer is equipped with a 38 Smith and Wesson side arm.

They also have ferrets for their 12 gauge guns which can go through glass and release gas. Hot grenades which start fires, and cold grenades are also brought to every emergency.

Officers are protected by bullet-proof vests and ballistic helmets.

The unit is also practising and learning from other units. Halton representatives have visited the tactical units in Peel, Hamilton, Niagara Falls.

They are also interested in getting together with the RCMP who deal with terrorists, Staff-Sgt. Bullock said.

"The men find the unit an exciting challenge. It's something different," he said.



All team members must be in good physical condition. Testing is regular and those that fail to meet the standards get only one chance to redeem themselves. Here, Unit members are practising sprinting with their weapons.

Golden Agers Activity Tuesday

Herald Special
A new project by the Golden Triangle Club for seniors called Activity Tuesdays will begin Sept. 24 at 1 p.m. at the YMCA building on Mountainview Road South.

Plans are for workshops in the making of novelty items such as dried flowers, weeds and working with dried materials. Also featured will be paper craft, knitting and other crafts.

There will be bingo, cards, games, sing songs and more.

The Golden Triangle hope the seniors of Georgetown will come out for a pleasant afternoon of activity and

friendship and enjoy a social cup of tea.

There will be a nominal charge of 50 cents for the afternoon. A fee for classes based on the instruction and materials required will be charged.

These activities will be on the second and fourth Tuesdays with the Golden Triangle Club's regular meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

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