



Having a ball

Balls, balls, balls. Everywhere you look there's a ball. Leanne McGivern, 11 (left) and her friend Tanya Burke, also 11, are getting that sinking feeling at McDonald's Playland Saturday.

Two weeks ago McDonalds opened an indoor mini-playground for children. There's a variety of amusements that seems to keep the kids happy. (Herald photo)

Halton stalls ban on hunt restriction

By MAGGIE HANNAI
Herald Special
After three hours of argument, Halton's pro-hunting lobby has won the bid to have regional council re-examine a ban on discharge of firearms in 14 agreement forests.

That decision was handed down this week by the region's planning and public works committee after a lengthy meeting crowded by 300 residents. The committee decided not to take action on a request to discontinue the ban it imposed in November, but established a special task force to look at the problem, including questions of liability for accidents.

The current ban will remain in effect at least until the task force reports to regional council. Residents Gladys McLellan of Nassagaweya, and Tom Kilmer of Limehouse, led the anti-hunting lobby, stressing the danger hunters pose to themselves and other users of the forests.

Ms. McLellan stressed her concern is for safety, not simply an anti-hunting bias, while Mr. Kilmer said he has regular problems with trespassers and illegal hunters, even though his land near an agreement forest is clearly signed prohibiting hunting.

Coun. Bill Johnson (Milton) said committee members were "chickening out" by deferring a decision, saying the liability study is simply a waste of time because the Brampton decision (in which the city was held liable for injuries suffered by someone on municipally owned land) makes the law clear.

The task force, proposed by Coun. Pam Sheldon (Halton Hills), will study continuing the ban or lifting it completely or partially as well as alternatives for settling the hunting debate in the region.

Such alternatives could include a registry of land in the region where hunting is permitted, a residents only deer hunt, an extended hunt rather than a four-day controlled hunt, having hunters wear large identification numbers and improved law enforcement by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The task force will include a regional police officer, a farmer, a hunting club member, Ministry of Natural Resources staff, a regional councillor and two citizens at large and is to report to council by April 30.

Hunters argued their sport is safer than many other outdoor activities, noting they can get \$1 million of liability insurance for premiums as low as \$1.50 to \$1.75.

They were also upset at regional council's decision in November to ban

hunting in the agreement forests, without giving them a chance to present their case, just days before the last controlled deer hunt.

Without a controlled hunt, they argued, the unchecked deer population would be thinned out by starvation, disease and damage to their habitat which will take years to correct.

Some also said they would help Mr. Kilmer prosecute irresponsible hunters and trespassers he complained of. Oakville Rod and Gun Club spokesman Jim Etherington said the ban will only work for a short time until people overcome their wariness of disobeying the law.

He argued if trespass and safety are the real concerns the regional police should be encouraged to more strictly enforce the Fish and Game Act.

Hunting is like abortion, a polarized debate marked by emotional arguments and individual interpretations of right and wrong, he said, urging council to "treat the illness, not the symptom" by long range planning and enforcement.

—Courtesy Guelph Mercury

Advisors overlooked

Bans on hunting and discharge of firearms in Halton's agreement forests will only add to the woes of neighboring farmers, members of the region's planning and public works committee were told this week.

Not permitting hunting in the agreement forests, lobbyists told the committee members, only gives the wildlife a safe haven during the day, a sanctuary from which they emerge at night to feed on farm crops.

John Glasgow, speaking for Halton and Wentworth fruit and vegetable growers, said while he can control rabbit and mouse damage to his fruit trees, a four day hunt isn't long enough to control the ravages of deer.

He appealed for help, saying when he told Ministry of Natural Resources staff he would solve his own problems with a gun their only response was to threaten to lock him up.

—Courtesy Guelph Mercury

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POLICE BEAT

Dog won't move

A dog that refused to move from the middle of the southbound lane of Winston Churchill Road caused a Georgetown woman to drive her car over three mail boxes and a hedge Jan. 13 at 6:15 p.m. She attempted to go around the dog and lost control on the slippery road, police said.

Trailer skids

A Hillsburgh man driving an International tractor truck hit a small truck on Trafalgar Road at 10 Sideroad Jan. 13 at 7:45 a.m. The tractor trailer skidded and ran into the small Chevrolet truck. Damage to the small truck was estimated at \$350 and \$950 to the International.

Car found

A stolen 1977 Plymouth was recovered. The \$1,000 vehicle was found on Reid Court and was undamaged. It was stolen from Cross Street Jan. 10.

Parking mishap

A Georgetown man admitted to a Nov. 16 accident last week. He was reversing from a parking space on Guelph Street when his foot slipped off the break pedal and onto the gas pedal. The car accelerated forward into a wall, police said. Damage to the car was \$1,600.

Damage at \$2,200

A Terra Cotta man accelerated his car to avoid losing traction and hit an Acton man's 1981 Ford Thursday at 8:40 a.m. on Maple Street and River Drive, police said. The Terra Cotta man's Oldsmobile was southbound on a Maple Street sharp bend when he hit the northbound Ford. Damage to the Oldsmobile was \$1,000 and \$1,200 to the Ford.

Two cars collision

A Georgetown man backing out of a parking lot on Ewing Street hit a passing Georgetown woman's 1975 Ford Saturday at 2 p.m. Damage to the Ford was \$500.

Stolen goods

An estimated \$1,700 in stereo equipment was taken from a John Street home between Wednesday and Thursday. Entry was gained by a sliding door.

The owner of a trailer on Smallwood Acres in Acton reported Jan. 18 \$320 in household goods were taken from it between Jan. 1 and 2. Binoculars, bedding, a heater, a knife sharpener and more were taken, police said.

Car rolls

A Georgetown man rolled his 1972 Dodge over on Sideroad 10 and Trafalgar Road Jan. 12 at 2 a.m. The man was westbound on 10 Sideroad when he attempted to stop, the vehicle spun and rolled over, police said. Damage to the Dodge was estimated at \$700.

Deer crossing

A Norval man hit a deer on Highway 7 near Delrex Boulevard Jan. 10 at 5:40 p.m. The man was westbound in the curb lane when the deer crossed his path. Damage to his 1980 Chevrolet was \$1,000.

Ghost driver

A Ford pick-up owned by Industrial Roofing Services of Hornby received \$1,000 damage Jan. 12. The vehicle that hit it did not remain at the scene. The truck was parked on Raylawn Crescent at Weber Drive when it was hit on the front left hand corner, police said.

Simon Fraser
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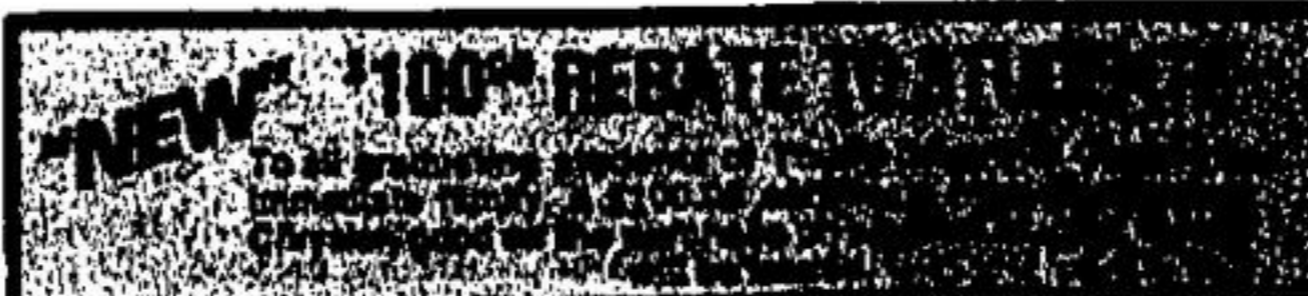
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