

Information presented to board

Questions arise over outdoor policy

Members of the Halton Board of Education's outdoor education committee presented their information to the board at a recent meeting, concerning a proposed outdoor policy.

On the whole trustees were not in favor of the policy, stating the board had other priorities to fund while some trustees felt the Halton Board was behind in its outdoor education policy when compared to other boards.

Georgetown Trustee Dick Howitt said that in developing the policy he does not want to hire consultants, buy equipment such as tents and canoes or pay for property.

Outdoor education is on the low list of his priorities. "I do not want to spend money to improve it," Trustee Howitt said. He wants to spend money on reducing class sizes.

Acton Trustee Arlene Bruce said the board must crawl before it can walk and that the Halton Board is behind other boards when it comes to an outdoor education policy.

She felt that in order to get outdoor education off the ground it is essential to have one person to help train teachers so they can make profitable use of their time.

Other trustees did not share her sentiments and the proposal to hire a full-time resource teacher was voted

down. Oakville Trustee Len Crosier said he could not support anything that would add money to the board.

As it is the Halton Board of Education does not get enough financing from the ministry and taxes have been raised enough, he said.

Oakville Trustee Janis Millman said she could accept the concepts of ideas, such as student experiences, but could not support the wording of the policy.

Stating that teachers must take their students for an outdoor experience once per season is a little too harsh, she said. The trustee wanted to see some of the wording softened so it is not so black and white.

Trustee Bruce said she felt it is important to have a policy spell out how much outdoor education each child receives.

There is a discrepancy across the Region as to how much outdoor education students get, she said.

Why should one child miss outdoor education because of the teacher they get year after year?

Trustee Howitt said he could not get excited over the fact that children do not get the chance to see the tadpoles one year.

Why should a Grade two teacher, who is interested in ballet and art,

have to take children out once a year because the policy says so, he said.

The Georgetown trustee figured that somewhere between kindergarten and Grade five students will hit a teacher who enjoys going out into the outdoors.

When it came to supporting the purchase of equipment and the use of paying for co-operative sites, trustees were concerned about costs.

Burlington Trustee Marg Bullock said she felt \$50,000 for a van to transport children to their field trips was just too much.

Burlington Trustee Dave Coons too was concerned about the costs and asked to see the comparative costs of renting as opposed to buying a van.

"I would like to see both sides of the fence," he said.

Trustee Bruce said that if trustees were committed to teaching children outdoor education, the purchase of equipment they need to work with was necessary.

Burlington Trustee Peter Abbott said he believed in the concept of buying equipment but could not support purchasing it at this time.

He wondered if equipment could be rented or if there were other ways to get around buying it this year.

Superintendent of curriculum services Pauline Laing explained the concept of co-operative agreements to trustees.

The school board negotiates with sites, such as the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, and reserves by payment a number of spaces for Halton students, Mrs. Laing said.

The most significant thing about block booking is that it guarantees time for students, which they may not otherwise be able to get, because of demands from other school boards.

Through all the discussion the outdoor education committee members gathered information they needed to help finalize the policy before bringing it back to the board for approval in September.

The committee will pursue the development of an outdoor education curriculum.

As well they will return to the board table with complete costing figures for transportation, equipment and co-operative agreement sites, as well as the pros and cons of leasing or buying a van.

Finally the wording of certain sections, such as student experience, will be softened and explained in more detail.



Going batty

Dr. Brock Fenton, a biology professor at York University, holds a little brown bat during a Bat Walk held recently at the Kortright Centre. Visitors can meet these bats during two more Bat Walks scheduled this summer: on Thursday, July 14, and Thursday, Aug. 11, both at 8 p.m. To register, call (416) 661-6600, ext. 258.

Parent-child centre caps off successful spring

After just three months in operation the Georgetown Parent-Child Centre is finishing up a very successful spring.

Actions applauded

More than a year after the issue of excessive bank service charges was exposed in Toronto Sun business editor Garth Turner's newspaper column, there is solid action at the federal level.

Recently the House of Commons Finance Committee released a report blasting the country's major banks for charging customers over \$750 million last year in fees for services. The committee has enraged the banks with a private member's bill aimed at providing some basic free services, establishing an ombudsman for consumer complaints and suggesting several other key changes.

"I'm delighted by this turn of events," Mr. Turner said. "After crusading on this issue for months, it's gratifying to see Members of Parliament follow through with real action."

Mr. Turner collected more than 3,500 responses on service charges from readers of his column, which were tabled as a submission to the Commons committee. Several committee members indicated that material was key to the committee's decision to go ahead with a full enquiry into service charges.

As well Mr. Turner debated several key banking officials on open-line radio shows while the hearings were in progress.

"Clearly consumers have felt ripped-off by the banks," Mr. Turner said. "There was simply no defence for banks not giving customers adequate notice of new or increased charges; for imposing fees on accounts when balances fell through certain levels; or charging a fee to somebody who received - not wrote - an NSF cheque."

"The banks, through their own arrogance, brought this one on their heads."

Garth Turner is currently on leave from the Toronto Sun, as he seeks the Conservative nomination in the new federal riding of Halton-Peel.

March of Dimes requires help

The Ontario March of Dimes is currently conducting a campaign to raise \$500 in the Acton-Georgetown area this year for programs and services for disabled adults. So far only \$200 has been raised.

"We hope people will give generously when they receive the appeal letter in the mail," said Lynn Ellerton, community campaign coordinator from the Ontario March of Dimes. "We need the support because even one wheelchair can cost \$1,100."

The funds raised will send 300 severely disabled adults to camp, train dozen of others for jobs using micro-computers and provide wheelchairs or back braces for hundreds across Ontario. Please give as generously as you are able.

Simon Fraser

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

★ ★ ★ ★

Phone (416) 877-0109

132 Main St. S. Georgetown, Ontario

Organizer Kathi Hull said about 20 mothers and 30 children use the centre each Tuesday and Thursday mornings for two hours of socializing.

The centre is located at St. Andrew's Church at 30 Mountainview Road South and parents can drop in with their children for the Tuesday and Thursday sessions, said Ms. Hull.

Children, parents and "caregivers" can do crafts, play with toys, use the gym in the mornings, she said.

On Wednesday mornings a program for parents with preschoolers is now underway. Qualified staff, led by Gail Cartwright, an early childhood education teacher, will look after the preschoolers while

parents attend a separate discussion group and workshop, said Ms. Hull.

The topics, which vary from week to week, include nutrition, choosing proper books for children, and self defence.

But parents must register for the Wednesday workshops so organizers know how many staff to have for the preschoolers, said Ms. Hull.

The centre opened its doors on April 5 thanks to funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

"Based on what we've seen so far there has been a need for a place for moms to bring their kids during the day," said Ms. Hull.

Children can interact with other children their age and parents can get together too, she said.

But the facility is not meant to be a

day care centre, she said.

The centre is looking for donations so organizers can purchase toys for the children and each donation is usually earmarked for a special toy, said Ms. Hull.

The centre is closing for the summer but it will reopen in September, said Ms. Hull.

A membership drive is underway for September at a minimal fee, she said.

"The response to the centre has been strongly indicative that the Georgetown Parent-Child Centre has been a much needed service within the community," said Ms. Hull.

Anyone wishing to find out more about the centre contact Mrs. Cartwright at 673-2960 or 877-9231.

Stedmans

GRAND OPENING

SALE

DOOR CRASHER SPECIALS

SALE CONTINUES IN ACTON

CHECK OUT THE SAVINGS!

LADIES SHORT SETS Multi-coloured S, M, L Reg. 17.99 SALE 11⁹⁹	LADIES COTTON PANTS Pastel shades Sizes 10-18 Reg. 13.99 SALE 9⁹⁹	LADIES OVERSIZE COTTON SHORTS ★ Pull on Style ★ Pastel Shades Reg. 9.99 SALE 6⁹⁹	JAUQUARD TOWELS Reg. 7.99 SALE 5⁹⁹	Hot Stuff WATER GUNS Reg. 3.99 SALE 2⁹⁹
LADIES OVERSIZE T-SHIRTS ★ Crew Neck ★ Pastel Colours Reg. 9.99 SALE 6⁸⁸	SOFT TENNIS SETS Reg. 2.99 SALE 2¹⁹	7 PCE. SAND SETS Reg. 4.99 SALE 3⁹⁹	SWIM AIDS Reg. 2.49 SALE 1⁹⁹	LADIES JAM SHORTS S, M, L Reg. 12.99 SALE 9⁹⁹

ACTON, ONTARIO 853-2741