

Cute as they come

It was tense at the Acton Fall Fair Saturday as the annual baby show got under way. But these boys and their moms don't seem to be suffering stage fright. Boys and girls in various age categories competed for top honors in the show. The fair was a huge success with 15,000 people pouring through the gates in the three days. Organizers say attendance was up from last year with the agricultural events as popular as ever. For more photos of the Acton Fall Fair, see page A6. (Herald photo by Brian MacLeod)



the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills — Established 1866

HALTON HILLS, ONTARIO

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1988

4 SECTIONS, 32 PAGES,

FREE DISTRIBUTION

OPEN 10-10.7 DAYS A WEEK



10 EASTERN AVE. ACTON (519) 853-1031
It's Worth the Drive to Acton!

IN THE HILLS

Acton man killed

An Acton man is dead following a single-vehicle motorcycle accident Sunday night.

Ontario Provincial Police in Milton say Thomas R. Swerbrick, 32, of Greenore Crescent died almost instantly when his motorcycle, northbound on Highway 25 near Sideroad 15, left the road, striking a rail post.

Milton OPP are continuing their investigation.

Boy injured

An Acton boy received severe head injuries when he fell from a mover's truck Sunday afternoon.

Police say Joseph Peters, 11, of RR2 Acton, was loading a small motorcycle onto a tractor trailer when he slipped off the ramp, falling four feet to the ground. The motorcycle toppled on the boy, and he received "a severely fractured skull," say police.

The boy was taken to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital and then transferred to the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, where his condition was being released to only family members.

POWER meeting

The next POWER (Protect Our Water and Natural Resources) meeting is this Thursday, Sept. 22 at 8:15 p.m. at the Limehouse School.

Rob Leverty, president of the Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment will address methods of fighting the proposed Acton quarry landfill.

The Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment is a lobbying group that encompasses many naturalists groups concerned with preserving the environment of the Niagara Escarpment.

Anyone interested in this important issue is encouraged to attend.

Totem pole fun

On Oct. 7, school-aged children are invited to the Acton and Georgetown Libraries for Munch to the Movies from noon to 1 p.m., followed by Totem Pole Making from 1 to 2 p.m. Children will learn about some traditions of the West Coast Indians and create Totem Poles for the library. Registration for this program begins Sept. 23. Call the Acton Library at 853-0301 or Georgetown Library at 873-2681 for more information.

Open Door party

Everyone is invited to attend Open Door's fourth birthday party at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 22. Open Door is entering their fifth year and will be open Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Optimist winners

The Optimist Club of Georgetown is pleased to announce the following winners for the Trip of the Month raffle for the month of September, 1988.

Trip prize is a travel voucher for \$1,500 valid for any travel facilities available through TWG Travel Inc., Georgetown. Winner was ticket 014, Julie Finlay, Georgetown. Consolation prize of \$120 cash was won by ticket 154, Thais Fook, Georgetown.

The club thanks all ticket purchasers for their support. All proceeds are returned to the community through our many projects. The next draw will be Oct. 11, 1988.

For further information contact Alan Farmer, 877-0267.

Truck fire

Firefighters were called to 186 Mill St., Acton to extinguish a truck fire Friday afternoon. Officials say grease on the vehicle caused the blaze, at a Texaco service station.

Fire officials report two false alarms last week, one at Georgetown and District High School Sept. 15 and the other at Centennial Public School Sept. 16.

Council votes 'no' on rail line purchase

Both sides state case in marathon meeting

By BRIAN MacLEOD
Herald Staff

In a lengthy and somewhat bizarre meeting Monday, Halton Hills councillors twice voted not to purchase 6.7 kilometres of abandoned CN railway track north of Wildwood Road.

However, they did pass a motion to ask CN to extend the closing date for a possible purchase of the land.

Councillors listened as 11 delegations submitted passionate pleas both supporting and opposing purchase of the railway line in the five hour marathon meeting before voting 8-5 to reject the offer from CN. Purchase of the land, which stretches to the border between Georgetown and Brampton, would cost the town \$5,000.

The controversial issue pitted about 25 abutting landowners against naturalists who want the land turned into a horse riding and hiking trail. The landowners have maintained vandalism, trespassing, and drinking parties have been commonplace on the property.

During the meeting several organizations made offers to help the town purchase and care for the land. The offers included: —a \$5,000 donation (the purchase price) from the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce if the town develops the nature trail; —a \$1,000 donation from Doug

Robertson on behalf of the Bruce Trail Association to help purchase and maintain the land;

—a proposal from the Ontario Trail Riders Association to officially designate the land as an off-road alternative to the Great Pine Ridge Trail;

—an offer by teacher and Georgetown resident Chris Walker to have his outdoor education class clean up litter and maintain the land.

But adjacent landowners were adamant that the land not be developed into a riding trail.

Some landowners said a nature trail would only increase the "harassment" they already get from trespassers.

Both sides put forth extensive arguments for their case.

Landowners say: —vandalism of adjacent housing and trails is common;

—theft, break and entering of adjacent houses is becoming a real problem;

—the cost of policing the land would be too large;

—thousands of dollars would have to be spent on fencing the land on both sides (town lawyer John Schallio said the town must legally provide fencing on the land if it assumes ownership);

—gates of farms are always being left open and livestock can escape;

—livestock are being killed - one landowner said a horse has been killed in the vicinity recently and another said six of his 18 chickens had their necks twisted by trespassers;

—snowmobilers, all-terrain vehicles and other motorized vehicles are a nuisance and causing thousands of dollars damage to adjacent farmland and property;

—access to the land would be impossible because of limited parking spaces;

—garbage and broken bottles litter the trail and the properties of adjacent landowners from users of the trail;

—there are numerous other trails, including the Bruce Trail only two kilometres away, for nature buffs;

—hardly anyone uses the trail now so it is not necessary;

—landowners have received verbal threats from partying thugs on the trail behind their property (one landowner, John Mezwick, said he once needed a police escort to return to his home because of threats from partygoers behind his home);

—the cost of preparing and maintaining the land will be much higher than the \$70,000 for developing and \$14,000 in annual maintenance that the recreation department predicts;

—the town will be liable for any accidents on the land.

In contrast, those who use the trail say they have never met any "un-

savory elements" and litter on the trail is nominal.

The naturalists argued the trail is an excellent natural hiking, horseriding and cross country skiing trail and it should be preserved.

They also said the trail would provide an excellent link to the nearby Bruce Trail and a path to the Terra Cotta Conservation Area.

Deer and rare birds have been spotted on the trail and it could be maintained by naturalist organizations and "properly planned" to make sure abutting landowners are not bothered by hikers, they said.

Most naturalists said the land could be governed to keep motor vehicles off.

The \$5,000 price for the seven kilometres of land is a "rare opportunity" to take over and preserve a nature trail, they argued.

The town of Caledon has recently purchased a much larger portion of the same railway line to develop a nature trail.

But a motion not to approve the recreation department recommendation to purchase the land passed virtually without debate, after councillors had spent hours questioning delegations and town staff on the issue.

Shortly after 11 p.m. - four hours into the issue - Ward 3 Coun. Betty Fisher successfully put forth a motion to call the vote on the issue.

Council voted not to support the recreation department recommendation. Told by town administrator Dan Costea that council would need a formal motion not to accept the offer (rather than just not approving a recommendation to purchase) in order for next week's council meeting to confirm the decision, councillors voted once more to turn down the offer of sale.

But several councillors were furious because the motion not to purchase the land passed without debate.

Ward 1 Coun. Norm Elliott, who said he had hoped for a compromise solution, called the process a "farce."

"This, in my opinion, is a very dramatic rejection," said Coun. Elliott.

"We called the vote too fast. We deal in confrontational politics because we send one group home and say you lost and the other group won," he added.

"It was rammed through with virtually no debate. That's ridiculous."

Coun. Pam Sheldon made an impassioned plea to her colleagues before the second vote on the purchase. "It's a vote for the future. It makes good business sense," she said.

"There are a lot of people who

Continued on page A2



A tree grows . . .

Fellow students at Pineview Public School look on as Amy Wilson deposits a shovel full of soil at the base of the commemorative Maple tree planted to mark the school's 25th anniversary last

Friday. After the tree was planted all of Pineview's student population gathered to release colorful balloons to mark the festive occasion. (Herald photo)

Local business aids relief

Shoppers Drug Mart on Guelph Street is accepting donations for Jamaica disaster victims, following the rampage of Hurricane Gilbert last week.

"We're accepting anything - clothing, non-perishables, food - anything that can be packaged and taken away," said store manager Al Fraser.

The Georgetown store, one of the Shoppers Drug Mart chain stores accepting donations, received word from the Toronto office Monday that the store would par-

ticipate. Since then, response has been good.

"We received calls from the Town, the Red Cross and various individuals," said Mr. Fraser. Most of the calls, he added, were to confirm that the Guelph Street store would accept donations.

The drug store chain has linked into a "network" of packaging that will allow quick delivery to the hurricane-torn island, said Mr. Fraser. Shoppers Drug Mart is located at Georgetown Market Place on Guelph Street.

Children 'still shaken'

Accident prompts council action

Four Limehouse Public School students who escaped injury when their bus was struck by a gravel truck Monday on Fourth Line are "shaken up," says the school principal.

"Physically they're fine, (but) having an experience like this, the children are nervous, I can tell you that," said principal Rick Kaufman Tuesday.

The children's school bus, driven by May Laing, 60, of Acton, was struck when it stopped near Sideroad 17 to drop off a young boy, one of five students aboard the vehicle.

"The truck jackknifed and pushed the school bus off into the ditch," said Mr. Kaufman.

Police say the emergency lights on the 1988 yellow school bus van were flashing, but the truck, a 1983

GMC tractor trailer, was unable to stop.

Police have charged a 31-year-old Weston man in connection with the accident, with driving with an improper licence and careless driving.

The incident evoked an angry reaction from Ward 3 Coun. Pam Sheldon Monday night.

"It's a miracle those children are still alive," said Coun. Sheldon, at council's regular meeting.

Earlier this year Coun. Sheldon asked for a hidden driveway sign installed before the knoll in the road to warn motorists, but that sign has not yet been installed.

The sign may have prevented the accident, she said.

"The only thing that's going to stop accidents in future is getting

that knoll removed," she said.

She asked town engineer Bob Austin to examine the town budget to see if the knoll removal could be done this year.

Mr. Austin said the hidden driveway sign was ordered in August and it, along with another batch of signs, was received on Monday.

The sign installation program started yesterday morning (Tuesday), he said.

Mayor Ross Miller, who along with Coun. Sheldon was at the scene of the accident, said "emotions were running high."

He agreed with a motion by Coun. Sheldon to send a strong message to next year's council to put the knoll removal high on the budget agenda.

Effects of landfill on property value

Residents don't buy claim

By BRIAN MacLEOD
Herald Staff

Members of the Acton quarry landfill study group hotly disputed a consultant's claim that property values of homes surrounding the site would go down only 15 per cent if the dump is built.

Sid Moorhouse, a consultant hired by dump proponents Reclamation Systems Inc. (RSI) to conduct the social and economic impact on surrounding residents of the proposed dump, said Sept. 15 that only properties within one half kilometre of the dump will be affected.

And any property values lost when the dump originally starts up will be regained within five years, said Mr. Moorhouse.

Only the five adjacent properties will lose any property value at all and that will be regained, he said.

"No other property values will be affected."

The dump wouldn't affect property values of the properties across the road from the dump, which do not border on the quarry property, he said.

That claim was disputed quickly by one audience member who said she lives two kilometres from the site and she has been asked to reduce the asking price by \$20,000 because of the dump proposal during recent attempts to sell her house.

Mr. Moorhouse called the 15-per-

cent reduction "severe," but the biggest property reduction he has seen because of environmental concerns is 40 per cent in another area, he said.

The dump would create 50 new jobs in the area with other economic spinoffs such as increased spending in the community which would create another 25 jobs, he said.

And any stress on nearby residents would likely subside when the formal decision on whether or not to build the dump is made, he said.

"The highest level of stress is created by the expectation that there will be a facility," he said.

Whether or not the dump goes ahead, stress on neighboring residents drops off once the decision is made, he said.

But once that stress is gone the community cohesion that fighting a dump creates, would remain as a positive factor, he said.

"People will have the same level of satisfaction about the community," he said.

Committee member Merlin Kobsa questioned the 15-per-cent property value reduction.

"Where are we going to find a sucker to buy a property that's next door to a garbage dump," he said.

"It doesn't take an awful lot of reduction in price to convince people

to buy a property," replied Mr. Moorhouse.

If the proposed landfill goes ahead Halton Hills could have free waste disposal resulting in a property tax saving to homeowners of \$100 each, said Mr. Moorhouse.

But Linda Friesen, the environmental approvals co-ordinator at Halton Region said waste disposal is a Regional matter and any savings would be channelled through Halton Region.

Mr. Moorhouse said the full report on social and economic impacts of the proposed dump has not yet been completed, pending further studies on transportation.

Committee members repeatedly criticized Mr. Moorhouse for not producing figures to substantiate his claims.

"Why are we wasting our time here tonight to hear a presentation?" asked Mr. Kobsa.

"You had no figures. Just a few blank overheads and a map that you really didn't use."

Mr. Kobsa demanded RSI reschedule the meeting at a later date when the reports are fully prepared.

RSI President Walter Graziani said meetings can be scheduled after the final report from all the committee meetings is completed in November.