

# Outlook on Halton Hills

## Police kept busy during power outage

Halton Regional Police were out at the crack of dawn Thursday to monitor traffic at Halton Hills' major intersections.

Halton's major concern was the early morning rush hour, according to a police spokesman. The intersections of Guelph Street and Mountainview Road, and Winston Churchill Boulevard and Steeles Avenue were guarded by police on "point duty." Police directed traffic with flashing lights or by hand signals.

A third intersection at Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road was "a big concern because the traffic speed is much higher (than the other intersections)," said police.

And "people weren't exactly following the rules of the road at Guelph and Mountainview," added a police spokesman.

Police say the roads were in good condition once the ice from overnight melted, and that there were

no accidents related to the blackout.

But they added that phone lines were plugged up all morning with people inquiring about school closures, and asking when the power would return.

"People should have portable radios and batteries handy," said police. They added that since the source of the blackout was in Peel, their information came from the radio. Georgetown's 11 Division Police Station on Guelph Street ran this morning with a backup generator.

Peel Regional Police called Halton police at 11:30 a.m. to say Georgetown and Acton's power would resume at 2 p.m. The power was resumed at 1 p.m. after more than eight hours of hydro efforts. Police said the blackout was handled "basically quite well" but said they were "too busy responding to the situation to answer (people's) questions."

## Schools finally close after cold, dark morning

Georgetown's 10 public and three Catholic schools closed Thursday around lunchtime after power was cut off by Ontario Hydro.

The hydro commission shut down electricity to the Georgetown and rural Acton following a transmission tower accident at Erin Mills Parkway and Highway 403 in Mississauga at 4:39 a.m. The 230,000-volt power source served Halton Hills, Mississauga and Brampton.

The 10 schools in the public Halton Board of Education closed shortly after lunch after parents were contacted through the

board's emergency telephone network, said local trustee Arlene Bruce. Georgetown's three Catholic schools closed shortly before noon when parents were contacted, said Halton Roman Catholic Separate School Board trustee Irene McCauley.

Buses were still running and schools couldn't close despite the power outage. "You couldn't listen to the radio to hear whether or not your school was closed," said Mrs. Bruce.

Halton schools give parents a list of radio stations where they can listen for closures when school starts in September, she said.

## Cold weather a godsend for movers of meat

Thursday's power outage had supermarket store owners scrambling but Steak Express at 360 Guelph Street in Georgetown came prepared.

It wasn't a back-up generator owner Dave Ogley had going for him. It was just those beefy refrigeration units which can keep meat frozen for up to 20 hours.

"It didn't effect me at this time of the year but I wouldn't want it to happen in the summer," he said.

The "box freezers" kept his frozen meat so cold that it didn't even begin to get soft, he said.

Upright freezers aren't quite as

airtight but they did the job, he said.

The alternative was to store the meat outside or in the car, he added. But the power was restored in time, negating the need for such a measure.

The \$3,000 to \$4,000 worth of goods regularly kept in the store range from red meats to seafoods, scallops and desserts.

Mr. Ogley couldn't put a dollar value on lost sales but seven or eight customers usually purchase meat at his store on Thursday mornings and those sales were lost.

## Bell lines snarled with power blackout

If you picked up the phone Thursday and heard dead silence, it was because the central station in Brampton was affected by the eight-hour power blackout.

The offices in areas like Mississauga and Brampton were hit by the power outage and had to rely on either diesel or battery back-up systems, said Geoff Matthews, Media Affairs Manager for Bell

Canada in Ontario.

Mr. Matthews added that slowdowns caused dial tones to take longer than usual to connect.

So, if you picked up the phone and heard nothing, hanging on for a few more seconds would have done the trick, he said.

Telephones themselves were fully operable, while the rest of current-supplied sources went black.

## OUR LANGUAGE

by Jeffrey McQuain

Pukka proves to be genuine or of top quality. Among English adjectives from India, this word is definitely pukka.

Bedecked appears dressed up or finely decorated. Don't get into a fight about bedecked, or you might be decked.

Q. I've always used the spelling curb, but recently I came across the spelling kerb. Are those two equally acceptable?

A. No, they're not, but the preferred spelling depends on your location. The British use kerb for the edge built along a street. Americans prefer to spell that word curb. Unless you're writing for a British reader, the use of kerb is a practice that American writers should try to curb.

## — Left in the dark —

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Asked at Georgetown Marketplace: How did the blackout Thursday affect you?

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GWEN LYNAS

"I was most annoyed because we live out of town. My husband and I had doctors and dentists appointments that we had to rebook."



DON SMITH

"I had a wood stove. I just heated some water, made some coffee and fried my eggs. But my wife drives a school bus, so (the blackout) affected her pretty badly."



LYNNE ARNOTT

"It was a little chilly in the house. We put the fireplace to good use. But it affected the kids. They couldn't watch TV or play video games. They ended up doing their homework instead."



MARY VANDERBURGH

"We had so much to do, since it was before Christmas. But it was very cosy here (Vanderburgh Flowers). We had at least 100 candles burning and Coleman stoves. One lady made coffee at her home and brought it in, in a thermos. I think everyone in Georgetown would have been here if they had heard how nice it was."



MIKE EIKERMANN

"When you drove through Georgetown and Noyah, there weren't any police anywhere. I just figured it was kind of unsafe to have no police out at all during the blackout. I was travelling to Brampton to go to a music shop."



CHARLES VALENTINE

"I woke up about five o'clock and I noticed the house a bit on the chilly side. I have four (tropical) birds and I started to think about them, whether or not they could survive the cold. My wife and I were a little worried about the elderly lady across the road, so my wife went over and made sure she was warm."



"Angels from the realms...."

The primary classes of Park Public School presented their Christmas concert production of *Have A Heart* - It's Christmas Tuesday night for an appreciative au-

dience. Here, students give it their all during a musical portion of the production.