



Margaret Carney, 5, of Glen Williams Public School was one of over 100 people who enjoyed hot dogs and hot chocolate at the opening of the Glen's outdoor skating rink last Sunday. (Herald photo)

Alcohol rehab centre gets green light

A local group is searching for a home for a women's alcohol abuse centre after receiving approval for \$400,000 in funding from Queen's Park last week.

The Hope Women's Place Treatment Centre will locate somewhere in Halton Hills and will serve the Regions of Halton and Peel, said board director and treasurer for the proposed centre, Bob Young.

The Hope Centre is searching for a rental property that will accommodate eight to 10 women who suffer from alcoholism and wish to come to the centre for treatment. Ministry of Health approval was granted Thursday after four years

of lobbying, said Mr. Young, but funds will not be released by the provincial government until a location for the centre is determined, he said.

The Hope Centre will be for women whose "prime dependency" is alcohol, said Mr. Young. But he added that statistics show a correlation between alcohol and drug abusers. About 40 per cent of alcoholics have a drug dependency, he said.

Women admitted to the centre will be treated by professionals and will remain in the centre a maximum of 28 days for treatment.

The board is presently working

out the criteria for entry into the centre, said Mr. Young, but the group is certain the house will have "a home-like atmosphere."

The name of the centre stands for "new hope" for alcohol abusers, said Mr. Young. The centre is the first of its kind in both Halton and Peel Regions. But he added a treatment centre for men in the Milton area could be similar.

The board of directors for the Hope Centre must deal with less funding than anticipated, meaning instead of the 12 beds originally planned, they will only get eight to 10. But they remain optimistic.

"If we can straighten out a few lives, it's certainly worthwhile," said Mr. Young.

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Board to pull plug on school-run pools

By DONNA KELL
Herald Staff

The Halton Board of Education will consider closing McKenzie-Smith Pool in Acton and all school pools in Halton to reduce the \$1 million spent annually on maintaining the pools, board trustees decided Thursday.

A motion to close McKenzie-Smith Pool was put forward by Milton trustee Bill Harrison. Georgetown and area trustee Dick Howitt added to the motion, making it clear that all pools in the region would be closed.

"My fear is that by simply singling out McKenzie-Smith and Halton Hills that there will not be a precedent... towards cost-sharing in the Region," said trustee Howitt.

He said \$1 million a year is spent on pool costs for Halton school pools. And this funding could go to "educational endeavors."

The board's Superintendent of Business Services Jerry Jenkins said taxpayers in the public school system are footing the bill for all pool users in the Region. According to figures released by Mr. Jenkins, only 30 per cent of pool users are students.

But full maintenance of the pools is a board responsibility, negotiated in a 1970s contract that the board wants to cancel, said Mr. Jenkins.

"The contracts say for the life of the pool (but) the life of the pool just goes on and on," he said.

The board attempted to close down the McKenzie-Smith pool in 1987 when reconstruction of the 15-year-old pool cost taxpayers \$75,000. The pool was closed again last December for pipe work.

With taxpayers of the public school system paying repair costs, trustee Harrison said the municipalities, who collect admission fees for the local pools, are "essentially stealing."

He added that there is no mandate from the Ministry of Education demanding that schools provide swimming to students. He pointed to pools being a local recreational responsibility. "If it's their mandate, they should provide the service," he said.

Trustees initially contacted the municipalities, but were not answered, said Mr. Jenkins.

"All of our requests were noted, filed and received," he said.

"We have gone from hope to frustration and now to anger about the situation," said Acton and area trustee Arlene Bruce.

Mrs. Bruce said the system that sees taxpayers providing "100 per cent" of maintenance costs for the school pools is "unfair and unequitable."

But the Halton Board of Education is involved in legal proceedings with the Town of Halton Hills over the cost sharing issue, said Mr. Jenkins. "We would like a separate agreement," he said.

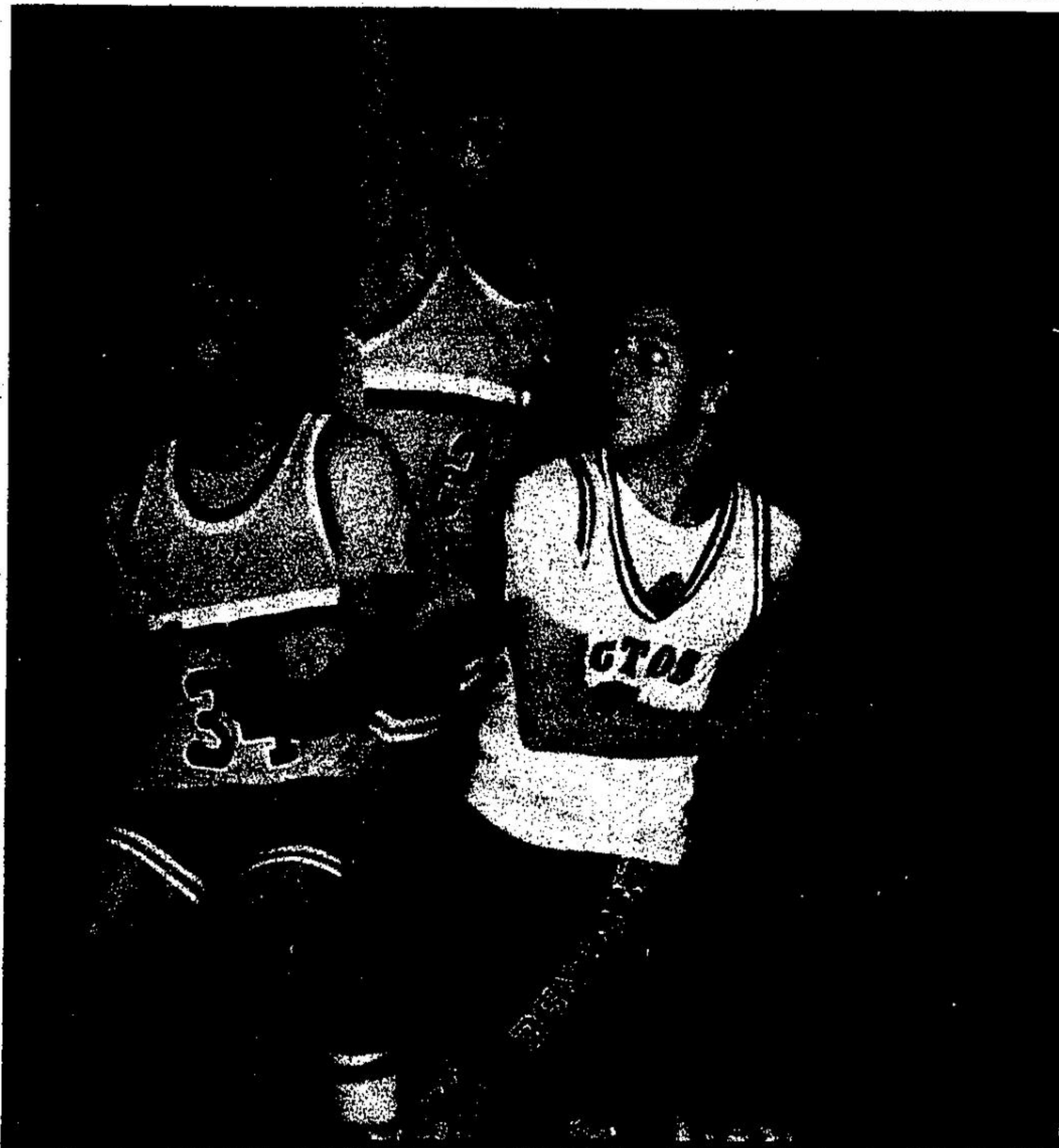
A spokesman for Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department said fees charged for local pools go to offset "personnel costs," and that the department is not making a profit.

But the Halton Board maintains a "cost-sharing" system must be implemented or the board can no longer afford to keep pools open.

"No matter how costs are viewed, it is simply less costly for municipalities than for the school board," said trustee Harrison.

The board's motion to close McKenzie-Smith pool and the amendment added by trustee Howitt will go before trustees again at the next school board meeting.

Chairman Pat Hillhouse said Mr. Jenkins will provide the trustees with more information before trustees vote to close the Region's school pools.



'cat Tamer

Acton Redmen guard Wayne Bousfield finds plenty of attention under the basket from a pair of White Oaks Wildcat defenders as he drives to the hoop during recent midget boys basketball action at AHS. Bousfield scored 12 points as the midget Redmen edged

White Oaks 47-46 in a cliffhanger. The junior and senior Redmen were less fortunate, however, as they both dropped decisions to the Wildcats. (Herald photo by Paul Svoboda)

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Headaches

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