

## Santa Claus parade

# Man objects to political and protest floats

By ALAN MACKIE  
the Herald

The Georgetown Lions Club has not stuck to its goal of keeping political and protest groups out of its Santa Claus parade, a local resident says.

Robert Johnston, a product analyst for Pultrusions Canada Limited, told Mark Rush, parade chairman, the POWER and Right to Life groups should not be allowed to participate in the Santa Claus parade.

The Georgetown Lions ran an advertisement for the Christmas parade in a local paper which read,

"No Political or Protest Groups Please," early in October.

POWER (Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources) is a citizens group fighting the proposal for a landfill site in the Acton quarry.

Mr. Rush acknowledged the advertisement and said, "We do want to keep (the parade) non-political." He said Christmas is a religious holiday and the Right to Life group is based on strong religious beliefs. He added they have been "translating their religious beliefs into political

views," but they are fundamentally based on religion.

Mr. Johnston said he is not associated with either the Right to Life or pro-choice movements and said he has "just about had enough" of the abortion issue because it is in almost every paper and program in the media.

He asked Mr. Rush if the pro-choice campaign would be able to put an entry into the parade. Mr. Rush answered, "No, quite probably not," said Mr. Johnston.

Mr. Rush explained the pro-choice campaign does not have any

fundamental religious base to it. He also stated the organization never approached him about entering into the parade. Therefore the Lions have not been forced to make that decision. The Lions have no official position on the abortion issue, Mr. Rush said.

Mr. Johnston said the Right to Life people are getting children involved in their float and, "that bothers me." He said the children don't know what they're getting into.

Although Mr. Johnston believes almost everyone in Halton agrees

with POWER, he said the Santa Claus parade is not the "proper venue" to express political views.

Mr. Rush noted last year's POWER float was objectionable and said the environmental group promised the Lions Club to stay more along the "Santa's Toyland" theme. A Lions Club committee agreed to give POWER another chance this year, Mr. Rush said. He also said it's a dangerous line to cross and a tough line to make. Mr. Rush also added that he does understand Mr. Johnston's point of view.

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25th, 1989

24 PAGES



## Five firefighters injured in \$110,000 Acton house blaze

By BENDUMMETT  
the Herald

Five firefighters were injured while battling a fire Wednesday that destroyed an Acton farmhouse and most of the two occupants' belongings.

Dale Levere, Duncan Waldie, and Don Martin were rushed to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital where they were treated for minor facial burns. They have since been released, Halton Hills fire department officials say. A flash-over caused the burns. Officials say a flash-over occurs when gases build up in a room, then exposed to oxygen. David Leslie was also treated for facial burns at Georgetown hospital. He has also been released. But officials were unable to give the cause for his burns.

Larry Frizzell suffered carbon monoxide poisoning while operating one of the department's pump trucks. He was first taken to Georgetown hospital and then transferred to the Toronto General Hospital. Mr. Frizzell has since been transferred back to Georgetown hospital where he is currently listed in good condition, fire officials say.

The fire caused an estimated \$110,000 damage to the house which is located on Highway 25 between Sideroads 15 and 17. Firefighters battled with the fire from 2:30 p.m. to 8:35 p.m.

As one of the house's occupants, Alfred Pilgrim, looked on at the bellowing smoke coming from the caved in roof and the second storey windows, he said: "I don't have much, but what I did have is gone, I guess."

The other occupant, Jack Evans,

said, "We've lost everything: a couple of hundred dollars each, the water bed, and about \$1,500 worth of our clothes."

"All we could save was the television, ghetto blaster and an electric guitar," he added.

Mr. Pilgrim was the first to notice the fire. "I was working on some tire chains beside the garage when I saw smoke coming from the chimney," he said.

"It had to have started there," he added.

Fire officials confirmed this location saying the fire was probably caused by blockage or creosote. This flammable substance is a build-up of water vapor and volative gases originating from burning wood.

Officials stressed this kind of fire can only be prevented if people clean their chimneys at least once a year.

When Mr. Pilgrim noticed the smoke he immediately ran into the house to warn Mr. Evans.

Mr. Evans said: "Just as Alfred came in I saw some flames licking from the walls. We punched a hole in the wall and then got buckets of water from the sink and tried to put it out."

"After a while I started taking things out of the house," Mr. Evans said.

When Mr. Evans left the house he saw someone in the driveway who then went across the road to a neighbor to telephone the fire department.

Mr. Evans was unable to identify the person.

The house is owned by Acton resident Catherine Carachi. Ms. Carachi couldn't be reached as of press time.

Firemen battled this blaze for six hours Wednesday. (Photo by Ben Dummett)

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