

## It's the law

# Take your keys with you when you leave the car

By BENDUMMETT  
the Herald

It's a Saturday and you're craving for a peanut butter and jam sandwich and a big glass of milk. But the refrigerator is empty. You get into the car and zip over to the local variety store. To save time you leave the car running while you dash into the store. You return in what you swear was only two minutes only to find that you've been charged with leaving the keys in the ignition. Astonishment might be in your first reaction. "Leaving the keys in the ignition is an offence?" you ask yourself incredulously.

It is, and Staff Sergeant Trevor Hay of the Halton Regional Police in Georgetown says it's the number one reason for car thefts in the Region. "I don't know how many times someone has left their car running, run into a (variety store) and five minutes later come out and found their car stolen," he said.

face a possible charge under the HTA of allowing unnecessary smoke to emit from the exhaust pipe.

He also has a warning for the James Dean types of Halton Hills. Cool it on the thresh mufflers - mufflers that enhance noise rather than muffling it - and especially the squeeling and screeching of car tires.

Police officers, except in cases of domestic assault offences, can lay a charge at their discretion. But like all people, Staff Sgt. Hay says, police officers have pet peeves. And his is, screeching tires. "Anytime I was on the street and I heard tires squeeling, I'd pull the driver over."

The town's Hollywood stars should realize if they insist on masking their identity behind tinted windows, they better not plan on doing too much partying. Staff Sgt. Hay says while tinted glass windows are legal, police have to be able to see into people's cars at all times. He says police can see into cars with tinted glass windows during the day but it's impossible at night.

Besides these common, but lesser known offences, people might also like to take note of some of the more obscure offences with which they can be charged.

If anyone in Halton Hills is planning to sell secrets to the Russians or disrupt the Queen of England's next visit to the Region, whenever that might be, think again. Staff Sgt. Hay warns they can be charged with high treason or exciting the Queen. He says it's safe to say no officers at 11 Division in Georgetown have ever had to lay either of these charges.

Under the criminal code the most common charges laid are impaired driving, domestic assault and theft, says Staff Sgt. Hay. Under the HTA they are stop light and stop sign infractions, seatbelt offences and speeding.

He said drivers should be aware that slowing down to the speed limit when they see a police car ahead, will not stop them from getting a ticket. The radar guns are so powerful these days that they have recorded the speeding offence before drivers can see the police officer, said Staff Sgt. Hay.

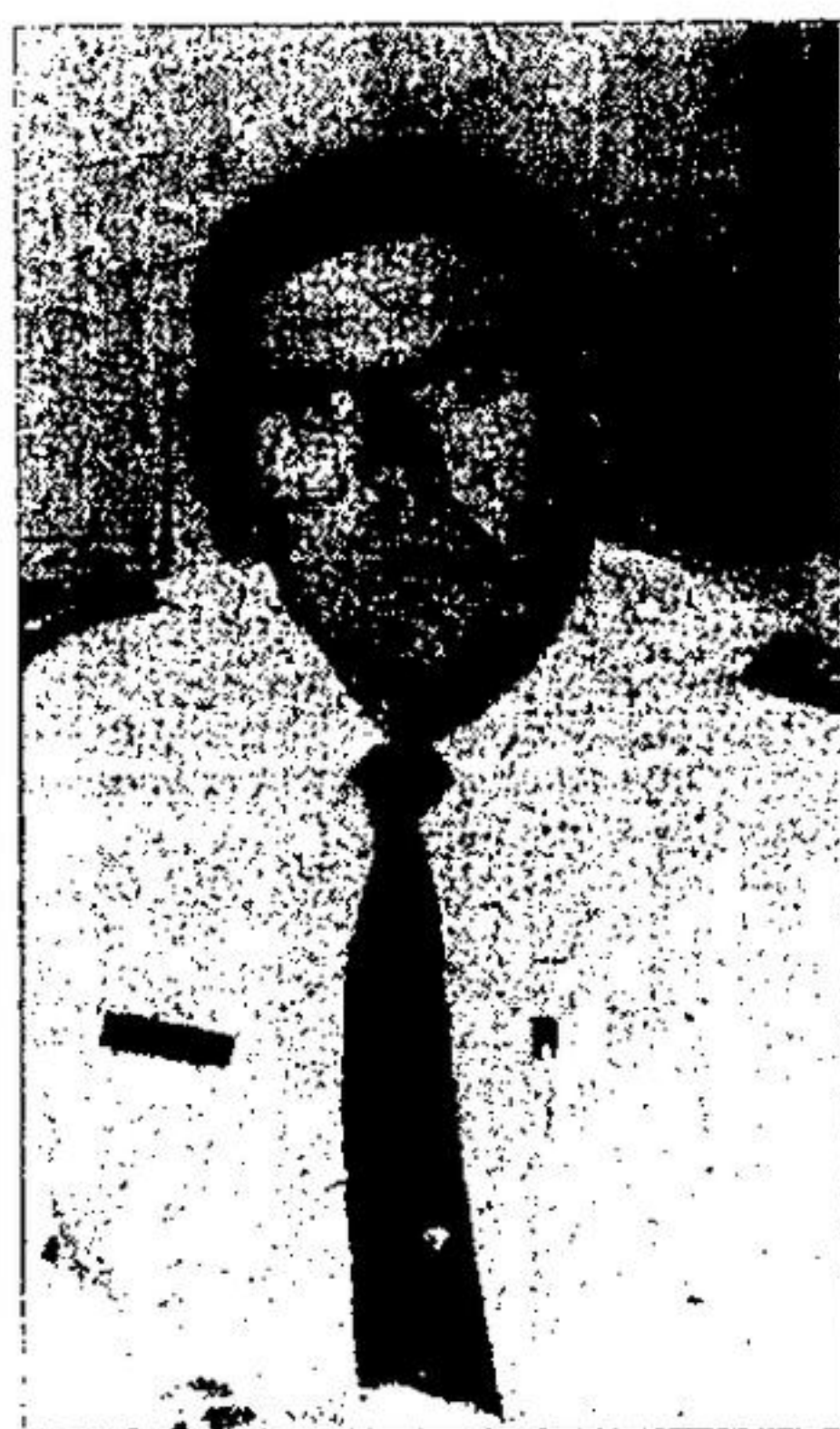
He also warns that police don't need a radar gun to ticket a speeder. If a police officer thinks someone is speeding, he will drive behind that person at a speed above the speed limit and if the distance between the two vehicles doesn't decrease... well you can guess the rest...

Staff Sgt. Hay also points out, police don't even need a car to lay charges of speeding. The village constable in Milton, Larry Brassard, has put pieces of tape at each end of a road. He then stands at one end with a stop watch and when a car travels the distance of the marked strip in less time than it takes while travelling at the speed limit, he's got you.



These are just four of the 100 music students from Georgetown and Streetsville, who participated in the annual Ontario Conservatory of Music Christmas recital at the John Elliott Theatre, Monday night. The organ, piano and guitar were the featured in-

struments during the performances. The group's teacher looks on during the performance. The conservatory is located on Guelph Street in Georgetown. (Herald photo)



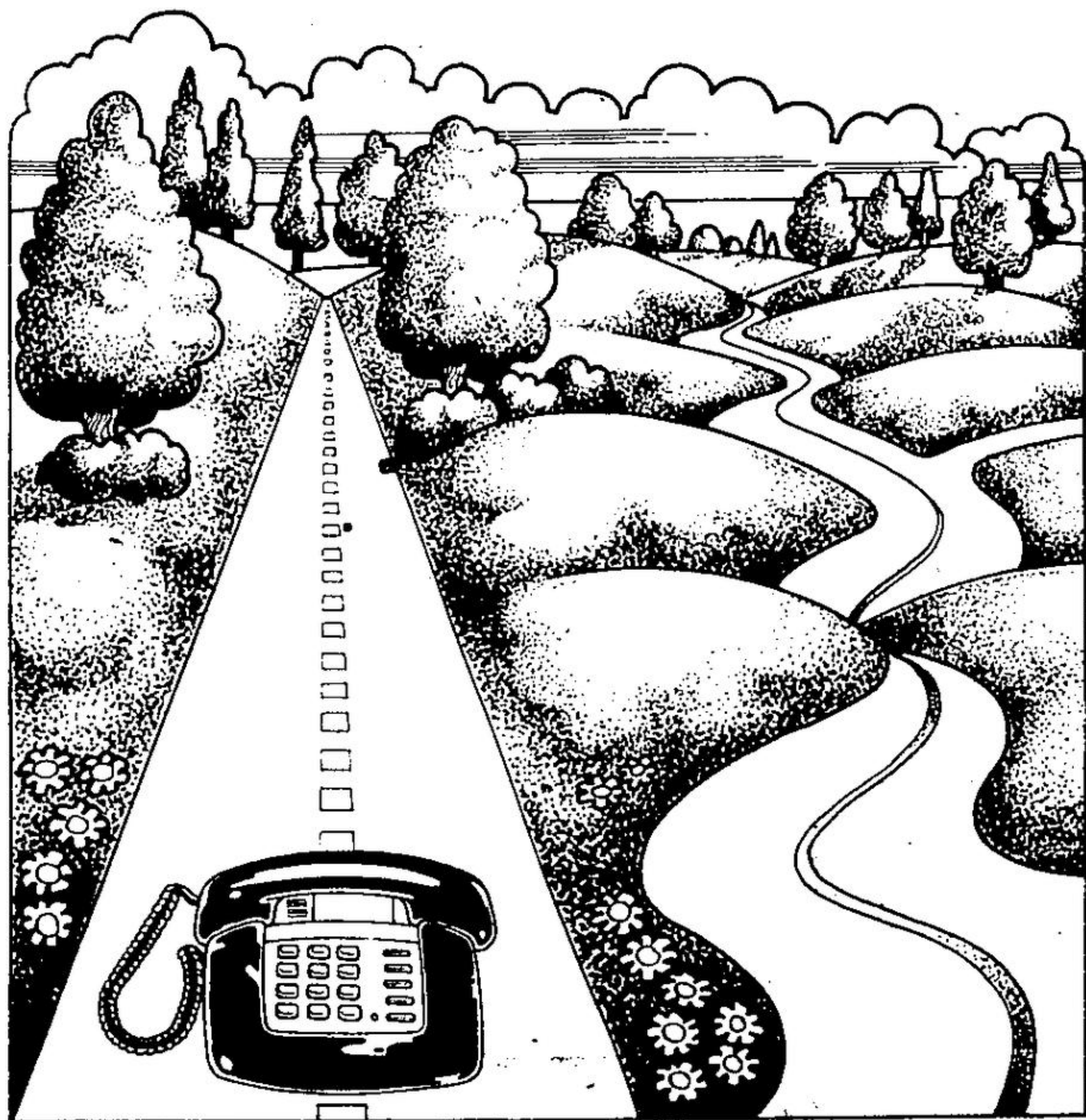
Staff-Sgt. Hay

Halton Regional crime prevention officer, Sergeant Dave Gwilliams, says there were 83 car thefts in the Halton Hills area in 1988. That's an increase of over 40 car thefts over 1987. There were 41 car thefts two years ago, Sgt. Gwilliams said.

The general public usually learns about the different offences outlined in the criminal code, the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) and those that come under the town bylaws through the media. But people should realize there are several seemingly minor offences, such as leaving the car keys in the ignition for five minutes, that are committed almost daily.

To the frugal car owner, Sgt. Hay says, get that muffler fixed, or

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