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Sikhs 'herded' into meeting

Chretien sweeps local Liberals

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

A group of Sikhs who were 'herded' into Sacre Coeur Church Hall in Georgetown last Thursday to vote at the Halton-Peel Liberal riding association delegation meeting couldn't prevent Jean Chretien supporters from sweeping all 12 delegate spots for the Calgary Liberal leadership convention in June.

About 20 to 25 Sikhs appeared at the hall near the end of the vote to cast their ballots in favor of a group of delegates supporting leadership hopefuls Paul Martin and Sheila Copps, said the riding association's president Carol Lawless after the delegation meeting.

The association's executive expected something like this to happen because Sikhs had suddenly appeared at other recent delegation meetings, said Ms. Lawson.

Ms. Lawson and the rest of the executive support Mr. Chretien's bid to replace John Turner as the federal Liberal party leader so they took the necessary precautions to ensure he would receive delegate support from Halton-Peel.

"I made several phone calls (leading up to the delegation meeting) to make sure we had over and above enough support," said Ms. Lawson.

Police seek missing woman

The Guelph division of the Ontario Provincial Police are asking for public assistance in finding a missing 31-year-old Hillsburgh woman.

Vivian Bremner was last seen at her residence around 10 a.m. Sunday morning.

She is described as five-foot four-inches tall, 140 pounds with short wavy blond hair and blue eyes. She is believed to be wearing a dark blue v-neck pullover, dark blue walking shorts and white running shoes.

Police have already started using dogs and a helicopter in the search for Ms. Bremner.

She was believed to be heading to Georgetown for a flag football practice. Ms. Bremner was driving a white 1986 Merkur XR-4 with a six-inch black trim along the bottom of the sides of the car. The licence plate is 672 ERW.

Although she couldn't say for sure, some of the Sikhs appeared to be "confused" and ended up voting for Jean Chretien delegates instead of those on the Martin/Copps slate.

Milton resident Bill Gregg, who was elected as a delegate, confirmed the Sikhs' apparent sense of confusion saying the group was "herded into the hall. They looked scared," he said.

Several people attending the delegation meeting didn't realize

the Sikhs had shown up because they came at the end of the evening, said Mr. Gregg.

By that time most people had cast their vote and left the hall, said Mr. Gregg.

Georgetown resident Tony Smyth, who ran as a delegate on the Martin/Copps slate, confirmed that a relatively large group of Sikhs appeared at the back of the hall near the end of the meeting.

Mr. Smyth was one of two Liberals for Life supporters who

ran on the losing slate. Mr. Smyth said an agreement between the "higher ups" in the Liberals for Life organization and a group of Martin/Copps supporters led to his running as a delegate.

When questioned why a pro-life advocate would support Sheila Copps, a pro-choice supporter, Mr. Smyth couldn't answer. The deal was made between the "higher ups" in the Liberals for Life group and the organizers of the Martin/Copps slate, said Mr. Smyth.

Ms. Lawson suggested the delegation process be changed. She objects to a system that allows for instant voting members. Only long-time Liberal party members who know what the party stands for and its policies should be responsible for determining delegates, said Ms. Lawson.

Members who wanted to vote at the delegation meeting had to be members of the Liberal party by March 29, four weeks prior to the

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Li'l Abner in Acton

Acton High School will visit Dogpatch, U.S.A. this week as students there present Li'l Abner. The play runs on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Tickets can be picked up at the school. The price is \$5 for adults, \$4 for students and \$3 for children and seniors. Here, Daisy

Mac, played by Mary Moore, and Li'l Abner, played by Peter Wilcox, discuss the upcoming Sadie Hawkins dance. (Herald Photo by Brian MacLeod)