

POLICE BEAT



**Numbers To Note
EMERGENCY**

Police, Fire or Ambulance Dial 911
 Fire (Information) 877-1133
 Police (Non-Emergency) .. 878-5511
 Hospital 877-0111
 Distress Centre 877-1211

House break-ins

Halton Regional Police suspect the same person may be responsible for three break and enters at rural Georgetown homes overnight March 5. Two houses on the 6th Line near Steeles Avenue were broken into and thieves made away with cash, jewellery, a camera and two VCR's. Total value of the stolen items is unknown. But at a third house, on the 10th Line, police estimate over \$7,000 worth of diamond rings, emerald rings, gold rings, gold and silver necklaces and gold earrings were stolen. Police have no suspects but believe only one person was responsible for the thefts. Police are continuing their investigation.

Failed to stop

Police charged an Ottawa man with going through a red light after two cars were severely damaged on March 1. The Ottawa man, driving a 1991 Chev sedan, failed to stop for a red light and collided with a 1985 Honda driven by a Milton man. No one was injured.

Left the road

Police say an Acton woman severely damaged her 1979 Pontiac after she failed to negotiate a curve and left the road, striking a sign post and hydro pole on Winston Churchill Boulevard March 5. The woman received minimal injuries.

Police Task Force

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

A rash of store break-ins in Halton where thieves steal cigarettes in a matter of seconds has caused Halton Regional Police to set up a cigarette Task Force to combat the problem.

"In one place, the thieves were in and out in 45 seconds," said Constable Laurel Barnett, crime prevention officer for Halton Hills. "In just that short time, they can get away with \$1,000 worth of cigarettes."

Sgt. Carey Smith of the force estimates more than \$300,000 worth of cigarettes have been stolen in break-ins since June of last year.

Police suspect the thieves are mainly opportunistic individuals

and small groups who are taking advantage of a lucrative black market.

Const. Barnett said most people can't resist buying cigarettes for half price even if they know they're stolen.

To try and slow down the time thieves can break and enter, community crime prevention officers are urging stores to keep their cigarette cartons in a basement, a locked back room or locked cupboard.

"The longer it takes thieves to steal cigarettes, the more chance we have of catching them," she said. "As well, the harder they are to get, the fewer cartons or packages the thieves will be able to make off with."

Hachey trial set over

The trial for a Georgetown man charged with impaired operation of a vehicle causing death and impaired driving, has been set over.

Ronald Joseph Hachey, appeared in court March 4 and the trial date was set over until sometime in May. He was charged by Halton Regional Police in connection with the death of Gary Russell McDonald, 19, of

Georgetown.

Mr. McDonald died from injuries sustained when he was struck by a 1982 Mercury car on Guelph Street at 12:35 a.m., March 9. He was taken to hospital by ambulance and pronounced dead at hospital.

Mr. McDonald is survived by his parents, Rosemary and Boyce Brown, and siblings, Delina and Scott, of Georgetown.



Hawk goes free

Students were thrilled and a little in awe at seeing a red-tailed hawk this close on Wednesday when Jim Aikenhead of the Mountsberg Wildlife Centre near Milton released the bird in the school's name. For \$275, the school purchased the bird in their name in order that it could be saved and released. The bird's are either found injured and rehabilitated at Mount-

sborg or relocated from Pearson International Airport in order to reduce the number of bird-plane incidents. Over 200 birds were given a better life last year through Mountsberg and the support of public schools like Park. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

Region bows to developers

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

Developers working in Halton Region have shown how effective they are as a lobby group when, as they claim, their livelihood in the Region is at stake.

Halton Regional Council Wednesday bowed to developers' opposition to a proposal by Regional staff to increase development charges for commercial and industrial construction by almost 200 per cent.

Halton charges developers a fee for both residential and non-residential construction to help cover services such as roads that need to accompany any new development project.

Regional staff originally proposed the development charge for non-residential construction increase from 85 cents per square foot to \$2.80 per square foot. The increase was based on a project that covered 25 per cent of a piece of property. However, after hearing threats from developers they would be forced to pack up and

leave the Region if the increase was approved, staff reduced the increase to \$2.38 per square foot.

In addition, the increase would be phased in over four years.

The developers still said the increase was too high.

Staff then recommended and received Regional Council support Wednesday to scrap any increase to non-residential development charges for two years. At that time, council of the day would reconsider if an increase would be necessary.

Halton Treasurer Joe Rinaldo said Wednesday the 85 cent per square foot charge covers 30 per cent of the cost to service a project. The remaining 70 per cent must be covered through municipal taxes, he explained.

Several councillors expressed dissatisfaction with the way Regional staff informed the public about the proposed increase and the resulting ramifications if an increase was not introduced. The issue was presented as a "developer/Regional problem

when it's really a developer/taxpayer problem," said Burlington Regional Councillor Kevin Flynn. The media's presentation of the issue has also contributed to the misperception, said Coun. Flynn.

He suggested if the public realized no increase meant 70 per cent of the cost of servicing a development is paid with tax money, then the Region would have received more of a reaction from people.

He, along with a few other councillors, directed staff to take out advertisements in the local media stressing this point.

Staff will soon be advertising a public meeting for April 2 in connection with the development charges. During that meeting developers and members of the public will be asked to comment on whether non-residential development charges should be increased and if so, by how much, in future years.

The meeting will take place at the Regional Administration building in Oakville starting at 9:30 a.m.

SAME DAY TAX RETURNS

101 Guelph St., Georgetown
877-2217

ANNOUNCING



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