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Chamber gives finance minister another chance

Federal Finance Minister, Michael Wilson, will get another chance to redeem himself with the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Chamber President Dave Page confirmed Friday he will present Mr. Wilson with a replacement cheque during the Debt Freedom Conference in Ottawa March 20 for the one that was issued by the Chamber to the government last summer but went uncashed.

The \$1,200 cheque represented money raised by the Chamber through ticket and beverage sales resulting from its Deficit Reduction Barbecue held last May at Gordon Alcott Arena.

ever deposited into the government's new Debt Servicing and Reduction Fund.

As to when the deposit would actually take place, Mr. Turner said within the next couple of weeks. "The fund is in the process of being set up and as soon as it is, the cheque will be deposited," he said.

To ensure there are no mistakes this time, Mr. Turner said, he hopes Mr. Page will ask the Finance Minister when exactly the cheque will be deposited.

Aside from the \$1,200, another \$22 billion expected to be raised from the Goods and Services Tax will be deposited into the same account, said Mr. Turner.

The Debt Freedom Conference is an all-day event in which a array of people including local, regional and national leaders, university students, politicians and business people will listen to speakers and discuss ways governments at all levels can live within their means without resorting to continuous tax increases, according to a press release issued by Mr. Turner.

The conference's proceedings will also see the unveiling of a 10 foot by 15 foot "Debt Clock" which will record the country's debt load by the minute. According to the press release, Canada's debt increases by \$53,000 per minute.

Speakers headlining the event include Tony d'Aquino, Business Council on National Issues; Professor John Crispo, University of Toronto; Laurent Thibault, Canadian Manufacturers Association; George Lansens, Ontario Taxpayers Coalition; Tim Reid, President Canadian Chamber of Commerce; Sally Pipes, Fraser Institute and Finance Minister Wilson.



DAVID PAGE

The cheque was given to Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner last summer and he in turn handed it over to Mr. Wilson last October, but it was never cashed and was declared stale dated in December.

Through Mr. Turner, the Finance Minister apologized for the mishap and attributed it to the cheque being misplaced by one of his staff members.

Mr. Turner told several members of the local business community at a budget breakfast in Georgetown March 1, Mr. Wilson had promised to make the Chamber's new cheque the first



Happy Birthday Father

This custom-made birthday card depicting Father Dave Cote, pastor of Holy Cross Parish, drew a lot of laughs from the Christian Fellowship Lunch Bunch who threw a party in honor of Father Cote's 50th birthday. Exactly 50 people turned up

for the occasion including church member Pat Green (left) and well-wishers from Oakville, Owen Sound, Wisconsin U.S.A. and Mississauga at the McGibbon Hotel last Thursday. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

Youths crime spree ends

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

Halton Regional Police arrested two young offenders and laid a total of 52 criminal charges in connection with numerous business break-ins and the theft of at least six vehicles from Halton during a 10-month crime spree beginning in May, 1990.

When police made the arrests March 5, they recovered approximately \$105,000 worth of stolen property including computers and computer software, stereo equipment, tires and wheels, expensive bicycles, auto stereos and speakers, cassette players, cellular telephones and skis. A second search conducted in Milton resulted in the recovery of a 17-foot ski boat valued at \$18,000 which had been stolen in Oakville, May 1.

Although most of the recovered items were stolen from Milton and Oakville businesses, the youths are also believed responsible for stealing a 1988 Honda CRX from Georgetown Honda Nov. 21, 1990. The car was later found "totally burnt out" in Milton.

Detective Constables Ian McNally and Clive Hubbard, who investigated the case, say the assistance of the Georgetown Honda owner helped them greatly in linking this theft and damage to other car thefts.

There was also one stereo component set with Pioneer speakers and tuner stolen in Halton Hills. Detective Constable Hubbard said the equipment was taken from a Volvo car but police don't know who the equipment belongs to. They're asking anyone who thinks the property is theirs to call the Halton Regional Police, criminal investigations bureau, at 878-5511, ext. 416.

Police credit two anonymous tipsters who gave information to Crime Stoppers for leading police to the persons responsible for the

thefts and destruction. Most of the cars stolen were later found burnt. One stolen van was set on fire and sent through the glass doors of the Milton Mall Oct. 15, causing \$250,000 damage.

For this act, the young offenders were charged with Mischief Endangering Life. This charge was laid against them twice more in connection with a stolen vehicle was that was left on train tracks near Milton while a train was coming (the train didn't derail) and with an incident on Main Street, Milton, when a burning stolen car was left to roll down Main Street.

Other charges laid against the young offenders include break, enter and theft, theft under \$1,000, mischief to property over \$1,000, theft over \$1,000, posses-

sion of stolen property, uttering a forged document, unauthorized use of a credit card and possession of a prohibited weapon (a switchblade knife).

Also charged in this case is a 23-year-old Milton man. A search of his home resulted in the recovery of approximately \$4,000 worth of stolen property including stereo equipment, tires, wheels and an expensive bicycle. He's been charged with one count of possession of stolen property.

Police are continuing their investigation into the incident and think at least \$50-\$75,000 worth of stolen property has yet to be recovered.

Police indicate more charges will likely be laid against the two young offenders as they uncover more information.

Smith and Stone plant laying off 38 employees

Georgetown electrical device manufacturer Smith and Stone on Glen Road, announced Friday it will close its porcelain operations by May, putting 38 people out of work.

The porcelain division of the company manufactures components for light fixtures and telephone poles.

Company general manager Al Gardiner attributed the closure to the high cost of manufacturing the products and the competitive market. "The operations have been unprofitable for several years," he added.

One of the prime reasons for the closure is that Smith and Stone's American competitors are able to sell their products on the Canadian market at a lower price.

Asked if the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement allowed American companies to sell their products at a lower price, Mr. Gardiner was uncommittal. "One of the causes may or may not have been free trade," he said.

The shutdown still leaves 80 people employed at Smith and Stone, said Mr. Gardiner. They are working in the company's wire devices operation, which Mr. Gardiner said, "remains stable in sales and production in spite of the downturn in construction."

Mr. Gardiner wouldn't explain why the wire devices component of the company was doing better than that of the porcelain division, except to say "there are a host of reasons."

Dufferin Aggregates wins top award

Dufferin Aggregate's Milton operation, which borders Halton Hills, is the recipient of an international award of excellence in community relations, according to a company-issued press release.

The company was picked over several other Canadian and American aggregate companies, said Milton quarry General Manager Brian Harrington.

"We (the Milton operation) are delighted that we have won the award, but our greatest reward is the relationship we have with our neighbors," said Mr. Harrington.

The award was presented during the recent annual National Stone Association Conference in San Francisco.

"Our company philosophy recognizes the importance of being a responsible corporate citizen. Our operations translate that philosophy into a reality by making sure that we keep our doors open to our neighbors. We play an active part in the community. We listen to the concerns of our neighbors and we act on them," said Mr. Harrington.

An Inside Look

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