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Recession claims another victim

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

If the economy is on the upswing or about to turn around, as some are saying, nobody has told the Georgetown-based company, Zavitz Technology Incorporated on Todd Road.

As well, it was learned, two other Georgetown companies are facing difficulties.

The circuit board manufacturer will shut its doors indefinitely effective May 17, confirmed General Manager Lester Hogan Monday.

The closure puts 12 of the company's 14 employees out of work. Two people including Mr. Hogan, are being retained to carry out administrative duties, he said. Mr. Hogan quickly added, however, his future with the company and that of the other employee, is uncertain.

Zavitz, which has been in Georgetown since 1985, manufactures circuit boards for airline companies and electrical component manufacturers.

Mr. Hogan attributed the indefinite closure to sales being unable to match the increasing cost of doing business. Sales haven't changed over last year, while operating costs have jumped significantly, he said. As well the company's customers have been unwilling to accept higher prices for Zavitz products, said Mr. Hogan.

Zavitz's head office is in Quebec, with other plants located in London, England and Ottawa. The Georgetown plant's business

is done within Canada, he said. Free trade has had nothing to do with the shut down, added Mr. Hogan.

Mr. Hogan expects the company should be back in business once the economy turns around, but when that might happen, he wasn't saying.

Zavitz is just the most recent in a long line of Halton Hills companies that have either had to permanently close or lay-off employees because of the recession.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for Georgetown Major Video Store on Guelph Street, said the store will remain open despite the company filing for bankruptcy, last Thursday.

However, the spokesperson said the store could at sometime in the future operate under a new name. The entire company, and or individual stores, are on the "auction block" said the spokesperson.

The company's bankruptcy is being attributed to an overly rapid expansion drive. The company owns 38 stores across the country.

The end of last week also saw Georgetown company Baltimore Aircoil of Canada Limited, on Sinclair Avenue laying off 11 of its 60 employees, said a company spokesperson.

A slowdown in sales was behind the layoffs, the person said. Baltimore manufactures components for air conditioning and cooling systems.



Nice Kitty

By the look on Dirk McKee's (student) face, petting this full-grown cougar more intimidating than animal conservationist, Scott Armstrong (far left) made it look. The cougar, along with a python, boa-constrictor, lion cub and hedgehog were some of the animals students at Harrison Public School in

Georgetown learned about when Speaking of Wildlife..., a wildlife conservation and endangered species education group came to the school Thursday. Parent Kay Mansfield also got a close look at the cougar while conservationist Dave LeNobel looks on. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

Ratepayers groups approached for town plan input

Halton Hills planning staff has targeted several ratepayer groups to help them in developing a comprehensive plan on how Georgetown and Acton should be developed.

Town planner Bruce MacLean said Monday invitations have been sent out to several groups such as Residents Active in Development Decisions (RAIDD), the Halton Hills Building Association, Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce and the Georgetown and Acton Business Improvement area groups to participate in the Town Urban Area Study Review Steering Committee.

The study will focus on the potential commercial and housing growth in the Georgetown and Acton urban areas. As part of the study, said Mr. MacLean, locations for medium and high density housing will be considered as will the issue of establishing

more affordable housing in accordance with the province's affordable housing policy.

The province's housing policy requires communities to have 25 per cent of new housing as affordable.

The study will also focus on the Town's commercial sector and whether there is sufficient land for plant expansions, as well as indentifying new locations within Halton Hills where new companies could locate, said Mr. MacLean.

He explained the Steering Committee will work with Town staff and the Town's consultant, Toronto based Walker, Wright, Young, Associates on the \$99,550 project. The province is funding 85 per cent of the project's cost while the Town is covering the remaining 15 per cent.

Wendy Knott, a consultant for

the planning firm, said Monday the study will work on the assumption the Town's water and sewage capacity can only handle a maximum of 60,000 people. She stressed nothing in the study will reflect the Town's growth potential should a pipe be built to bring water into Halton Hills from Lake Ontario.

Mr. MacLean said the Town has targeted ratepayer groups to join the Steering Committee because several public information meetings for the general public concerning the study's direction will be held. He predicts the study will be completed by year's end.

Mr. MacLean urges groups wanting to participate in the Steering Committee, contact the Town Planning Department by Friday by phoning 873-2600. After the May 10 deadline the committee will be officially formed.



Cash for Cancer

The Glenlea Beauty Salon in Acton hosted a cut-a-thon last month where 50 per cent of all cuts, perms, colors and streaks was set aside to be donated to the Acton Cancer Society. Accepting a \$212.50 cheque from salon owner Bev Swartz (right) and stylist Brenda Noseworthy (standing, left) is president of the Acton Cancer Society, Cathy Gerrow (seated) with her son Michael. (Herald photo)

An Inside Look

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Bogus bills

Halton Regional Police in Burlington have noticed an increase in the amount of counterfeit United States currency in circulation in Burlington.

Retail merchants are advised to be particularly vigilant when accepting U.S. banknotes, particularly in the twenty and one hundred dollar denominations. Area restaurants, convenience stores, and mall merchants have been recently victimized. The bills are of good quality, and generally are of the 1985 series.

The bills in question are part of a counterfeit series well established in the north eastern U.S. Serial numbers vary considerably, and with modern printing methods, duplicate serial numbers on counterfeit bills is no longer a reliable indicator. The bills are appearing randomly, and do not appear to be passed by any particular suspects.

Merchants who are suspicious of the validity of foreign banknotes should not be reluctant to ask for identification or direct the customer to a financial institution to exchange their funds.