

Round, round we go: Use of roundabouts requires some education

Morning 'chaos' prompts councillors to keep two crossing guards on duty at Danby Rd. roundabout

By **CYNTHIA GAMBLE**
Staff Writer

Local students are learning more than the ABCs at school. They're also learning how to navigate a roundabout.

Roundabouts, while common in Europe, are become the latest North American engineering tool to keep traffic flowing safely in communities. They are modern traffic circles in which vehicles slow down and move in a counter-clockwise direction around a centre island, eliminating the need for stopping or making left turns, and lowering vehicle noise and emissions.

Halton Hills's first two roundabouts are located in Georgetown South on Danby Rd., both at Barber Dr. intersections.

North American statistics, compiled in a Transport Canada report, so far have shown roundabouts reduce car crashes and increase safety for pedestrians. But for walkers and drivers unfamiliar with roundabouts in Halton Hills they have led to confusion and safety issues.

It was these issues that prompted Halton Hills Council to nix a staff recommendation to eliminate one crossing guard from the duo that patrols the Danby Rd. roundabout near Gardiner Public School during the school morning and afternoon opening and closing times.

The two Town-paid crossing guards



Halton Hills crossing guard Doug Tucker escorts some students across the street at the Danby St. roundabout. Town council recently rebuffed a staff recommendation to eliminate one of the two crossing guards at the roundabout, citing safety concerns.

Photo by Ted Brown

have been in place after Halton District School Board decided to save money to stop busing students in the area last spring. But earlier this year, Town staff said the Town could save \$7,100 if only one guard patrolled the roundabout.

Ward 4 Councillor John Duncan made a motion during budget discussions to reject that move.

"Safety far outweighs the numbers here," he said.

Before advocating the additional crossing guard, Duncan said he, Mayor Rick Bonnette and his Ward 4 mates, Councillor Bob Inglis and Councillor Jane Fogal, spent some time observing the roundabout during school crossing times.

"We did feel there is a great deal of concern over the safety of the children at that roundabout and the sightlines—

not being able to observe," said Duncan. "Because of the volume of traffic, kids aren't going to be totally responsible crossing and they can't be seen by the crossing guard in many cases."

Inglis was more blunt, recalling the scene at the roundabout during time just before school starting and ending times as "15 minutes of chaos."

Fogal said the children were not just going to the nearby Gardiner School, but were going off in other directions as well, and "for one

crossing guard to handle it was clearly impossible."

Fogal criticized the drivers. "The time it got dangerous was about 15 minutes before school started and everyone was in a hurry driving and it got kind of wild at that point."

Bonnette said the Town had received many letters and emails from parents concerned about the roundabout's safety.

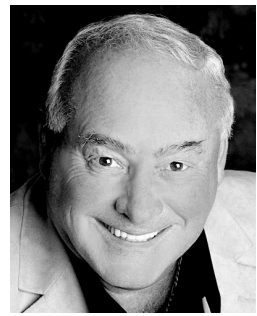
"And the morning I was there parents stopped by to express their concerns," he said.

Director of Infrastructure Services Chris Mills said the Town staff and the schools has been proactively educating the students about the roundabouts during the Walking School Bus or the Safe Routes to School programs.

"Staff monitor on an ongoing basis all the Town's crossing guards locations, but in particularly this area which is in south Georgetown which is going through a lot of growth," said Mills. "So we do keep an eye on operations at those locations to see any changes or modifications are required to ensure the safety of the children is preserved."

Mills says there are some operational advantages and disadvantages to roundabouts, and his department will be studying this situation for future recommendations on where they should be installed and where not.

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JOHN DUNCAN

Congratulations Daniela

On placing 1st in your first dance competition in Michigan.

We are very proud of you.

A special thanks to Rhonda for all her love and support.

Love Mommy,
Daddy, Junior,
Adrianna & Abuelitos

Bud and Joyce Hardman are please to announce the engagement of their son Terry to Carissa Rissman of Mississauga.

There will be an engagement party held on Saturday May 8th in Burlington. Come and help them celebrate!

Please call Wendy at 416-433-5015 or email wmortimer@cogeco.ca for more information.

CONGRATS TERRY AND CARISSA!!

Congratulations Christine of ANNA CHRISTINE'S

for hair

on **20** very successful years in business.

What a great achievement!

We are very proud of you.

With love from all of your family & good friends

Many thanks to all her loyal customers.

Brian & Cheryl Cotter are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter

Cassandra Lynn to Ryan Hurren

son of Ken Hurren and the late Azelle Hurren.

Wedding to take place
September 2010