



Field of Dreams breaks ground

Although work has been underway for months at the Field of Dreams construction site at Georgetown District High School, many of the players assembled for an official groundbreaking to kick off the project. On hand to turn the first spade of dirt were (from left) Mike Wildfong, Halton District School Board (HDSB) Project Lead; Gerry Cullen, HDSB superintendent; Wayne Joudrie, HDSB director; Ian Troop, Field of Dreams chair; Lois Fraser, Georgetown Kiwanis; Warren Harris, Town of Halton Hills; Gillian Tuck Kutarna, HDSB Trustee; Mark Zonneveld, HDSB superintendent; Rick Bonnette, Mayor of Halton Hills; Jim Kardash, Halton Hills Football; Alice Strachan, Georgetown Soccer; Judy Showers, Trillium Foundation and Mag Gardner, principal, Georgetown District High School.

Photo by Ted Brown

Police to run camp for at-risk youth

By **TIM WHITNELL**
Metroland Media Group

Halton Regional Police has resurrected a summer camp to try to keep at-risk youth off the streets and create a better relationship between them and law enforcement.

M.Y. Camp, which stands for Mentoring Youth Camp, is a weekday camp for 80 selected pre-teens in Halton who are in Grades 7 and 8.

Police say the goal of the week-long camps is to reduce criminal and anti-social behaviour in youth through education, mentoring and relationship building with police and the community.

The camp will be held at two sites. The south Halton camp is set for St. Gabriel elementary school in Burlington this week (July 12-16) while the north Halton location will be at St. Catherine of Alexandria School in Georgetown from July 19-23. There will be 40 youths at each location from Monday to Friday between 8 a.m.-4 p.m. daily.

Busing is provided to the 'campers'. There is no cost to attend the camp. It is being financed by donations of \$5,000 each from the Halton Safety Council and Halton police, \$2,000 from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) board of directors and \$1,000 from a local McDonald's restaurant operator.

"It's for children who may not normally see an opportunity to go to a camp," said Sgt. Craig Platt, a member of Halton police's Community Policing unit and a supervising co-ordinator of the camp.

Selection of the 80 M.Y. Camp participants was finalized in late June. Grades 7 and 8 students were recommended by principals, the Our Kids Network and the Children's Aid Society. Also, information packages were sent home to parents via the students.

Platt said the camp has to be "fun and engaging" for pre-teens and new teens to maintain their interest. He said there will be some lessons provided at the camp along with guest speakers, a tour of police facilities and a community service component such as garbage and graffiti clean-up.

Each camp has seven Halton police educational service officers, a police officer supervisor and six Youth In Policing Initiative (YIPI) workers aged 14-17 who must live in Halton and be returning to school in the fall. The latter assist the officers at the camp and work with the police service for eight weeks during the summer. They are paid through the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

Halton Const. Bruce Hasenbacher, who liaises between the police and the community by working with the administrators and students at 18 schools in Halton, said the camp can develop the leadership potential of youth where they can take the experiences and confidence earned at the camp back to the school and community to share with their peers.

Hasenbacher also believes M.Y. Camp can break down barriers that exist between youth and police such as negative portrayals of law enforcement in popular rap music.

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