

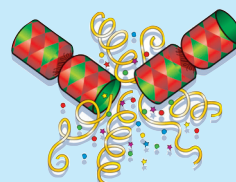
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BLUE FINS DOMINATE

The host Halton Hills Blue Fins won the annual Gord Bassett meet

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Independent & Free Press will be closed Friday, Dec. 31 for New Year's. The office will reopen Jan. 3 at 8:30 a.m.

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THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

THURSDAY,
 December 30, 2010

Halton Hills' award-winning newspaper

Local 'rink rat' creates a frozen field of dreams

By **TED BROWN**
 Staff Writer

Tony Hayward loves to skate.

And for the past six years, the Metcalfe Court resident has made sure there's a place for him, his family and local kids to skate near their home.

That place is their backyard rink.

The 24x36 ft. rink is an impressive structure, with a near-perfect ice surface, and a goal at one end. It even has lights for night skating.

"I usually start flooding the rink the first weekend in December," says Hayward. "We lay a (swimming) pool liner in the bottom, so we don't lose the water if it turns mild."

Over the following weeks, Hayward continues to build up the thickness of the ice, until it's level and covers the entire rink with several inches of ice. At its lowest corner, the ice is about 18 inches thick.

"I use hot water from our (nearby) hot tub to flood the ice, so it keeps it quite smooth," said Hayward. "It also keeps the water in the hot tub fresh as well."

Hayward is quite at home on the ice, as he has been a regular participant in the Skate in the Dark in the Park at Gage Park in Brampton, where he has skated with a team covering 300 miles, or 1,000 laps. Unfortunately, due to other commitments, he won't be able to take part this year.

In spite of the fact the weatherman is



Tony Hayward of Metcalfe Court displays some fancy puck work as he skates on his backyard rink Wednesday. The rink is a fixture local kids enjoy on a regular basis. Photos by Ted Brown



forecasting mild weather over New Year's, Hayward is not concerned. With the thickness of the ice in his rink, it usually takes until the end

of April or first of May for it to disappear, so a mild spell in January isn't going to make a dent in his rink.

Roads a priority for 2011

By **CHRISTINA COMMISSO**
 Metroland Media Group

Transportation is Halton's top priority for the next decade, according to the Region's 2011 business plan.

Nine out of the top 10 capital expenditures for the next year are road-widening projects, and that trend is expected to continue to 2020.

At the top of the 2011 list is the widening of James Snow Parkway in Milton at \$29.4 million, followed by the widening of Burnhamthorpe Road in Oakville at \$23.2 million.

The widenings of Trafalgar Road and Winston Churchill Boulevard in Halton Hills, Dundas Street and Ninth Line in Oakville, and Regional Road 25, Steeles Avenue and Tremaine Road in Milton also make the list as 2011's big-ticket items.

Combined, the roadwork accounts for \$112.8 million, more than half of Halton's \$214.4 million capital budget.

Regional council took a glimpse at the budget summary last Wednesday, which showed

See **ROADWORK**, pg. 3



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