

# High schools get okay to change start times

By **DOMINIK KUREK**  
*Metroland Media Group*

Would your teenager's grades improve in high school if they could sleep in an extra hour?

Oakville Trustee Kelly Amos thinks so and recently, the Halton District School Board approved a motion she introduced to allow schools to move back their start times.

But before any teens start looking forward catching some extra shut-eye on school days, the board also approved starting classes earlier.

"Everyone knows they (students) experience biological change when they go through puberty and their sleep and wake times are different. They need an increasing amount of sleep," said Amos. "Research has shown, children need up to 9.5 hours of sleep every night."

Amos said students have shown improved grades in high schools with later start times.

Her original motion asked for a procedure to allow schools to introduce later start times. Trustees amended her motion, however, to also allow high schools to schedule an earlier start to the school day.

Changing start times is not a simple process. It requires consultation with parents, as well as input from students and staff at the school. The school council and trustee must be notified and an assessment of the impact on transportation costs must be made.

Director of Education David Euale said the transportation consortium could charge the school board a fee for conducting an impact assessment, but such fees have not been charged to the board in the past.

If there were a cost impact on transportation, school trustees would have the final approval on the time change.

Student trustee Jason Earl said the majority of the board's student senate would not change the start times. He said because of extra-curricular activities before and after school, everything would just shift to later in the day and the students would just go to bed later. However, he added, having this procedure in place would allow flexibility on when students become involved in school, such as some extra-curricular programs could begin before school start time.

Amos reiterated this is not a mandate for high schools to push their start times to a later hour, but it will let them know that the schools have the option to do so.

# Reading material

Hayden Mills, 10, with grandma Nancy Downes from Georgetown, checks out some of the books available at the recent Canadian Federation of University Women's book sale held at Christ the King Secondary School.



Photo by Calvin Dyke



## ... Lend Me Your Ears

By **Cory Soal**  
R.H.A.D.

You have probably heard recently, that legislation has been passed that will target drivers using cell phones while operating a motor vehicle. We all know that distractions are a dangerous combination and common part of driving on today's congested roadways. Any way to lessen the number of distractions faced daily would greatly help one to focus on the task at hand, and get on with their day. At the Georgetown Hearing Clinic, we do not condone the use of cell phones while driving, but when absolutely necessary, a hands free device, such as a speaker phone, line Onstar™ or a bluetooth connected earpiece can be very useful and help reduce distraction - not to mention allow the driver the use of both hands.

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# Coyotes very adaptable: MNR

Continued from pg. 1

They had another coyote encounter Friday. While walking with a friend and Guinness in the ravine about 10:30 a.m. a "red coyote came charging out of the trees at us."

The coyote ran off when she shook the can of coins she was carrying as a deterrent at the animal.

Porter said she has respect for the coyotes and understands their right to live in the ravine, but believed it was at dawn and dusk when they were active.

"They're very brazen, being very bold," said Porter. She's worried smaller dogs might not get off as lucky as her larger dog did. She's decided to stop walking Guinness in the ravine for a while.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) spokesperson Jolanta Kowalski said they don't track the coyote population so don't know if there's been an increase in their numbers.

She suspects the coyotes are more visible now because they are more active during mating season (the spring).

"Our advice is always the same," said Kowalski. "They're really adaptable animals. The key is learning to live with them."

She said they figure out where to get

food, then come back for more.

Kowalski said it was unusual for the coyotes to come after a dog the size of Guinness and she's concerned that maybe someone in the area is feeding them— by accident or on purpose- resulting in their fearlessness.

She said the coyotes could be eating a dog's food in the area that's left outside, or seed from a bird feeder.

"Now is a good time for them to go back to where they should be, which they will if they don't find food sources. They will go after easy food, if the food disappears, they will move on."

She said attacks on humans are incredibly rare, but the coyotes should be considered potentially dangerous.

## Tips to protect your pets

The MNR issues the following tips to pet owners:

- Keep all pets on leashes or confined to a yard
- Install proper fencing
- Keep animals inside at night
- Keep cats inside, don't let them roam from home
- Keep your dog on a leash at all times, even in the yard if its not fenced
- Spay or neuter dogs. Coyotes are attracted and can mate with dogs.

## Tooth Chatter



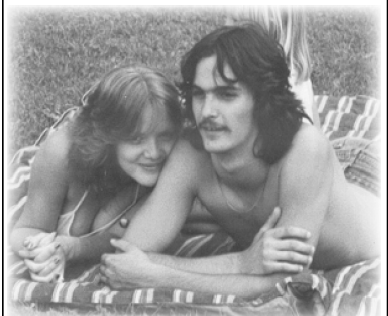
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