



Cross-country skiing was the order of the day at Cedarvale Park earlier this week as the Maple Nursery School children attempted to "take to the slopes." The four-year-old tykes managed to do quite well on the skis - even

James MacDonald, who had a little trouble standing up at first. His classmates Dallan Crossman, Michael Mands and Stacey McCormack also braved the cold to have a little fun in the park. Photo by Stuart Johnston

Halton retains its triple 'A' credit

By MARK HOLMES

Halton Region's triple 'A' credit rating, the highest possible rating attainable from the Canadian Bond Rating Service (CBRS), has been reaffirmed, Halton Hills council learned Monday.

In a report from Regional Treasurer Joe Rinaldo municipal officials discovered Halton is one of only three Canadian regional municipalities to have such a high rating and the associated borrowing privileges.

Bestowed with a top rating Peel, Metro Toronto and Halton may borrow money at rates one-quarter to one-and-a-half per cent lower than municipalities with a slightly less prestigious 'AA' credit rating.

And, aside from financial benefits, triple 'A' credit indicates economic stability, ultimately providing incentive for commercial and industrial firms to locate here.

Halton's financial rating was determined by the Bond Service following extensive studies on the Region's demographics, industrial and commercial bases, development and growth and government spending patterns.

According to the CBRS, Halton has experienced residential growth of 126 per cent since 1961, bringing 1989 population totals to 280,000. And the region's population, generally speaking, is well off financially.

In comparison to other Canadian cities, Oakville and Burlington rank third and fifth respectively with the highest average household incomes. Compared to the Ontario average, Halton Hills residents bring home 15 per cent more income.

Regionally there were 136,990 peo-

ple employed in Halton, and it comes as no surprise that most jobs are found in Burlington and Oakville. However, the CBRS concluded that up to 25 per cent of the region's total workforce are employed outside Halton.

Halton's 10 year unemployment rate was about two per cent lower than the Ontario average and three per cent lower than the national average.

But economic prosperity does have some side effects. Since Halton is such a desirable place to live, housing prices are 25 per cent greater than the provincial average. Oakville homes are the most expensive being 50 per cent more costly than average. Halton Hills homebuyers pay about 10 per cent more than average.

High prices are something which doesn't seem to affect spending patterns - probably because of higher household incomes.

Halton is a boon to commercial enterprises which each year grab their share of an estimated \$1.85 billion, or \$6,700 per person, in retail sales.

Good planning has also led to a quality educational system consisting of 94 primary schools, 18 secondary schools, two private schools, a college and a university. Enrolment in primary, secondary and private schools stands at about 62,000.

Seniors' meeting

The Georgetown and District Seniors Association will hold a general meeting on March 6 at 1:30 p.m. in St. Andrew's United Church. The directors wish to bring the membership up to date regarding the association's progress. All seniors are welcome.

CVCA wants 8.8 per cent more money from municipalities in '89

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA) has okayed a \$7.5 million 1989 budget, and Halton Hills taxpayers are contributing the third largest chunk of that money.

Halton Hills' share will be \$44,968. Mississauga, the largest of the member municipalities, will have to contribute the largest chunk - \$954,543, which is 72 per cent of municipal levies. There are 11 member municipalities in the CVCA.

The area paying the least amount this year will be Amaranth at \$169.

Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCall-

lion says she is upset about the representation on the CVCA. She says the small northern municipalities such as Amaranth, East Garafraxa and Mono shouldn't have one representative each on the CVCA.

Instead, she says there should be only one person sitting on the CVCA to represent all of the small municipalities put together. She says Mississauga should have more representatives because it contributes the most money.

Despite the fact that spending will be up only 2.4 per cent over last year,

municipalities will be paying 8.8 per cent more. That increase was needed to make up for smaller than usual funding from the Ontario government.

As a result the authority has had to cover the increase in operating costs, including salaries for technical summer staff support. The competitive student market and low unemployment has led to that additional money being added to the budget.

The lack of students will mean activities such as stream clean-up and litter pick-up will be discontinued.

Marriage preparation course for area couples starts in April

By REV. TOM BANDY

The Georgetown ministry is introducing a marriage preparation course for the Georgetown community.

This is the first time the churches of Georgetown have co-operated in this way, and is seen by clergy here as an exciting way for churches to share their resources in support of this vital part of life.

Couples seeking to be married in most Georgetown and area churches will be asked to participate in either of two ways. Plan 'A' requires one evening a week for four weeks, from 7:30 to 10 p.m. This course begins April 5 at St. George's Anglican Church.

Plan 'B' requires a commitment to a weekend (Friday night and all day Saturday). This course will be April 14 and 15 at St. Andrew's United Church.

Glad Bryce, educator and Marriage and Family Therapist, will be the leader of both course options. She has taught at York University, and serves as a consultant in marriage-related issues for the Anglican church of Canada. Besides this professional expertise, she brings to the course her sensitivity from her own faith and family experience.

The courses will emphasize communication skills, financial planning, and goal setting techniques, as well

raise awareness of issues related to intimacy and family life. Each couple will continue to see their personal minister in charge of the wedding. But much of the background counselling preparing the couple for life together will be accomplished through these courses.

The cost of the course will be \$75 per couple. Registrations may be made through Pam Ford, 27 Stockman Crescent, L7G 1J5. Inquiries can also be made through any local minister.

The churches of Georgetown perceive this program as one more sign of their unanimous support for marriage and family life as an important priority for our society.



Planning for the upcoming marriage preparation course at a recent ministerial meeting in Georgetown were, back from left, Rev. Bert Slofstra (Christian Reform Church), Rev. Walter Ridley (Norval United Church), Rev. Bob Flindall (Norval United), Rev. Tom Bandy (St. Andrew's United Church), front from left, Rev. Margaret Murray (St. John's in Stewarttown, St. Stephen's in Hornby), Pam Ford (registrar for the course), Rev. Tom Kingston (St. George's Anglican) Rev. Angus Sutherland (Norval Presbyterian).

Historical Society to hear memories of Stewarttown

By J.M. ROWE

The oldest village in Halton Hills and the former capital of Esquesing, Stewarttown, will be the topic of discussion at the March meeting of the Esquesing Historical Society.

Don and Bob Lawson will speak of their memories of Stewarttown on Wednesday, March 8 at St. John's Anglican Church at 8 p.m. St. John's stands at the corner of Trafalgar Road and 15 Sideroad.

The first village to be established in the Township was originally called Esquesing and later renamed Stewarttown after John Stewart, the tanner, and his brother Duncan, the miller. James Young and William Clay ran the mills after the Stewarts until the Lawson family took over about 1876. They sold in 1962 and the mills were destroyed by fire 10 years later.

When the Stewart brothers established here, the prospects for the village looked terrific. William Appelbe ran the shop at 15 Sideroad, with an inn and school opposite. In the valley were the tannery, mills, another shop and inn and services like shoemaker, blacksmith, and harness maker.

The first post office moved here about 1845. In 1850, Stewarttown became the seat of the Esquesing Township Council. The ratepayers usually met here anyway, from 1821. Trafalgar Road, the most important road in the area, was planked in 1850 all the way from the lakeshore. The Esquesing Agricultural Society had long held their annual "Fall Fair" here and the annual fourth of June "training day" for this district was held here for every male aged 18-45 who could bear arms.

However the village was destined to remain a small Esquesing backwater. In 1856 the first railway train ran through Georgetown and Acton, putting them on the principal transportation route. The post office closed in 1918. Finally Township Council moved north of the village in 1963 and the creation of Halton Hills in 1974 removed any vestige of official importance from Stewarttown. Even the main road by-passed the village in 1974.

However all of these changes have produced a Stewarttown which maintains its identity. The fact that it is small and off the main road has attracted residents looking for a quiet home. Nevertheless, the glorious past is never forgotten. Come and share its history with the Esquesing Historical Society on March 8.

