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Compromise reached on well water dispute

By **STUART JOHNSTON**
Staff writer

A compromise has tentatively been reached to provide a Milton farm sufficient water after the owners claim Halton's new neighboring landfill site has seriously affected the quality of their well.

Ray and Annette Winter, owners of Winsum Farms on Hwy. 25, immediately south of the almost-completed regional landfill in Milton, have been arguing since last September that the construction next door has affected the quality of their water.

The Winters have repeatedly asked Halton officials to help solve their problem, but they in turn have argued that there is no evidence to support their charge.

In late May, and again Wednesday, the frustrated couple approached regional councillors, demanding to know what can, or will, be done about their rapidly-deteriorating water quality.

The Winters explained that they have two wells, one for their home, while the other is used in their dairy operation. They own about 60 head of cattle.

They insisted that the well had operated without a hitch for four years, but it wasn't until Halton began pumping water from the landfill site last fall that the problems started occurring.

They gave councillors several jars of water taken from their well late last week, which Ray Winter referred to as "chocolate milk." The jars contained brown, murky water, which they "wouldn't even use for the cattle," he added.

Due to the condition of the water, regional chairman Pete Pomeroy arranged for a 4,000 gallon tanker to be hooked into their home last week on a temporary basis.

Careful to avoid words like "fault," "responsibility" and "liability," Pomeroy successfully urged his colleagues to support his idea that a mutually chosen "expert" be hired, at the expense of the region, to conduct detailed studies of the Winter's wells.

In the meantime, the region will continue to supply water to the Winters "on an emergency basis" until a solution to their problem is found, providing that the couple agree that Halton is not admitting any liability for the situation at this time.

"If the region agrees to participate financially in the well tests, we must cast aside any legal liability on either side to try and resolve this problem," Pomeroy said. "We must look at the evidence — it appears the situation from last year hasn't changed but you're saying there have been major changes — but, we should go in and find out what's really happening if we can....Once we do that, then we can make recommendations on how to fix it."

Pomeroy suggested that a possible solution, depending on the results of the tests, could be to install a holding tank on the Winter's property. He said in an interview that Milton councillor Barry Lee may have "hit the nail on the head" with his suggestion that the large volume of water needed for the cattle may have drained the well, and now all the couple is drawing up is the silt lying at the bottom.

"They have a shallow lense — it's not drawing from an aquifer — so that might be the problem," he said. "But, we'll just have to wait and see."

Burlington's Bob Brechin sympathized with the Winter's plight, noting that he would probably blame the region if he were in a similar situation, but asked if the couple are prepared to accept the outcome of the well tests, regardless of what they may discover.

"Yes, I'm prepared to accept it, because I know what we had before this started, and it's garbage what we're getting now," Ray Winter said.

In an interview following the decision, Annette Winter admitted that although she is relieved that the region is taking steps to help solve their dilemma, she is angry that it has "done nothing for the past six months."

Hey, keep the noise down!

Halton Hills bylaw prohibits the making of unusual noises likely to annoy or disturb the inhabitants. Any person who is responsible for the property from which this noise is coming from will be held responsible and could receive a fine of up to \$2,000 for each offence.

Should the bylaw not provide sufficient deterrence, police may

arrest the responsible person and charge him/her for the criminal offence of mischief, thus causing the person to have a criminal record. Futher, police may enter the premise and seize property which is being used to cause the noise (i.e. stereo equipment). The penalty for mischief includes up to five years imprisonment.

Propeller stolen

A propeller was reported missing from a boat on Maple Ave. in Georgetown Monday. The propeller is valued at \$600.

\$16 stolen from 7 year old

Sixteen dollars was stolen from the bedroom of a 7 year old in a break and enter at an apartment on Carruthers Rd. in Georgetown Tuesday. A woman convinced someone in the building to unlock the door. Once inside, she took some clothing and the money. Police have a suspect in the incident.

Jewelry, bike stolen

A house on 32 Sideroad near the Sixth Line was broken into during the day Tuesday. The front door was kicked open to gain entry, police said. A jewelry box containing women's jewelry and a man's wedding ring worth \$600 was taken from the living room, along with a color television and a VCR. A yellow bike, worth \$1,500, was taken as well, police said.

Car stereo stolen

A stereo was stolen from a car parked in the driveway overnight at Marilyn Cres. residence Thursday, July 2. The stereo was valued at \$300.

Goat missing

A goat lawn ornament was taken from the front lawn of an Elgin St. Georgetown residence Tuesday evening. It was a grey-cream color with a wavy texture

Police Blotter

and curling horns, police said.

Shower curtain slashed

The only evidence of a break-in at a Carruthers Rd. residence Wednesday was a slashed shower curtain, police said. There were no signs of forced entry and nothing was taken from the residence, but the shower curtain was cut in half horizontally with a sharp object.

Dishes dispute

Police were called to a domestic dispute in Georgetown between a father and son Tuesday. The argument broke out when the son refused to do the dishes. Both men reacted favorably when police suggested agencies which could help them with long-standing problems.

Acton youths charged

Two Acton youths, aged 14 and 15, were charged with break, enter and theft Wednesday. Police believe the two broke into a residence on Holmesway Place in Acton sometime between July 2 and 5. A sliding glass window was removed, then the back door of the house was unlocked. A safe was found in the basement and about \$400 in bills and change was removed, police said. One of the youths was also charged with breach of probation.



Julie Bishop of Georgetown weighs in with Miss Piggy at the annual garage sale for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation held in June. The sale which included a barbecue and face painting, all in a carnival atmosphere attracted many and raised \$1,900 to help find a cure for the disease.

Photo by BARB STEPHENS

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