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By JANET BAINE
Staff writer

The evening air is bringing a cool breeze which hints that fall is just around the corner. That means the fall fairs are about to begin, and Halton Hills residents are lucky enough to have two of the best. The fairs mean lots of work year round for two teams of volunteers, who dedicate a lot of time, energy and effort to the celebration of the harvest which brings us all back to our rural roots.

The Acton and Georgetown fairs share a common beginning. The first fair was held in Acton 147 years ago, and for some time the fair was held alternate years in Georgetown, Acton and Nassageweya, in what is now called Stewarttown, said George Henderson, president of the Acton Fair Board. But in 1912 people voted to cancel the alternating arrangements and hold the fair each year in Georgetown. A committee formed in Acton the following spring and The Free Press reported "they had been successful beyond the most sanguine expectations of the supporters of the project (to hold an Acton fair). Not only this, but the support has been so liberal that a most attractive prize list was assured." From that time on there have been two fairs in Halton Hills.

Georgetown's fair is September 10, 11, and 12 this year. It is always the weekend after Labor Day, while the Acton fair follows on its heels and is held the following weekend, Sept. 17, 18 and 19.

In the past fairs were very competitive, and farmers would get up before dawn to get their

animals ready and walk them in to the fairgrounds. Award winning recipes were closely guarded secrets. While the local fairs still maintain a rural flavor, both are holding education day for school children, so they can learn more about where their food comes from.

"This is the first year we've had a daytime education program for local kids to show them what agriculture is all about," Al Cook, president of the Georgetown Fair Board said. "It makes people aware of the importance of agriculture. We take it for granted when we go to the store that the milk, eggs and cheese are there." The Acton education day is well established and children come from as far away as Mississauga to learn about agriculture.

The fairs promise something for everyone. Along with the dairy and cattle shows, the judging of animals, grains, crafts and home baking, there's a midway and a petting zoo. The Georgetown fair also features a demolition derby and a performance by Juno award winner Cassandra Vasik. Cook says his favorite part of the show is the eight horse hitch, while Henderson says he's especially pleased to be awarding \$25 to the best decorated chocolate



Georgetown Fall Fair September 10, 11 and 12	Acton Fall Fair September 17, 18 and 19
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cake, which he personally gets to select. Admission at both fairs is very reasonable which makes it an affordable family outing. "Agriculture for the last 200 years has been the backbone of the community, maybe the country," Henderson says. Attending the fair brings urban and rural people together to celebrate their heritage.

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