

Youth group seeks higher subsidy as arena ice rates increase 15%

By STEVE LeBLANC

Special to The Independent/Free Press

Users of the town's arenas will face a 15 per cent increase in ice rental rates beginning July 1, 1994.

The increase follows a new town rate schedule which was passed by council Monday.

This could mean that two of the biggest group users, the Georgetown and Acton Minor Hockey Associations, will face annual increases of \$16,000 and \$6,000 respectively.

The revised rates would provide the town with about a \$36,000 increase in revenue over 1993. The decision stems from council's commitment to budget for a zero per cent tax increase in 1994.

Under the new schedule, 1994 hourly ice rates for prime-time and special events in season ice will jump from \$86.50 to \$99.50 before GST. With GST the new rate will be \$106.47. The non prime-time hourly rate will go from \$73.50 to \$84.58 before GST or \$90.50 with GST.

The two minor hockey organizations will still receive a 15 per cent subsidy on their ice rates.

Prior to council's decision, Acton Minor Hockey treasurer Gord Chapman stressed the impact of the changes in the proposed Municipal Rates and Service Charges are disproportionately heavy on ice users

and will have significant impact on his organization specifically.

"I am fully aware of the tax problems facing the town this year and I commend council for making the rates effective in July rather than in the middle of the current hockey season in January. However, I hope council is fully aware of the implications this increase will have on the users of the town's three arenas."

Chapman explained that the \$6,000 increase for Acton Minor Hockey will work out to roughly \$45 per child, which takes in all 140 current players.

While town superintendent of facilities Paul Stover said last week that several neighboring communities surveyed have higher ice rates, Chapman explained that most of these municipalities have much higher subsidy percentages as well.

"Cambridge, Hespeler, Guelph and Burlington all have 50 per cent subsidies for their hockey groups, Brampton has a 40 per cent subsidy and Orangeville 24 per cent."

Chapman said that raising the subsidy per cent would help offset the increased ice rates. He also proposed making the ice rates higher for the adult users.

"If council has no choice but to pass these rate increases, is it possible to implement them more slowly? A \$45 increase per player could

price some children out of the sport. Ice and children are an important part of this community."

Upon hearing about the proposed increase last week, Georgetown Minor Hockey Association (GMHA) President Hal Pells said his organization had budgeted for an increase of 5 or 6 per cent and called the new ice rates "garbage."

Mayor Russ Miller stated that if taxes are to remain at a zero per cent increase, the only alternative is to raise these user fees.

"People simply can't stand more taxes," stressed Mayor Miller.

Councillor Gail Rutherford said the increased ice rates are "a fair and adequate way" of dealing with the tax problem and that this is simply passing on the cost of arena operating fees to the users.

"I agree with subsidizing the children, but only to the point that we can afford," she added.

Councillors agreed that making the new ice rates effective in July would give the different user groups enough time to budget for the increase and that the town will be willing to meet with the different groups to address their concerns.

Along with the two minor hockey associations, the three Halton Hills arenas are also used by the Georgetown and Acton Figure Skating Clubs and various other hockey groups.

Chamber of Commerce directory distributed to Halton Hills homes

Members of Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce are busy putting together their annual directory which is to be distributed free to area residents in *The Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press* in May.

The directory provides Halton Hills and other residents with a handy, compact listing of area residents and business telephone numbers along with community information. The directory is the chamber's key communication tool to annually promote the area.

Along with newspaper distribution, the 18,500 directories are also available in Halton Hills through Welcome Wagon and Hi Neighbor programs, and at area real estate offices, the Chamber office and the Civic Centre.

Terry Jackson, manager of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, says the directory will be slightly different this year than it has been in the past.

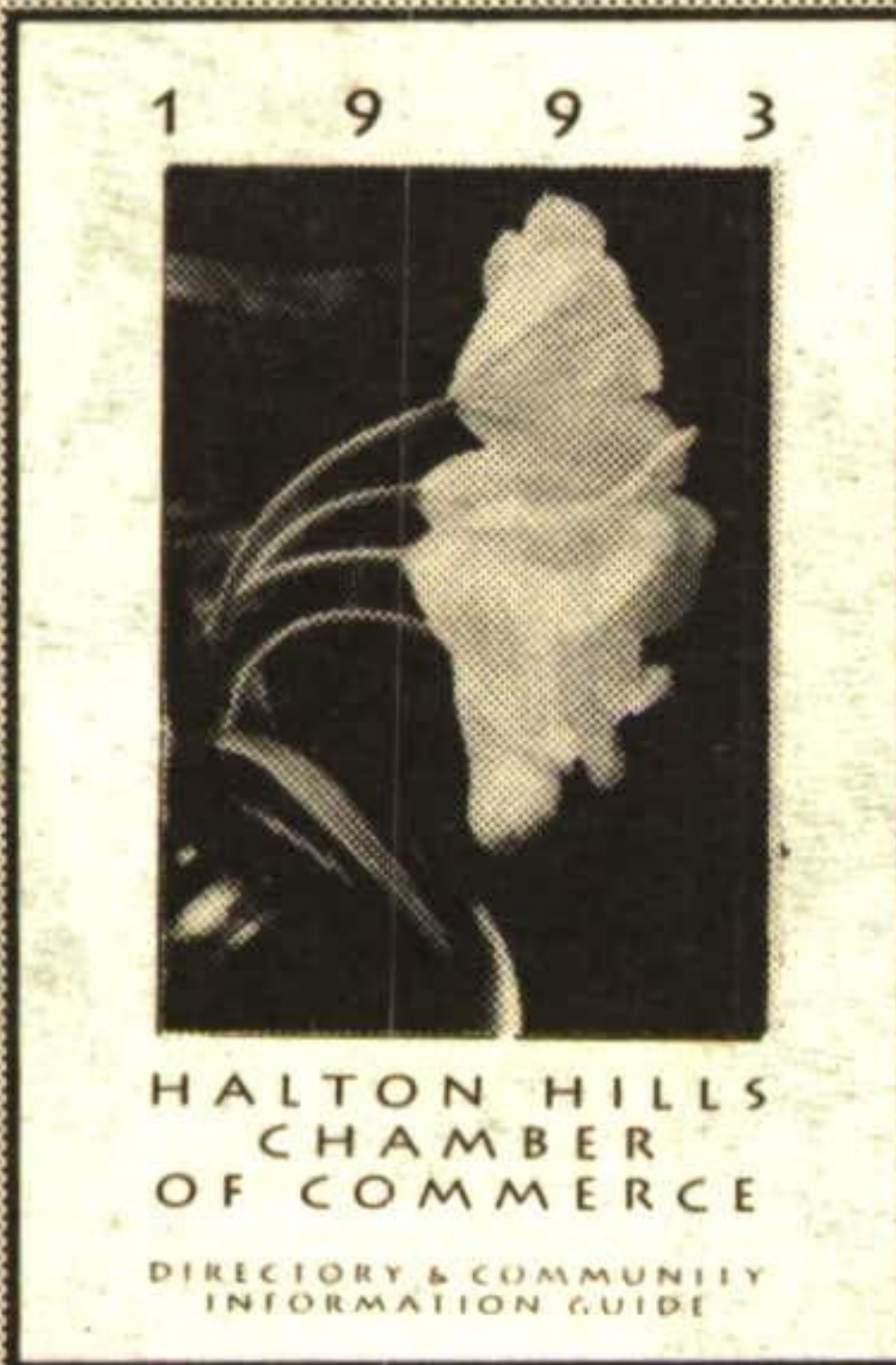
"Instead of advertising throughout the book there will be yellow pages featuring local businesses," said Jackson. "We will also be upgrading the paper in the directory and a survey will be included this year."

The survey will ask readers what they think of the directory and provide them with the opportunity to make suggestions for changes.

The directory is the Chamber's main fundraiser.

"Only Chamber members advertise in the directory and all the funds raised stay in the community," said Jackson. The Chamber book is in direct competition with a directory called the Locator, published by an Orangeville company.

Jackson said all advertising dollars from the Locator go out of town and the Chamber is urging area businesses to support its directory to ensure local ad dollars stay in town.



CORRECTION NOTICE

We wish to draw your attention to the error in our current "Give Like Santa, Save Like Scrooge" flyer.

Page 47: 09-5031-B, Portable 12V Air Compressor does not have dial-in pressure and auto shut-off feature as listed.

Page 15: 99-0166X - 2 speed food processor continuous feed attachment as shown in the illustration is not included.

In our "More Gifts For A Lot Less" flyer.

Page 22: 35mm Focus Free Cameras - the illustrations and insets for: 99-3573-4/99-3574-2 should be transposed.

Page 23: Item #2 44-2012-6 Pulsar Clock Radio does not have a cassette as listed.

Canadian Tire regrets any inconvenience this error may have caused our valued customers.

The Lube Factory

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Limit one coupon per total \$50.00 and over grocery purchase.
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