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## Canada 150 committee holds first meeting

By: Dawn Brown

The Town of Halton Hills' Canada 150 Committee held their first community meeting on Tuesday, March 15 at the Acton Arena Community Hall to hear input from the public regarding plans to celebrate the country's sesquicentennial in 2017.

Through the Canada 150 Fund, the Federal Government of Canada has made funds available and is accepting grant applications to allow Canadians to participate in local, regional and national celebrations creating a sense of national pride.

While a number of ideas are already being considered, the committee wants residents' input.

"We're back to the community to say, hey what are we missing? What do you guys want to see?" explained Jamie Smith, Cultural Centre Supervisor who led Tuesday night's meeting.

A heritage/arts interpretive trail, enhancing Canada Day community events in Glen Williams and Acton, a public art installation, and citizenship ceremony are just a few

of the possibilities being considered at this time.

"This should be a community driven event," said Smith. "It should be about what the town wants to do. It shouldn't be about what the staff wants to do or even necessarily what council specifically wants to do or individual councillors. This is about how does the community celebrate? What's of value to our residents and the tax payer?"

There are, however, some things that will not qualify for grant approval, including: lobbying and advocating, roads and buildings, keeping ongoing activities alive, fundraising/profit, and activities outside Canada.

When asked to "ball park" the kind of money necessary to develop the projects under consideration and whether they would be fully funded or require monies to be matched from other sources, Smith admitted the representative from the Canada Heritage had not been keen to give specifics.

"The sort of Cadillac (grant) would be about \$200,000 to ask for every-



**MAKING A BREAK:** The Dufferin Rural Heritage Community Centre was open during the March Break for free drop-in sports sponsored by Tim Hortons. Lots of kids took advantage of the opportunity to play indoors out of the rainy weather – Les Schmidt photo

thing," Smith said. "In terms of what we're trying to get, I would say we're aiming around that 200,000 range, and I don't know what they'll fund. In terms of how much and what percentage, this is another one where they

say you don't have to have matching funds, but it doesn't mean they're not going to look favourably on ones that do."

"I assume that whatever our final list is going into them," added committee member Beatrice Sharkey.

"There's sort of a parallel where we're searching for matching funds potentially from grants or fundraising or some other source. Because I don't assume they'll fund everything we want a hundred percent."

Smith hopes to have the grant application ready to go before council for approval in May. As well as a second community meeting on Wednesday, March 16, there will be another, possibly two more sessions, held in April.

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