

Young people carry anti-KKK sign

By Laura Salverda

Three young Halton Hills residents took the Ku Klux Klan coming to their town, personally, as they stood on the side of Guelph St. Sunday afternoon waving a banner saying 'KKK Stay Away.'

Brothers Ron and Darren Kemp of Ballinafad both "hate racism."

"I've been in a band and I've written songs about it. It really bothers me that they picked on Georgetown," said Ron.

They were joined on the side of the road by Natalie Heinz, a North Halton Association for the Developmentally Handicapped group home worker.

"We want people to know that not everyone in Georgetown is racist," she said.

"Some people are giving us the finger," said Darren. "Mainly men in their early 40's and 50's."

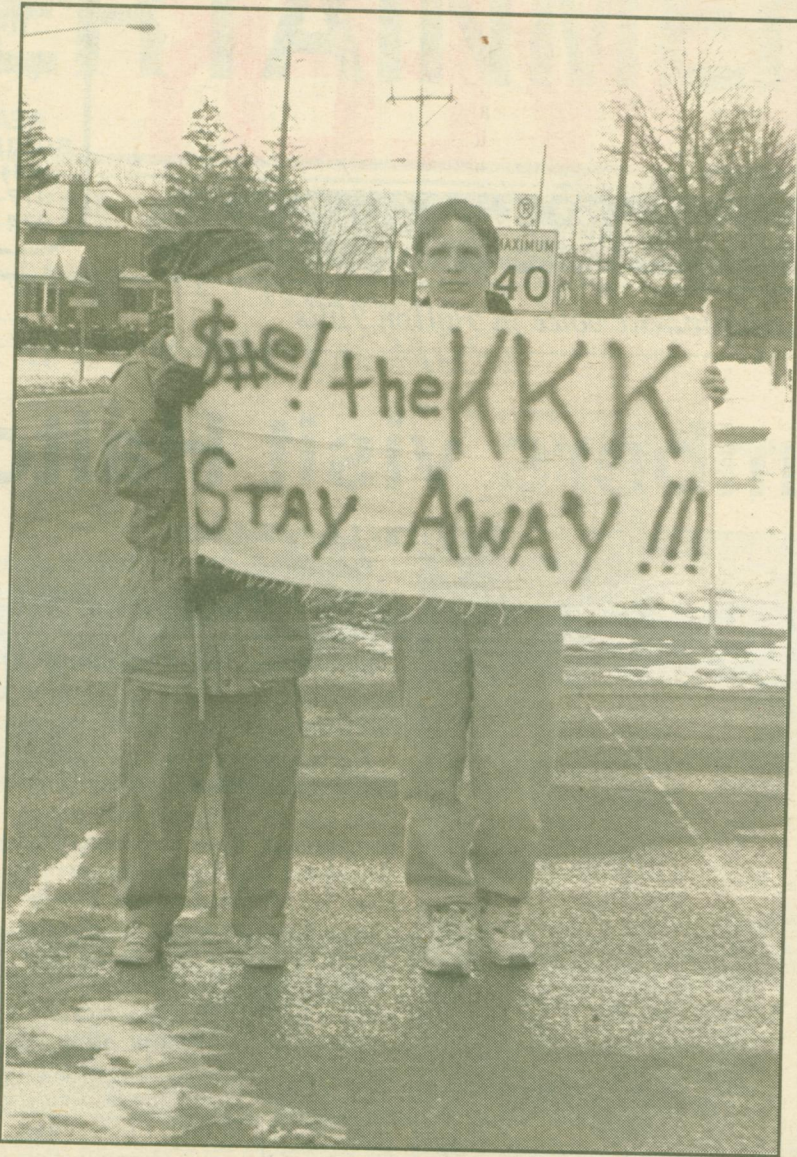
"We walked through the mall but the security guard told us to get out. We are protesting this white supremacist's message. We can work things out together," said Heinz.

"A lot of people are blaming others for the recession and no jobs. It has nothing to do with race at all," said Heinz.

"I work with a guy from Guyana," said Ron, "and he's like my Dad. His colour doesn't come into play at all. He's one of the best people I know."

"These people (Klan members) need to do a lot of soul-searching. I guess they have a right to their opinion, but then why do they need to hide behind hoods, if they're not ashamed of what they're doing. It's really sad that their children will be brought up to hate," said Heinz.

"When I tell people, at bars or



Brothers Ron and Darren Kemp reacted to Saturday's incursion by members of the KKK with a display of their own on Sunday. Motorists honked in support of the sign, but several jeered the pair.

wherever, I'm from Georgetown, they say 'Ooh, that's a redneck town.'

"A lot of people in Georgetown do have really negative attitudes

towards other races," Heinz continued. "People in Georgetown need to get educated on different cultures."

"Pure rage" prompted reaction to KKK's visit

Continued from page 1

"They are just so scary," said one woman who, in fear of retaliation, refused to be identified, a sentiment echoed by many.

"I was so nervous. They had me all jittery," said another woman.

"They went right by the window here; the leader with the KKK on the back of his hood and all the others following along behind. I was so scared."

In an interview Monday, Kirkpatrick said she was still angry over the event and with the reaction of some people on the street corner.

"I had full intentions of taking a more diplomatic approach," Kirkpatrick said. "But, when I saw them it was pure rage and I did not have enough time to generate support from spectators. I had two minutes to get these people out of town and give them the message that we don't want them here. Some people said my language was offensive, it was my way of being loud and angry."

"I don't want to offend anyone...there are a lot of good people here, but there is obviously a reason why they came to Georgetown," she said. "The people (on the street) were talking to them and taking their pamphlets. I asked them for one and they wouldn't give me one. They said they were all gone. It just makes me furious. The people were stopping their cars and taking the pamphlets."

Other reaction on the street Saturday was mixed.

Georgetown resident, Ron Deforest, was in the laundromat on Mill St. when he saw the group.

"I just saw them walking down here and I thought 'this is not good'. I don't go for any of that crap," Deforest said.

Connie Karlson was also spending a normal Saturday morning in the laundromat, and had tried to normalize the sight on the corner.

"I thought it was a movie at first. With all those boys in the hoods and the cruisers and cops all over. I wondered who the famous actor was we had in town, this time," she said, referring to the previous occasions when downtown Georgetown has been featured in films.

"I did think it was a little cold, though," Karlson added, with a grin, "to be filming a scene set in South Alabama."

One man on Main St. said he had a good chuckle about the whole thing and went on his way, while another accused the media of perpetrating the whole affair by encouraging the Klan with publicity.

Brenda Snow, an employee of a downtown business, said she saw them when they were standing on all four corners.

"Then they started walking out into the middle of the road, handing out pamphlets and stopping cars. People were waving them off."

"It's kind of creepy. They had this big cardboard sign with their address on Main St. in Brampton. I mean, I've lived in Georgetown all of my life, I'm 20, and I found this really disgusting. It's just a small community and no one really bothers people here," Snow said.

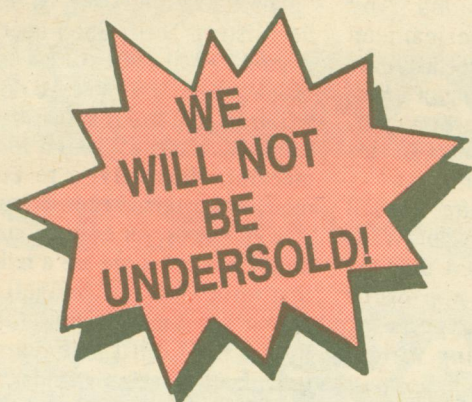
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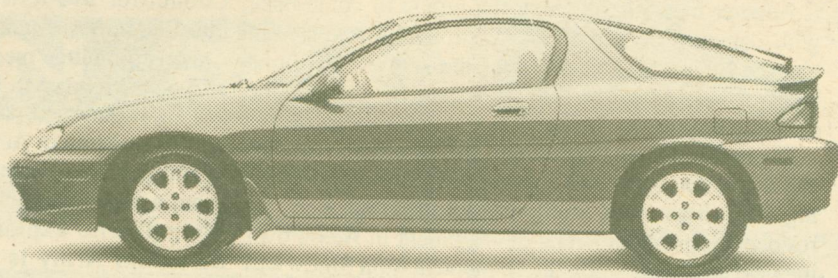
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