

Seniors' crusade continues

By Wendy Long

A meeting of the Georgetown and District Seniors Association Wednesday afternoon drew over 130 local seniors to vote on a temporary location for a seniors recreation centre.

Association president Les Mellish addressed the crowd at Holy Cross Church's parish hall, along with executive members vice president Ross Bethel, treasurer Grant Greenaway and secretary Mabel Mellish.

"We're asking for some guidance on the direction you wish us to take," Mellish said.

The Georgetown and District Seniors Association has been in existence since 1988 as a fundraising and lobbying force pushing for a seniors centre. Currently Halton Hills is the only municipality in Halton that doesn't offer a facility of this kind for its elderly.

In Acton, the old fire station on Bower Avenue has been approved as a future seniors centre, but now funding has obstructed the needed

renovations.

Georgetown and area seniors, an estimated 4800 over the age of 55, continue to crusade for a temporary location until a permanent centre can be established. The town's long-range capital forecast includes a permanent centre with the twinning of the Alcott Arena in 1999, based on financial resources at the time.

Town councillors Rob Heaton, Kathy Gastle, Ron Chatten and Al Cook were in attendance at the meeting and listened again as

five possible locations were presented. (Earlier in February the seniors made this presentation to all of town council.) The advantages and disadvantages of each location were outlined objectively by Bethel to the attentive audience.

Possible locations given were the upstairs of the Alcott Arena, accessible only by a flight of 21 steps, the Dominion Gardens once renovated, the upstairs of the Georgetown Legion, St. George's church and Sacre Coeur church.

The first vote included all five locations. Dominion Gardens was the overwhelming favorite with 112 votes. Respectively, the Legion received 7, St. George's received 5, Alcott Arena 1 and Sacre Coeur 0. Seven ballots were spoiled.

Another vote was then taken to rule out bias and strengthen the seniors vote before council. The Dominion Gardens choice was withdrawn, leaving the other locations and adding a "none of the above" category.

"None of the above" received 87 votes, the Legion 23, St. George's 11, Alcott Arena 4 and Sacre Coeur 1.

The estimated cost of a temporary facility, and in particular the Dominion Gardens location, is \$60,000 per year. This figure would be offset by the seniors' membership fees and continued fundraising.

It should be noted that capital expenditures in the creation of the Dominion location would be

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Les Mellish, president of the Georgetown and District Seniors Association, addressed a crowd of local seniors Wednesday at Holy Cross parish hall regarding the location of a temporary seniors recreation facility.

Halton Hills This

WEEKEND

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Halton Regional policeman faces obstruction charges

By Dianne Cornish

A message recorded eight months ago on Councillor Pam Johnston's telephone answering machine will be included in evidence next month when a Halton Regional policeman faces charges of attempting to obstruct justice. Charged Thursday was Sergeant Rod Wilson, 46, of Burlington.

The charge relates to events which occurred last May, when Halton Hills councillor Pam Johnston, who also sits on regional council, received an anonymous

letter. The same letter was also received by Burlington and regional councillor Barry Quinn, a member of Halton's Police Services Board.

The letter alleged a cover-up by the administration of Halton Regional Police Service concerning a domestic assault that occurred in 1983. The allegations were the subject of an internal investigation conducted by the OPP. The investigation concluded in June that there was no wrongdoing by police administration.

On June 11 of last year, Councillor Johnston received a message on the telephone answering machine at her Halton Hills home. The taped message was turned over to Halton Regional Police Service and an investigation was conducted by the Professional Standards Bureau. As a result, a Police Services Act charge of discreditable conduct was laid against Sgt. Wilson.

A press release issued Thursday morning by Sgt. Joe Martin, media relations officer for Halton police, said: "The results of the internal investigation into the matter were

turned over to the Regional Director of Crown Attorneys, Mr. L.J. McGuigan, Q.C. The content of the recorded telephone conversation led to a charge (attempting to obstruct justice) being laid under the Criminal Code of Canada."

Responding to questions during a telephone interview about the status of Sgt. Wilson as a result of the criminal charge, Sgt. Martin replied, "He booked off sick yesterday (Wednesday)." Asked if Halton Regional Police has any policy such as suspension with or without pay for members of the force facing criminal charges, Martin said any such action is determined by Police Chief W.I. James Harding. He repeated that Sgt. Wilson is booked off sick.

On the OPP probe into cover-up allegations, he said the author of the letter "has never been discovered" and the investigation concluded that the letter's content wasn't factual.

Martin also said that an internal tribunal investigating the charge of discreditable conduct hasn't yet made a decision and, in light of Thursday's charge, has decided to

apply to the Crown Attorney's office for a stay of proceedings until the criminal charges have been heard.

Sgt. Wilson will appear in Milton provincial court at 9:30 a.m.,

March 22, to answer the charges.

Contacted Thursday afternoon by Halton Hills This Week and asked to comment on the recent development, Councillor Johnston said, "I

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Beier gets 13 years

The man who robbed Georgetown's Guelphview Square Royal Bank on October 31, 1991 was sentenced last week in Brampton court to 13 years in prison.

Herman Beier, 52, pleaded guilty to 31 charges including bank robbery and attempted murder. He originally faced 118 charges.

Beier robbed the Georgetown bank at 9:05 a.m. that Halloween day, departing with almost \$14,000 after detonating a smoke grenade to disguise his exit. He made his way to a bank in Rockwood, robbed it, and then drove on (in a stolen car) to Guelph to rob yet another bank.

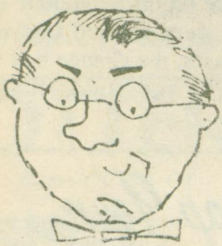
In Guelph police caught on to Beier and a high-speed police chase began.

During the chase Beier would stop his car intermittently to stand and shoot at police. The chase took Beier north on Highway 6 and along backroads to an area north of Brampton. Beier's car was forced into a ditch and Beier was wounded. The final shootout was videotaped from an overhead OPP helicopter.

Beier's list of bank robberies is impressive. Georgetown turned out to be one of his last stops. The Alliston man first robbed an Orangeville credit union in April 1991, followed by a six month spree at banks in Nobleton, Beeton, outer Orillia, and eventually on to Georgetown, Rockwood and Guelph.

As well as the 13 year sentence, Beier is prohibited from owning firearms for life.

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