

## Chamber of Commerce supports Acton development

By Oksana Buhel

Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce (HHCC) president Bob Malcolmson emphatically stated to Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) members, solicitors for Acton East developers, regional and town staff, and members of the public at the OMB meeting Tuesday at the Halton Hills Civic Centre, lack of development in Acton will destroy small

business.

The Halton Hills OMB meetings presently ongoing are looking into future development in Acton.

"Now is the time for growth," he insisted. "Any delays in development will kill the very backbone of Canada - small business."

HHCC has 400 members who employ approximately 8,000 people. This represents roughly 25 per cent of

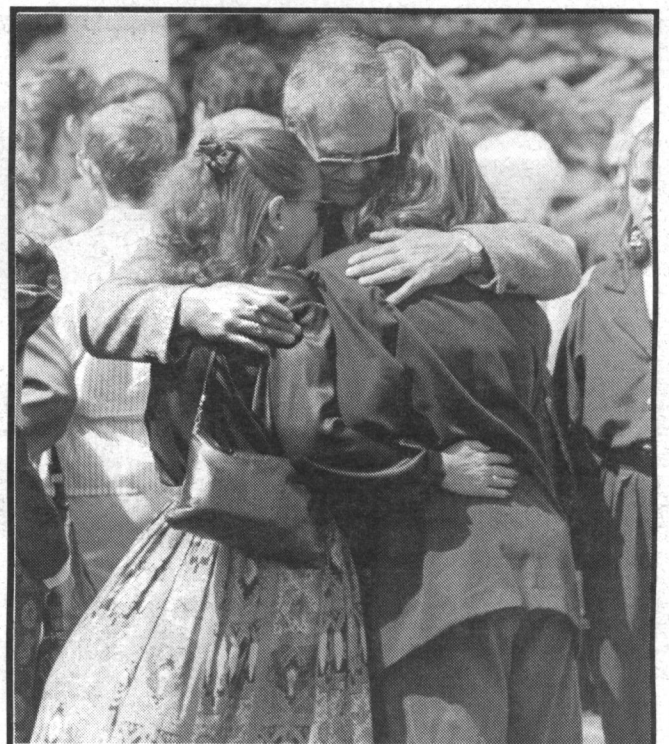
the population of Halton Hills. According to Malcolmson, these people shared the same opinion - "We need development to sustain business."

Malcolmson pointed out 43 businesses had closed in Halton Hills during the past year, and deplored the "loss of Acton's viable shopping district over the past 10-to-15 years." He insisted Acton was long overdue for

development, contrasting it to the rapid development of Georgetown.

He listed an improved tax base, more jobs, community support and a sense of pride, as reasons small businesses are necessary in Acton, adding these businesses will only flourish through development. "Development means increased population, improved job prospects for the residents of our community and the possibility that our children may be able to grow up and work and live in Halton Hills."

Malcolmson ended by asking all individuals involved with the OMB to carefully consider the effect on small business their decision would make. "The community is our livelihood," he stated.



Arthur Bull is consoled by friends following the funeral service for his only remaining daughter, Harmony, Thursday, who was found dead in her bed at home in Georgetown last Monday. Please see HHTW Editorial on page 6. photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

## Hide House preparing Restructuring Proposal

The olde Hide House management team has completed the three year operating plan which will form the basis for its Restructuring Proposal to creditors.

The Flight-Line and West Warehouse outlets will not reopen. Instead, these product lines will be merchandised in themed

areas within the olde Hide House itself.

Jack Tanner's Table will also remain closed and the space "moth-balled" for one year, pending a final decision on how to best utilize that section of the building.

The closing of the three divisions translates into the loss of approximately 50

local jobs, 15 full-time and 35 part-time.

If the Restructuring Proposal is approved by the company's creditors, the remaining operations will reopen in early September. The outcome of the creditors voting process will not be known until mid-August.

*Halton Hills This*

# WEEKEND

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Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department's Tot Lot program toddlers visited the Bennett Health Care Centre in Georgetown last Wednesday to sing their camp songs. Gladys Whitmee, a resident of the Bennett Health Care Centre, gave 4-year-old Joanna a kiss on the cheek for a drawing she made for Gladys.

photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

## Insurance agents denounce NDP's auto insurance law

By Oksana Buhel

Bill 164, which passed first reading during Monday's provincial legislature meeting, may not be implemented until the new year. But local insurance brokers are already worried about how it will reflect on them.

"The government has certainly timed this well," admitted Paul Armstrong, of Paul C. Armstrong Insurance Brokers Ltd. in Georgetown. "By the time the bill is enacted, everyone will forget what role the government played, and insurance brokers will come out looking like the bad guy."

Under Bill 164, motorists may now sue for pain and suffering, but a definition of "pain and suffering" has not yet been provided. The threshold on litigation has also been lifted.

If the bill goes in to effect, death benefits to the spouse of an accident victim will be doubled to \$50,000; funeral benefits will be doubled to \$6,000; maximum benefits paid to accident victims for lost income will increase from \$600 to \$1,000; and a \$10,000 deductible on awards to seriously injured accident victims or the dependents of people killed in accidents who gained the right to sue because of the

bill.

Armstrong insisted drivers may not see the full implications of these increased benefits. "People were buying what they needed," he said. "Now, we almost have to inflict a rate, whether they need it or not. /the decision-making option of consumers is almost taken away."

Norman Freethy, manager of the Spriggs Insurance Brokers

Ltd., in Georgetown, predicted Bill 164 will open up every accident to a lawsuit. "This will be very costly and time consuming," he said. He added people can now be compensated for "pain and suffering" (the definition of which he was not certain) from the other party's insurance agency, while getting paid from their own insurance company for lost wages and medical and rehabilitation expenses.

"Premiums will have to be raised to pay for all these claims," Armstrong predicted. He added the number of accidents over the past few years has also increased, and this will have an effect on the premiums.

Insurance agencies must also compensate for the 5 per cent sales tax on automobile insurance and 3 per cent pro-

mium tax, implemented July 1 as part of the spring provincial budget.

Before premiums are inflated, insurance companies will have to justify the increase before the Ontario Insurance Commission.

Both men view Bill 164 as

a detrimental piece of legislation. "You just wait for the first two months," Armstrong predicted. "The increase in whiplash injuries will be startling."

Freethy agreed, adding, "This (Bill 164) is not a move forward."

## Auto parts fraud exposed

A six month auto parts fraud investigation in Halton Hills has ended with the arrest of five Toronto men and one Mississauga man.

A Halton Hills auto parts dealer, who wished to remain anonymous, was approached Jan. 14 by a Toronto tow truck driver and asked to crush cars which would be reported stolen and car owners could collect insurance on them.

The tow truck driver had an arrangement with the owners of the cars where he would receive a fee for towing the cars to the auto parts dealership. Eight cars were brought to the dealership between January and March, before five car owners and the tow truck driver were arrested and charged.

"Maybe some of the car owners chickened out at the last minute and didn't report

the cars stolen," suggested Halton Region Police Service Detective Constable Dave Broughton, who worked with Metro and Peel Regional Police Services in the investigation.

The five owners were each charged with public mischief and attempted fraud over \$1,000. The tow truck driver was charged with four counts of conspiracy to commit fraud and four counts of attempted fraud. Broughton assumed there were only four counts of each charge because the Mississauga man would not name the driver.

Police had to wait until the owners of the cars falsely reported their cars stolen before any action could be taken. "Some owners waited months before they filed for insurance," Broughton said. "It was a lengthy process."

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