

Budding scientists at St. Joseph's

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

From bacteria to worm composting to stinky feet, Grade 7 and 8 students at St. Joseph's School showed their scientific prowess at last Thursday's science fair.

Grade 8 teacher Claude Malette said that the purpose of the annual fair was to generate student interest in science.

"We have them make displays and we teach them the concepts of scientific methods so they can see the process of a scientific experiment," Malette explained in an interview Thursday.

"This fair keeps the kids interested in science. A lot of them think of it as a burden sometimes, but in the end the products they create are really good quality."

Fifty students took place in the fair and outside judges picked winners in three categories including biology, applied science and pure science.

The first prize in the biology category was awarded to Anne Marie McGeragle for her experiment with worm composting.

Second prize was won by Nicole Lee, whose project was on stinky feet, and third prize went to Melissa Wood, who studied cold remedies. Honourable mention went to Adriann Coe for her experiment involving seed depth and plant growth.

Acton Tanner carrier Kevin Dick took first prize in the applied science category for his project on generators.

Danica Albano took second for her photography project and third

prize went to Erin Montgomery for her project on orthodontics. Honourable mention went to Bryan Coles for a project on friction.

In the pure science category Tanya Tonkovich's project on soil won her first place.

Susan Lehman won second prize for her presentation on Ohms Law and Julie Restivo took third for her project on bubbles.

Brendan McGrath's work on animal intelligence won him honourable mention.

Garbage disposal will not be free to rural residents

If rural Acton residents want free garbage disposal, they will have to take their waste to the new Milton landfill site.

Halton Hills politicians have endorsed the \$1.50 per bag disposal fee that Leferink Transfer Limited, of Georgetown, has charged since the first of the year.

Until then, rural residents were not charged to dump their garbage at the Leferink facility, but that ended when Halton Region cut funding to container transfer stations, like the Leferink operation. The move will save Halton \$900,000 a year.

Last month angry residents asked Halton Hills councillors and staff to investigate the issues and a staff report was on Monday night's General Committee agenda.

Besides endorsing the current \$1.50 per bag fee, Town staff rejected suggestions of extending garbage pickup services to the hamlets

and adding the cost of rural garbage pickup to the tax bill. Both suggestions were labeled too costly.

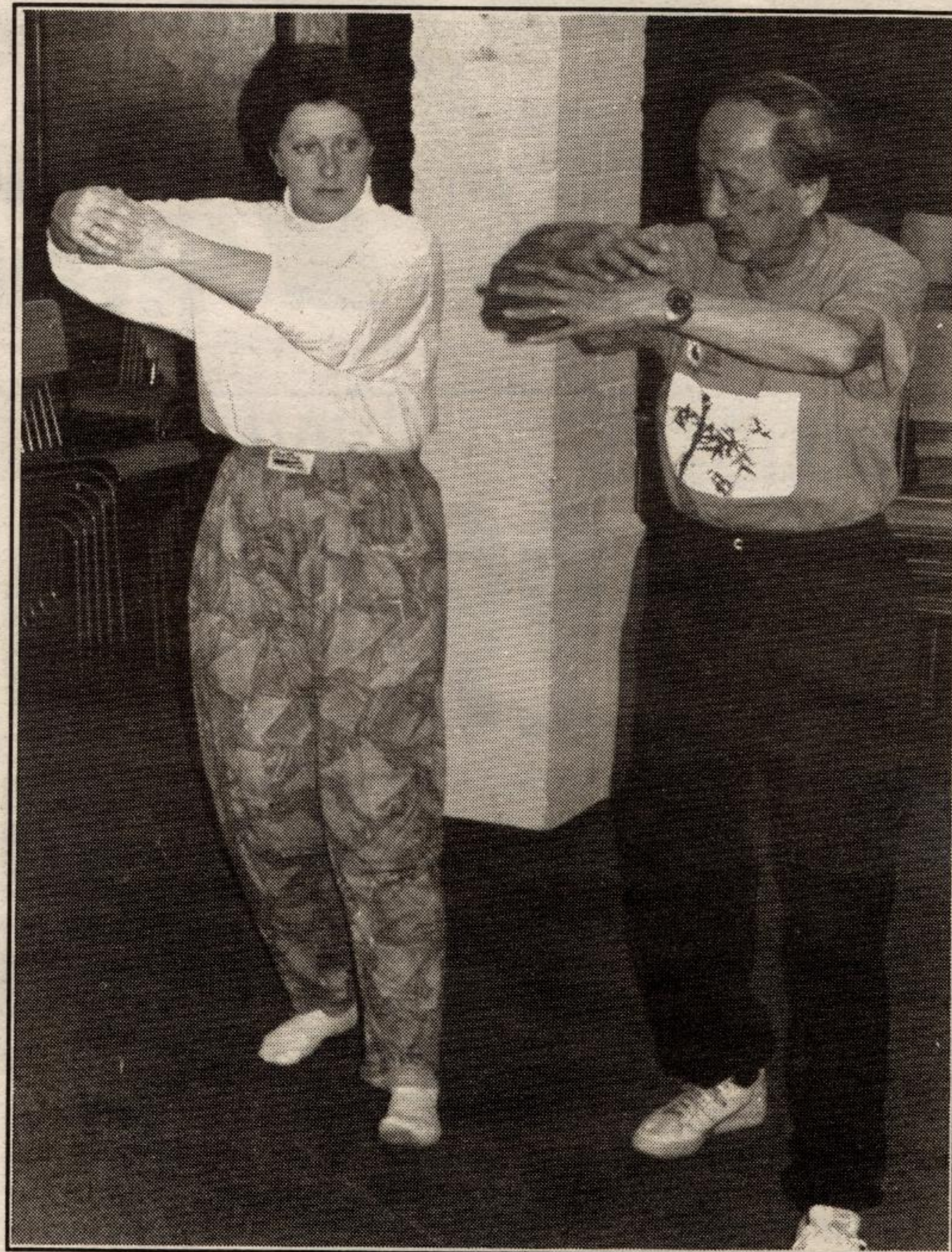
The report approved by politicians Monday night recommends that the fee be charged for the rest of this year and that staff investigate and report back by September on the issues of collection and disposal of garbage in the rural areas, bi-weekly Town-wide garbage collection and a single-tier waste management system for Halton.

Speyside resident Doug Young was not impressed with the decision.

"It will cost me between \$280 and \$300 in gas, insurance and maintenance on my car to drive my garbage to the Milton landfill. Those living farther away than I do could pay \$500 a year. There are 3,400 rural residents in Halton Hills and if you add up the dollars you will find it will cost about a million bucks to move the garbage from rural residences to the free drop-off that Halton Region offers," Young said.

"The Region is going to save \$900,000 by closing the transfer stations and it could cost rural residents more than that to dispose of their waste. That's false economy. It's not a free drop-off service, it's smoke and mirrors," Young argued.

Young said was willing to pay his equal share for the services he requires, but the service must be fair and equitable and be freely purchased in an open, competitive marketplace.



POETRY IN MOTION: Gladys Stoneham watches intently as Tai Chi instructor George Lee demonstrates "grabbing the ball" at last Tuesday evening's class at Knox Presbyterian Church. (Eric Balkind photo)

Sprowl on tax committee

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

Esquering's Mac Sprowl has been named to a Halton-wide committee that is under the gun to come up with a Region-wide property tax reform system.

The committee resulted from a last minute compromise at Halton Council in September that resulted in the controversial market value assessment (MVA) tax reform plan being shelved for one year.

This 20-person committee has until September to propose an alternate tax reform system, acceptable to two-thirds of Regional Council. If no deal can be reached, the original MVA plan would be implemented for 1994.

In Acton, that would mean 86 per cent of homeowners would pay higher taxes. While overall taxes in the commercial and industrial sector would be reduced, 49 per

cent of the properties would face tax increases.

Acton Councillor Norm Elliott sat on the search committee that chose Sprowl and two Georgetown citizens to represent Halton Hills citizens.

"Mac Sprowl has rural and urban ties and has shown an interest in the whole tax reform issue," Elliott said in an interview last Monday.

Sprowl, a retired Halton Sheriff who lives on Churchill Road, wants the committee to look at alternate taxation systems.

"I'm a senior citizen," Sprowl said last Wednesday.

"My taxes have jumped from \$300 dollars in 1965 to \$3,200 last year. Without any assessment change, just the mill rate, they are jumping by \$200 a year. Anybody on a fixed income won't be able to stay in their homes at that rate.

"Maybe we should look at a poll tax like Britain had. Maybe the property tax should be based on a percentage of the owner's income. I don't think using 1988 for the base year for MVA is fair. We aren't in as good shape and maybe 1992 would be a more equitable base to use," Sprowl said.

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