Resident miffed at reduced swim times

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Chopping public swim time at the Acton Indoor Pool on weekends this fall has one resident wondering if the 20-year-old facility will see its quarter-century birthday.

Ann Labelle is irked that Halton Hills Recreation and Parks has reduced the fall-winter session at the pool to one-hour (2 pm to 3 pm) from last year's 2 pm to 4 pm slot.

"I was so annoyed," she said last week, referring to her discovery of the altered hours. "The kids can't do anything in an hour."

Labelle feels the change hasn't been well-publicized, adding she only fell upon the notice two weeks ago at the pool by chance.

She was dropping off her 10-year-old son Patrick when she realized she gave him a $10 bill and didn't want him leaving the change from the $1.35 swim fee in the change room.

Rec and Parks decided to make the move — that will be in effect until at least Nov. 27 — because studies conducted over the last few years indicate a lack of response to a two-hour swim.

"On a recent Sunday visit there were about 16 people and to me that's busy. I can't remember when it was only us (in the pool)," said Labelle, referring to herself, Patrick and her 6-year-old daughter Mikala.

Rec and Parks supervisor Joanne Wilson defended the Town's move by saying numbers are significantly lower this time of year from spring and summer (50 vs. 20), so "we're responding to the needs of the public." She also pointed out this latest move is not etched in stone.

"We're trying it for the fall-winter session. We'll possibly go back to 2 pm to 4 pm come the spring," Wilson said, adding there's been sufficient advertising of the time change at the pool since Sept. 19 and in the Rec and Parks fall-winter brochure. "Fall is always down, maybe because of minor hockey and other sports in town.

"People in Acton don't seem to want it (a two-hour swim). Plus, it's an irresponsible use of taxpayers' money to keep the staff working the extra hour."

Labelle, 39, fears Actonites will begin driving down Hwy. 25 and swim in Milton. Realizing the pool has to cut back because of budget constraints, she still thinks the move could jeopardize the long-term existence of the Acton Boulevard facility.

Wilson countered by saying people's decision to change swim venues "definitely is a possibility, but we've been competing with Milton for two years."

"I just want it (the hours) changed," said a frustrated Labelle, who has used the pool for six years. "And I don't want the guilt trip that we're not going to use the pool.

"They (Rec and Parks) just changed the wrong program, because it affects me and a lot of other people."

UNHAPPY SWIMMERS: Acton's Ann Labelle and her son, Patrick, 10, are upset Rec and Parks has cut public swimming at Acton Indoor Pool to one hour on weekends. *(Doug Harrison photo)*

ADD meeting

Acton's Attention Deficit Disorder support group holds its next meeting Tuesday, Oct. 11 at M.Z. Bennett, at 7:30 pm.

The group welcomes parents to share concerns and obtain information.

For information call Wanda at 853-3803.

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Peanuts!

The Saturday morning Peanut Club activity program begins again on Oct. 29 at Prospect Park.

Parents can register their 3 to 5-year-olds by calling the Town Rec and Parks department at 873-2600, ext. 275.

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Pet owners: Rabies clinic next weekend

Acton pet owners can have their dogs and cats vaccinated for rabies at a low-cost clinic on Saturday, Oct. 15.

The clinic, operated by the North Halton Veterinary Association, will be held at the Boat House in Prospect Park from 1 to 3 pm in the afternoon.

The cost of the vaccination is $10 and payment must be made in cash as no cheques will be accepted.

No pet examinations will be done and no other vaccinations will be given.

As of Jan. 1, rabies vaccinations will be mandatory in Halton. The fine for non-compliance will be $5,000.

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