

NDP's minimum wage increase a job killer: MPP

Special to The Rockwood Miller
The NDP's recent announcement of another increase in Ontario's minimum wage will mean fewer new jobs in Wellington County, says Wellington MPP Ted Arnott.

The minimum wage will be increased to \$6.85 an hour starting in January 1995. This is the third time the minimum wage has been increased since 1992.

"I've received numerous letters

and phone calls from employers in Wellington. They tell me that as a result of minimum wage increases in the last few years, they will have to cut jobs," said Arnott, who also acts as his party's Small Business Advocate.

Arnott pointed to a report entitled The 'OECD Jobs Study,' produced by a highly reputable international organization, the Organization for Economic Co-operation

and Development. The study, which took two years to complete, is an extensive analysis of factors affecting job creation and unemployment across the world.

As one of its recommendations, the OECD study suggests a reassessment of the role of statutory minimum wages as an instrument to redistribute income. The report states that although minimum wages are used by governments as

methods of setting a wage floor, minimum wages end up limiting the number of jobs available for unskilled people. According to the study, there is a need for the public and private sectors to adopt policies to encourage greater wage flexibility.

"I think the OECD report should be required reading for the Premier and his minister of labour," Arnott stated.

"The NDP government is using outdated socialist thinking on the minimum wage. The end result will be more people out of work who are unable to get the job experience they need," charged Arnott.

"I have urged the government to freeze the minimum wage, but they've ignored this advice. Instead they've taken yet another action to discourage new job creation in Ontario."

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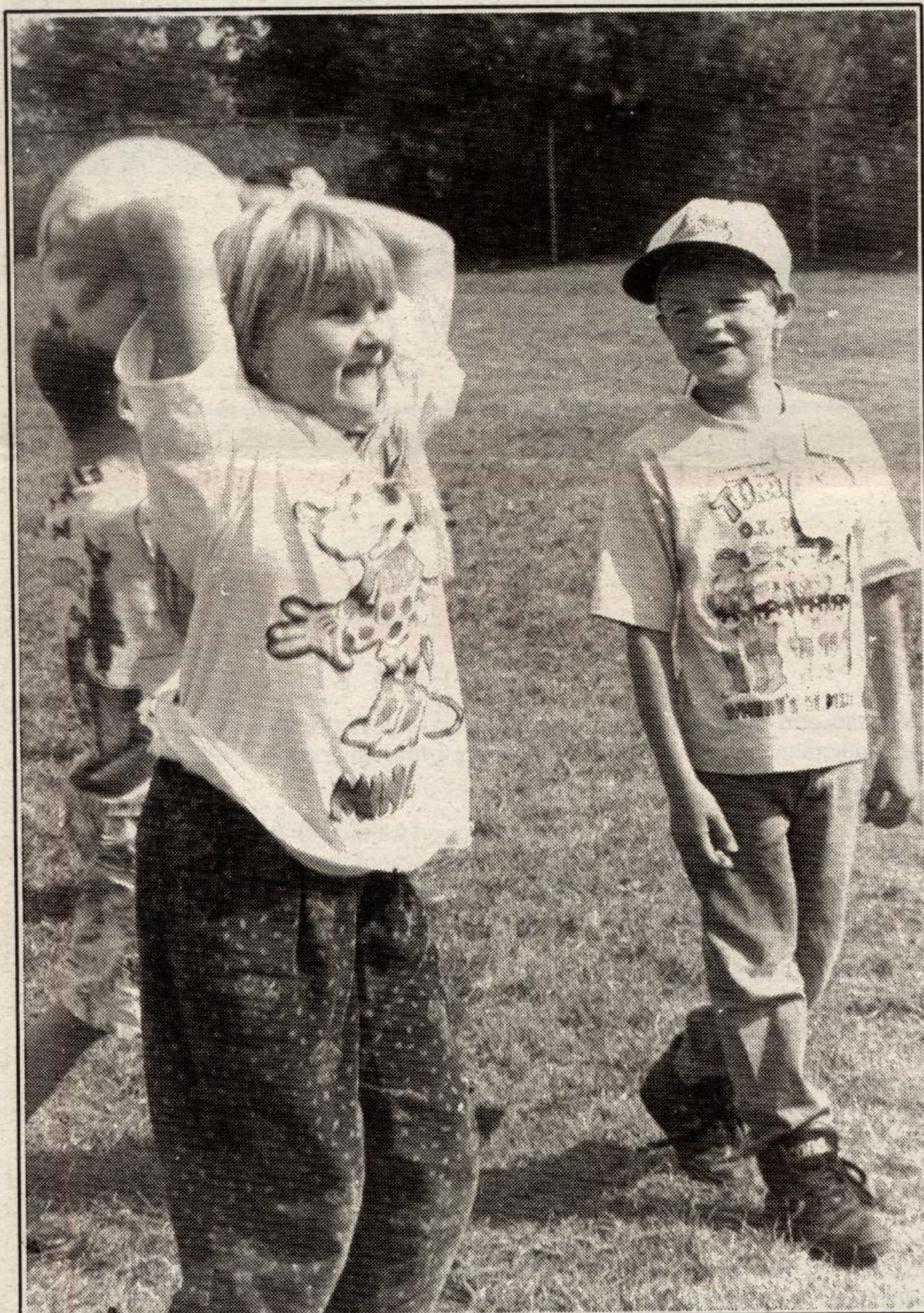
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WINDING UP: Rockwood Centennial student Elyshia Timbers, 7, reaches back to toss a volleyball over the net during the recent Activities for Terry Fox day the school held to raise money for cancer research. (Doug Harrison photo)

Sat. Open House highlights Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 8 to 15

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Rockwood Miller

Sirens will be activated for a different reason at the Township of Eramosa Fire Department's Open House this Saturday — to alert people of Fire Prevention Week from Oct. 8 to 15 and this year's theme *Test your detector for life*.

"We'll be canvassing the schools on fire prevention, preventative maintenance and alerting the students about chimney cleaning. We've got to hammer people to educate themselves on fire prevention, because it's a costly business," says Fire Chief Dave Sherratt of the week's agenda.

"There are a lot more fires that are the result of human error, so we're taking time to inform people, because time is precious."

Sherratt adds he's received a number of smoking-in-bed calls recently.

Also on tap for Saturday — starting at 10 am — is the presentation of the fire department's new reserve truck to replace an obsolete one. The new vehicle has more command features, is more versatile for rescue communication and has room to enclose firefighters, which is now law.

Sherratt says the truck will meet the needs of the municipality for the next 18 to 20 years.

As well, there will be a presen-

tation of a clock to outgoing Community Oriented Police officer Martin Murray and the naming of his successor, Andrew Ferguson. And people will be invited to observe the new recreation-picnic-tennis facilities behind the Rockmosa Community Centre.

"It will be a great opportunity for people to learn the role of today's firefighter, a chance for them to meet their volunteer firefighters, who put their lives on the line, and to see the refurbished fire hall," says an excited Sherratt.

Sherratt says while the department can have all the latest technology, it's public education that's going to reduce the number of fires.

"We're not educating the children. We (adults) are missing that

link of passing information to our children," he comments.

Some of the areas that Sherratt and local firefighters will be stressing are making sure batteries accompany smoke alarms, which should be located on each floor, and the question, Are people pre-planning for fires?

"Are families discussing if everyone is to meet on the front lawn in the event of a fire or does each person go out separate areas?" wonders Sherratt. "We can always re-build foundations, but we can't bring back a life."

"It's said the gift of life is giving a pint of blood, but my slogan for fire prevention is the gift of life is to get a smoke detector with charged batteries. It's certainly an affordable Christmas present."

Rockwood FitWalk is back, next Monday

Back by popular demand is Rockwood's FitWalk, to be held this Thanksgiving Monday.

Sponsored by Eramosa Township's Recreation, Parks and Culture Committee, this three kilometre family walk is part of the Province's Community Parks Week.

The one-hour walk will skirt the Rockwood Conservation Area and will be a great chance to view the fall colours.

Walkers should gather at Waterside Park at 10 am.

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