

CHAMPS! Rockwood's rookie hardball team wrapped up a successful season by defeating Carlisle last Wednesday with a score of 7-1. Here the team celebrates in a traditional way. (Eve Martin photo)

Accident renews calls for intersection improvements

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK The Rockwood Miller

Traffic lights are warranted at the Brucedale intersection that was the scene of a horrific two-vehicle, four-fatality accident on Friday, but provincial budget constraints resulted in the project being deferred.

Although there is no indication that traffic signals would have prevented the accident, a witness, Gursharan Puar, who operates the Petro Canada station adjacent to the scene, has repeatedly asked that safety be improved at the intersection.

"The traffic scares us too much," Puar explained in an interview on Monday.

Puar, who was pumping gas at the time of the accident, ran for his life when the van involved in the crash ended up three feet from where he had been standing.

"It's a dangerous spot with too much speed and too much traffic," Puar complained, noting that he had spoken to MTO officials last month and was told intersection improvements were still in the

planning stage.

"They should have put the lights in here before they put them in Rockwood because the traffic speed here is 80 km an hour and if there's an accident it would be a more serious one than what could happen at much slower speeds in Rockwood," Puar said.

Two men and two women, all from Toronto and Etobicoke and all members of the Korean Baptist Church in Toronto, were killed and four others were injured when a transport truck travelling south on Hwy. 24 collided with a GMC Safari van which was travelling west on County Road 27. There is an oversize stop sign at the intersection as well as an overhead red flashing light.

Identification of the deceased was made with the help of the Korean Consulate and Immigration Canada. Many of the van's passengers recently arrived in Canada to attend university.

The four people injured in the crash were transferred to Hamilton General Hospital.

MTO Planning and Design manager Alan Anderson said the ministry had a work project for that intersection, which would have included resurfacing and traffic lights, but that the project was "deferred or delayed" to the end of a five-year work program, which began this year.

"We are looking at all our programs and first we will look at preserving the pavement that's out there - that really needs resurfacing - and we're concentrating on that work, rather than expansions," Anderson explained Monday.

Eramosa Fire Chief Dave Sherratt said he hoped the incident would convince the Province to do some intersection improvements.

"There were lights designated for that area and we had lights designated for Hwy. 24 and County Road 29 and also Ospringe, but due to budget restraints and cutbacks the lights weren't put in. Maybe Mr. Palladini will re-assess and get some money spent out here," Sherratt said on Friday.

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