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'ACTON'S OWN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER'

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1996

BETWEEN THE COVERS...



Two Acton High students are recognized for their accomplishments in the community
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A third season of bad weather leaves area farmers frustrated but optimistic
...Page 5

New puppet show, *Three Wise Men and a Baby*, to be performed by the Hands Up Puppeteers
...Page 11

Nearby in Guelph, see what this city's downtown has to offer!
...Pages 12-13

Ending a surprising week of break-ins and thefts in Rockwood
...Page 16

Rotary hockey team at Acton High wins first point in season with a tie against Burlington
...Page 19



GREAT START TO SEAT SALE!

In charge of arena seat sales, Marilyn Russiani, centre, accepts cheques from, in back, Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette and Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson and in front, Norm Elliott and Gerald Rennie who have each pledged to purchase the first four seats to be sold for the new Acton arena. See Grapevine, page 7 for details on purchasing your own seat at the new facility. (Karen Wetmore photo)

Preliminary budget is approved

The lion's share of next year's \$3.6 million preliminary capital budget, approved by councillors last week, is earmarked for engineering and public works projects.

Included in the \$2.5 million engineering and public works budget are:

- \$277,000 to install storm sewers from Commerce Crescent to an outfall;

- \$150,000 to reconstruct the Fourth Line from the 10th Sideroad to the CNR tracks;

- \$60,000 to resurface Mill Street from Victoria Avenue to Cobblehill Road;

- \$5,000 for the engineering required before the Sixth Line can be reconstructed from Hwy. 7 to 32 Sideroad;
- \$12,000 for a pedestrian signal at Main Street North and School Lane.

Included in Recreation and Parks Department's budget:

- \$5,000 for structural repairs at Prospect Park arena;
- \$45,000 for improvements to Acton Indoor Pool.

Equipment purchases are included in the \$266,000 budgeted for the Fire Department including \$175,000 for a heavy rescue vehicle.

Computers to be leased, not owned by the Town

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

Halton Hills will no longer own its computers but, in what the Treasurer called a "fairly dramatic change in policy," will instead lease them in an effort to save money and allow the Town to outfit most of its staff with current technology.

Although the majority of councillors accepted the concept of leasing and not owning the computers and laser printers, they balked at replacing the Town's existing 131 computers with state-of-the-art Pentium 133 models.

Acton Councillor Norm Elliott, a long-time critic of what he called the Town's "worship" of computers, argued the plan to lease 153 Pentiums was a "Cadillac" proposal - one that would be very hard to sell to taxpayers and one that didn't show "one iota of restraint."

Elliott convinced councillors to reduce the number of new computers to be leased to 125 from 153 and to reassign some of the more powerful computers that the Town bought in the past two years,

a move he predicts will save \$20,000 a year.

"That's more than generous," Elliott said. "You've heard of a chicken in every pot. Well, we don't need a Pentium on every desk."

Ward 2 Councillor Kevin Kuiack also convinced councillors to reduce the number of laser printers to be replaced to 20 from 30 for additional savings, arguing that 10 of the Town's existing 29 printers must still be acceptable.

In defense of the lease proposal, Koopmans said the present financial environment has resulted in attractive lease rates and leasing will allow the Town to acquire improved technology for all staff at one time. That, he said, will increase efficiency and eliminate many incompatibility problems the Town now has with staff using different models and different software.

The leasing plan includes disposal of the Town's existing computers, and although the leasing company offered the Town \$35,000 to take them away, Town officials are confident they can get more for the equipment if it is offered to the public in a sealed bid process.

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