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'ACTON'S OWN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER'

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 1996

BETWEEN THE COVERS...



Trustee Ethel Gardiner feels the school board should sell J. W. Singleton Education Centre
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Appointed to Halton District Health Council: Elly Tuitman and Linda Dawson
...Page 5

New program offered to persons aged 55 and over, called "A Time for Me."
...Page 11

Now you, too, can learn to make a gingerbread house!
...Page 12

End of an era comes about, as Ivy Ritchie retires after 30 years of mail delivery
...Page 17

Really strong performances by Acton Aqua Ducks at two separate swim meets
...Page 19

Fire hall not for sale, for now

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

Heritage Acton's attempts to buy the old Fire Hall on Bower Street for \$2 are still alive after Town councillors rejected staff's recommendation to list the building for sale, and instead voted to continue negotiating with the group.

Heritage Acton wants to develop the old Fire Hall as a community centre, at no cost to the municipality, which has declared the building surplus. The group's plans call for part of the renovated space to be rented to Acton Support Service and Information Centre (ASSIC) which currently

rents the ground floor of the adjacent old Town Hall, which was conveyed to Heritage Acton by the Town for \$1 a number of years ago.

Although several councillors wanted to list the building at its appraised value of \$160,000, the majority agreed with Acton Councillor Norm Elliott, who argued Heritage Acton needs control over the old Fire Hall so it can continue renovating the old Town Hall because the two are "irrevocably linked."

In response to some councillors' comments that the Town needs the \$160,000 in what will be the toughest budget year ever, Acton

Councillor Rick Bonnette reminded them there was no guarantee that anyone would pay that much for the building and cautioned that high density housing could end up on the property if it were sold to a developer.

Councillor Moya Johnson pointed out that tourism will be key to Acton's future and although \$160,000 is a lot of money, once the chance to restore the building is lost, it's lost forever.

"We have to find it in our hearts and in our budget to do this for the people of Acton and Halton Hills," she said.

Heritage Acton spokesman Dr. George Elliott said

if the Town agreed to convey the building to the group, its first priority would be to modify a portion of the second floor of the building to provide desperately-needed additional office space for ASSIC.

The second priority is building two fire exits on the second floor, which would make it usable, and the third priority is to remove a block wall and restore the stage on the second floor, possibly for a dinner theatre.

The group's fourth priority would be to renovate the first floor of the old Fire Hall for office space and possibly a small museum.

UAL tries to polish image

Now that controversial plans to use a mined-out portion of the Acton Quarry for a massive landfill site are dead, the quarry owner, United Aggregates Limited (UAL), is attempting to clean up its image with an ambitious public relations campaign.

UAL vice-president Bill Burkart told Town councillors recently that he was "committed to improving our image, to the betterment of everybody."

"I'm confident that the Acton quarry and all of its employees can play a positive and constructive role in the future," Burkart said as he introduced Judy Spear, in charge of UAL's industrial relations, who outlined a new program initiated this year to make quarry neighbours "feel comfortable" about contacting the quarry with any questions or concerns.

That program includes a new contact form, designed to ensure that anyone calling the quarry gets a response within 24 hours.

Spear said they had also handed out brochures to neighbours explaining water-taking at the site and hosted open houses where water experts outlined the de-watering process at the quarry. This was in response to some neighbours' concerns that the water being pumped from
See UNITED, Page 5



WHAT A GAME!

Acton High's Rotary hockey team took on the Dallas Stars midget team at the Acton Arena last Thursday night, defeating the visitors by a score of 8-1. Acton Citizen of the Year George Henderson dropped the ceremonial puck at the beginning of the game, to Acton team captain Jason Pembleton. The game was a fundraiser for the new arena and community centre. (Eve Martin photo)

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