


	FRIDAY  Sunny, some clouds High 0 / Low -8	SATURDAY  Sunshine and clouds High -1 / Low -9	SUNDAY  Sunny and colder High -2 / Low -12	TYLER TRAVEL SERVICE LTD. "Best Price, Best Service Since 1972" 853-1553 379 Queen St., Acton

Going south? - Book early *Tough decisions ahead for Halton Board - Gardiner*

By **MAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY**
The New Tanner

The drop in the dollar has not stopped area residents from taking that traditional winter break, area travel agents agree.

"The weather seems to

depress a lot of people so that they're not letting the dollar stop them. Either they're staying with relatives and don't have accommodation costs to worry them or they haven't had a holiday for so long they're desperate to get away. It seems to be a case of 'anywhere and everywhere

- just get me out of here," says Laurie Henson of Tyler Travel.

Ski enthusiasts are giving Whistler, Banff and Lake Louise a good year while sun lovers are heading to warmer climes as usual says Ruth Burnett, manager of Bruce Hood Travel's Milton outlet.

Cruises are always popular and the all-inclusive packages are an especially good value right now because of the currency situation.

"If you pay here, you pay in Canadian dollars," Burnett explains. "That's a lot better than waiting till you get there and getting only 50 cents on the dollar because of the exchange rate. Most of the islands use American dollars and you wind up paying a lot more for meals and so on if you do it that way. Pre-booking here means you're a lot better off with the low dollar."

She says the Caribbean and Mexico are the popular spots this year although Cuba is always popular and an excellent value.

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Trustees for the Halton District School Board still have no idea what the financial picture will be when they tackle their 1998 budget, says board chair Ethel Gardiner.

"It's hard to say where we are because we still have not received our funding model from the province," Gardiner explains. "The latest rumour is that we'll get that information by the end of this month."

Trustees know they will receive six or seven different types of grants under the new system but that doesn't really tell them how much those grants will be worth. Nor does it explain how the province-wide equalizing of funds will be done.

Not that Halton is alone in the dilemma. None of the new boards know their situation, Gardiner says.

"We just know the funds will be tailored to each board and the government will rationalize that it has given each board enough money in the province's opinion to run their system."

She doubts whether trustees will agree. That's why she's betting on the need for

tough decisions in the coming three years. The old Halton Board of Education had been downsizing administrative staff for 10 years so there will be no obvious places for further cuts.

Gardiner is thankful the new district board is just a reshaping of the old board with a reduction of trustees to 10 from the former 18. Challenges in Halton will be big enough without facing the ones many new boards must tackle where funding issues are complicated by the need to shrink administration, reshuffle transportation and perhaps even set up complete new headquarters while learning about totally new constituent concerns.

"The demand for programs and services have never been greater," she says.

Given all these uncertainties, Gardiner sees communication with constituents as a major priority for trustees. People are usually supportive if they understand the board's reasoning she says. That why she and her Milton counterpart plan a series of community meetings to "keep people up to date and hear community concerns".

The monthly public meetings will be held at Acton's McKenzie-Smith-Bennett

school, Centennial in Georgetown and Dick in Milton. These won't be restricted to councils for those schools or even to town residents.

"I hope rural residents will avail themselves of the chance to attend wherever is closest to them so they can find out what's going on too," she says. "I can't get to separate meetings with all 13 of my school councils so this seemed the best alternative. And if they can't get to their local meeting, I hope people will feel free to come to one of the others."

In Acton those meetings are scheduled for Feb. 17, March 23, April 27, May 25, June 22 and Sept. 21. Since the schedule is still tentative she suggests checking with the school principal to be sure about potential changes.

The public is also invited to attend board meetings, which have been changed to Wednesdays by the new board. The first two Wednesdays of each month will be for committee of the whole meetings and the full board meeting will be held on the third Wednesday of the month. As before, board meetings will begin at 8 p.m. in the board's Burlington office.



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HALTON HILLS COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

(combining the resources of ASSIC, Georgetown Meals on Wheels and Open Door Youth Centre)

The Chair of the Nominating Committee is accepting applications for membership on the inaugural **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** of Halton Hills Community Support and Information. Applications will be reviewed by the Nominating Committee. Prospective candidates will be notified and interviews will be conducted during the month of March. A slate will be presented for election at the Annual General Meeting to be held June 10, 1998.

The organization was created in 1998 by combining the resources of Acton Support Services and Information Centre (ASSIC), Georgetown Meals on Wheels and Open Door Youth Centre. Collectively, these organizations have provided high quality services to the citizens of Georgetown and Acton for over 50 years. Halton Hills Community Support and Information is a multi-service organization supporting people of all ages in the development of a caring and responsive community.

The Board of Directors are responsible for:

- planning the future directions of the organization
- ensuring the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the organization and its relevance to community needs
- representing the organization and its goals in the community
- selecting, defining the role of and evaluating the Executive Director

Community residents who are interested in supporting the organization by serving on its Board of Directors, are encouraged to call (519) 853-3310 or (905) 873-6502 for an application and information package.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: FEBRUARY 23, 1998

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Hello, my name is Rory Gibbons. I own Gibbons Painting and Decorating. I have been serving Halton Hills and surrounding areas with 10 years experience. I started painting 10 years ago in Toronto, but after starting a family we decided to

come to a community-based town. We chose Acton. I have found Acton and area to be a friendly and warm environment to work in. I take great pride in my craft and customer satisfaction is guaranteed. I do interior and exterior in both oil and latex and also do staining and deck sealing. I offer competitive rates and have references available upon request. I look forward to serving you.

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