

Rotary winners

Winners of Acton Rotary Club and Acton Kinsmen Club "Nite on the Town" have been announced. Bruce Youngblood, Elora and Larry Cook, Paris had the lucky tickets. Youngblood won 1st prize; limousine service, din-

ner for 4 at Ed's Warehouse and 4 tickets to the April 11 Toronto Maple Leafs game against Carolina. Cook won 2nd prize; limousine service, dinner for 4 at Wayne Gretzky's and 4 tickets to a May Toronto Blue Jays game.

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DEMOLITION DELAYED: The demolition of the Prospect Park arena has been delayed to give the Acton Agricultural Society time to develop a business plan for the aging facility, if a structural review to be done in the coming weeks determines that the building can be repaired at an affordable cost. -Frances Niblock photo

Stay of execution for old arena

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day. I understand that it's insured for \$2.5 million," Varanelli said, adding it would be a positive, not negative thing, to spend the money already allocated to repair and not tear down the arena.

Acton Councillor Norm Elliott stressed that the arena is not unsafe, pointing to an August structural report indicating it was safe for public use for the 1997-98 ice season, as long as snow loads were monitored. Elliott also said he wanted to end once and for all, rumours that the building would ever be used as an arena again. Calling the Agricultural Society's

proposal a "stay of execution" Elliott said that the building had a lot of potential and was not just a liability.

Varanelli agreed to ask the Agricultural Society if it split the costs of on-going operating costs - hydro, gas, electricity and insurance - during the six months it takes to determine if the repair plan is viable. He will also ask if the Society would accept the

building outright without any Town money and if it would consider the \$110,000 in the budget as a loan.

The Town's manager of facilities, Paul Stover, said that demolition date was unknown and that it would take six months once the building came down to fully restore the site, leading mayor Marilyn Serjeantson to suggest that the building can't come down in time for this

year's fair anyway.

Following a two-hour debate and committee's approval in principle, Varanelli said he was relieved and pleased, but fully aware of the amount of work that now must be done.

"This delay has given us a window of opportunity to see if there are users out there and to see how much it would cost to repair the building,

High tech hounds in Hills

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

A canine census, proof of annual rabies vaccination and support for implanting micro-chips in dogs for identification are all part of the

Town's new enhanced dog licensing program approved by council on Monday night.

Town staff estimate that as little as 25 per cent - 5,828 - of the Town's 8,259 dogs are not licensed. Licensing fees pay for the cost of operating

a canine control service and to provide identification and registry system for dogs to ensure that they have had rabies vaccinations.

Town staff said that the new licensing program would save the Town approximately \$45,000 a year. Last year the Town received \$33,000 in dog licence fees - staff expect that figure will jump to \$128,500 this year as all dogs are counted and \$20 licenses are issued.

Micro-chip implantation - a chip the size of a grain of rice is implanted by a vet between the dog's shoulder blades - is a growing trend,

an alternative to the traditional method of dog tags. If a dog is found running loose a scanner can be used to determine whom it belongs to and return it. The fee for the implantation is \$60 and the owner would have to pay a one-time \$40 licence fee to register the dog as an alternative to yearly renewing their dog tags. Proof of annual rabies vaccination as a condition of a new licence or licence renewal.

Staff report that although revenues from a log licensing system should cover all of the costs for canine control, that's not happening in Halton Hills because of a lack of enforcement. The first step to better enforcement will be a census this summer undertaken by students who will go door-to-door, recording any dogs they find.

Several councillors questioned spending money for additional staff time and office equipment to pay for this program in a year when budgets are tight, including Councillor Rick Bonnette who asked that the enhanced log licensing program be evaluated at the end of a one-year trial period to see if it's worthwhile.

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