

# Dog catcher calls soar in Halton Hills

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

Georgetown south residents would rather call animal control than call their neighbours to ask if they've lost their dog. Their quickness to phone the town has sent animal control service calls soaring to over 300 per month.

A recent canine enforcement report showed a significant increase in calls until

August this year - 2,243 compared to 1,549 for the same period last year. Staff said the increase can be attributed to growth in Georgetown south.

"As there is less tolerance for dogs running at large and residents unwillingness to return these dogs on their own and approach their neighbours, there is an expectancy that Town staff will provide these services similar to that of the larger communities where they

emigrated from," customer service support supervisor Carolyn Kelly said in a recent report to councillors.

The Town contracts a private operator to provide animal control services and councillors were also concerned with the relatively small number of dogs that are impounded or handled by the contractor, 197 so far this year.

In addition to the huge number of canine complaints, Ward 2 Councillor Kevin Kuiack

is alarmed that enforcement services staff still can't keep up with the number of complaints coming in, by as many as 100 per month.

"We need to do something, whether it be staffing to deal with it or some other procedural matter ... if something has to come to budget (talks) it should be the way we handle bylaw enforcement," Kuiack said recently, noting it wasn't the first time councillors asked that bylaw enforcement be looked at.

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## What's Inside



Old St. Nick or Santa Claus was in Acton on Saturday for the annual parade sponsored by the firefighters. See two pages of photos on 10 and 11.



You've still got time to buy a ticket on United Way's raffle on a VW Beetle. See Page 3.



'Deck the Halls' house tour was a great success. See photos on Page 7.



John Eddolls has made the Canadian national lifesaving team. See Page 12.

## Special award for 'Mr. Santa Parade'

### Acton man wins \$250,000 in lottery

An Acton man has won \$250,000 in the provincial lottery ENCORE of November 10.

Harold Arbeiter, 43, an avid lottery player, said he plans on paying off bills and banking the rest of his \$250,000 earnings.

"It really is worth the drive to Toronto when you've won this amount of money," Mr. Arbeiter told Ontario Lottery Corporation staff when he collected his winnings.

A tool and die maker and single as well, Arbeiter bought the winning ticket in Georgetown.



**HONOURARY CHIEF:** Halton Hills Fire Chief Bill Cunningham, left, presented retired firefighter Bill Spielvogel with a golden helmet following Acton's Santa Claus parade last week. "Spee" has remained the guiding force behind the parade for 18 years even though he left the Acton department several years ago. - Maggie Petrushevsky photo

### Bill 'Spee' chair for 18 years

After 18 years of bringing Santa Claus to Acton, Santa's right hand man, former volunteer firefighter Bill Spielvogel, has been honoured for orchestrating Santa Claus parades for the Acton Firefighters Association.

After Saturday's parade, Spielvogel was left speechless (not a common occurrence according to friends) when Halton Hills Fire Chief Bill Cunningham presented him with a gold fire helmet and named him Honourary Chief.

"I'm still surprised," a grateful Spielvogel said on Monday.

"There aren't very many honorary chiefs and I had no idea that this was coming. It is a great honour and I'm lucky that they let me keep organizing the parade, even after I retired as a volunteer firefighter after 32 years and 10 months."

Chief Cunningham said he wanted Bill to have special recognition for all of the time and commitment he'd put into the parades.

"He's sort of the unsung hero of bringing the parade to Acton each year and I just thought it was fitting that we recognized him in some significant way," Chief Cunningham said, describing Bill as "Mr. Santa Claus parade."

"I watch him and he's like a grandfather bringing his

Cont. on Pg. 2

## POWER to plant trees in Acton

Town owned land near the Acton Legion and the seniors' residence on Fairy Lake will be planted with hundreds of trees as a millennium project of the north Halton environmental group POWER - Protect Our Resources and Environmental Resources.

In conjunction with the Town and both the Credit and the Halton Conservation authorities, POWER has selected six sites in Halton Hills to be forested with thousands native species trees and heritage seeds.

"In Acton, we looking at low growing things so the view of the lake isn't blocked and although we haven't picked the actual kinds of

trees that will be planted on that land, our forester is working on it," explained POWER president Barbara Halsall in a recent interview.

Eighteen schools in Halton, including those in Acton, have agreed to be part of the millennium project and hundreds of students will plant this spring. A curriculum consultant is helping teachers fit this project in with the new curriculum.

"Now we have to get the money," Halsall said, adding they've applied for grants from various environmental, millennium and provincial agencies. The number of trees planted depends on how much money they receive.

Already POWER has received unsolicited cash and donations of supplies from local tree planting companies.

Halsall said while they mulled over several millennium project proposals, they really liked the education component of the forestry project.

"This is not just getting trees in the ground because this is going to be a major educational program. There's been so much money cut out of the school budget as far as outdoor education the kids are missing things they should be getting."

Pictures of the six sites to be forested were on display recently at POWER's recent

annual general meeting and the importance of forestry was highlighted by the guest speaker, Paul Aird, professor emeritus at the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Toronto, and a former member Niagara

Escarpment Commission.

"It's very critical how we manage our precious heritage of wild plants and animals and trees. It's only in the 1990s that we have begun to embrace the concept of managing systems, of managing a forested area, not just for large trees, not just for beaver and salmon, but for air," Aird said, as he applauded POWER for its millennium tree planting project.

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