



HOT WHEELS: Danielle Wilson of Eramosa Township learned to race her Junior Late Model on the track. This is her second year of competition. Photo supplied

Winning racer can't get her first driver's licence

BYMAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY
The New Tanner

With two successful seasons under her belt, Danielle Wilson is a veteran racer in the Junior Late Model class at the Sauble Speedway.

What makes her racing slightly different is Danielle's age. She is only 15.

While the Eramosa Township teen can't get her driver's licence for another year, she can race cars.

These are not your standard car, Wilson points out. They are only about a quarter the size of ordinary cars. But they can travel at 68 miles per hour - that's equal to about 110 kilometers. While their size may make them seem akin to toys, their speed is no joke.

Since she is not licensed, Wilson had to learn to drive by trial and error on the track. She had one serious accident last year when she hit the wall at full speed, but she walked away safely. Credit for that goes to a number of things including a full roll cage, a five point harness, a helmet, a neck brace and a full fire suit. These safety features are mandatory in this class, Wilson says.

Wilson started racing because her father encouraged her. Her mother isn't quite so enthusiastic although she attends most of her races - just has trouble watching them, Mrs. Wilson says.

The Junior class is open

to drivers aged eight to 16. There are usually nine cars entered for the race and only one other driver is female, Wilson says.

Races are held every Saturday night, except on holiday weekends. Then they

race both Saturday and Sunday.

Wilson is not aware of any other Ontario tracks holding Junior races.

So far, her best placement has been a second. She also has a number of fourth place finishes.

The Rockwood MILLER



Open house supports fire hall but not on conservation land

BYMAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY

The Rockwood Miller

The message was clear. A vast majority of the residents attending an open house about a new Rockwood fire hall support the need for the hall. They just don't support putting it on conservation land.

Guelph/Eramosa Mayor Dave Adsett urged the 100 or so people at Monday's meetings in Rockwood to examine drawings of the proposed new hall and fill in comment sheets for council.

The fact an architectural firm has already done drawings and a 2-acre preferred site has been selected on the corner of the Grand River Conservation Area Park at Fall Street and Highway 7 does not mean the decision has been made, he said.

The fire hall committee looked at a number of sites but ruled out the others over size and surrounding uses. Adsett denied "playing politics" with the citizens by refusing to disclose which specific locations were considered. He said no negotiations were ever attempted with owners of the sites and the prices could increase dramatically for future negotiations if the owners knew the municipality wanted the sites.

Residents questioned

why the municipality thought GRCA land would be available if no serious negotiations have been conducted between the two bodies. They also implied that some sort of deal must be under consideration to let the GRCA fix their water and septic problems by hooking to municipal services in exchange for giving the township free land for their firehall.

Adsett allowed someone must have asked GRCA if they'd be interested, but emphasized no price has been discussed.

"The land deal is not contingent on giving them services," he said.

Former Eramosa councillor Ken Mercer questioned GRCA's aims for servicing the park. Would they just service existing sites such as the communal showers, dumping station and canteen? Or would the connection to municipal water and sewers give them the opportunity to greatly expand their developed camping space, he asked.

Several residents questioned the need for a 2-acre site, pointing out that new halls in large municipalities are often built on spaces no bigger than the one occupied by the existing hall.

Fire Chief Sean Armstrong said cities have training space where full time firefighters can go for practices away from

their hall. Eramosa firefighters only have one space - their hall, so space for that training must be incorporated at any new hall site.

It was suggested the hall could be put on a vacant lot at the intersection of Highway 7 and the Eden Mills Road where the owner has publicly stated the municipality could have the land by paying the Land Transfer Tax.

Deputy Fire Chief Tony Van Dam explained the site must be in the village to keep response times within the provincial guidelines. Taking firefighters to a hall away from the village before taking off with trucks to the fire, perhaps back into the village or the north end of the township, just slows down responses.

Residents asked the committee be re-constituted to renew the search since so many oppose the Grand River Conservation Area site.

As one man put it, if the GRCA will give up lands entrusted to it for preservation for a fire hall, what guarantee do residents have that it won't allow bending of the rules to allow building of a service station next, or some homes.

Residents were told the reduction in provincial funding is forcing conservation authorities to operate on business plans and sell off less important pieces of property in order to maintain their high priority projects.

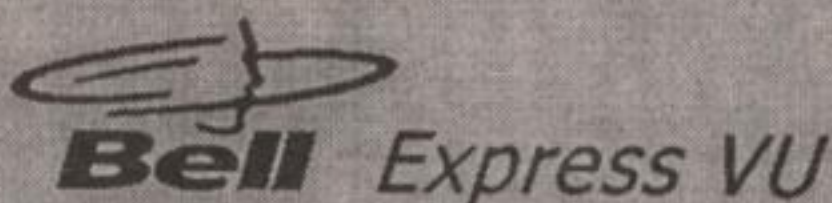
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