

Region's triple A credit rating reaffirmed

Halton Region has had its AAA credit rating reaffirmed with Moody's Investors Services of New York, the highest rating given by Moody's. Achieving and retaining a AAA credit rating allows Halton Region and the Area Municipalities to borrow funds at the lowest possible interest rates.

The long-term debt of the region is rated by two external rating services. In January, the Canadian Bond Rating (CBRS) reaffirmed

Halton's AAA credit rating.

"We are really pleased with this reaffirmation," said David Birkett, Director, Budgets and Fiscal Policy services, Halton Region. "It recognizes that, even with the challenges posed by growth demands and the shifting of several costly services from the Province, Halton Region still has the ability to control debt servicing costs."

Moody's Investors Service recent rating

Review states, "the municipality typically records positive results and a sound financial position, and has continued doing so despite the challenges posed by provincial aid cut-backs and local services realignment."

The review also recognizes the Region's low debt levels because of extensive reliance on pay-as-you-go financing. In the last five years, ending in 1998, over two-thirds of the Region's capital financing was derived from

reserve funds and current revenues, while less than 10 per cent came from long-term debt proceeds.

"This is great news for Halton Region," added Brent Marshall, CAO, Halton Region. "Moody's AAA credit rating reaffirms that effective financial management allows the Region the flexibility to deal with various financial pressures and growth challenges."

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What's Inside



Guess who the latest Acton Community Champions are? Recognize them? Turn to Page 2.



Acton teens and computers are just like bread and honey. Frances Niblock's story on Page 7 gives us insight into high tech.



Still looking for that date on the Man About Town calendar. The New Tanner has a peek at some of the Calendar Boys on Page 6.

Town taxes in Halton Hills could go up by 3% next year. Council is wrestling with the budget. See Page 11.

Acton High's bands silent

Extra-curricular work shunned by teachers

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

There's dunking and spiking but no music making (so far) at Acton District High School where some teachers, faced with an extra class this semester, have withdrawn from extracurricular activities.

Principal Greg MacPherson said some of the 32 full and part-time teachers are offering "advisorship" to community volunteers and senior students helping with sports teams, the yearbook committee and student council. The jazz and concert bands remain silent and MacPherson said options for the extracurricular music program are "still being pursued."

Halton District School Board guidelines say a teacher supervisor is needed for most board-sanctioned activities, raising safety and legal questions for parent volunteers.

When 250 students from Pearson High School protested the loss of after-school clubs, athletics and dances at the board offices last week, the director of education for the Halton District School Board, Dusty Papke, said parents and volunteers might have to supervise extracurricular activities — a move MacPherson supports.

"I think it is quite conceivable that many of the programs in our school will change in the way they are offered, who leads them and perhaps, even the degree of programming that schools will be able to offer."

Acton High physical education teacher Dave Boycott made a personal decision to continue supervising extracurricular sports, but respects

those teachers who found "they had too much on their plate."

"Nineteen of the 21 secondary schools in Halton County are running volleyball teams this year, and I just felt that, if everybody else was running competitive league, I would join it," Boycott said.

Like last year, the boys' and girls' community volunteers and senior students are coaching the junior and senior volleyball and basketball teams. The volunteer coach of the cross-country team has moved from Acton and a parent of a team member has taken over.

OSSTF Acton branch president, English teacher Dave McConnell, said some teachers are "saddened" that they don't have enough time for extracurricular activities.

"I notice that teachers who are doing the four (classes) right now are really starting to feel burnt out after only three-and-a-half weeks," McConnell said adding some teachers are working through their lunches and most are coming in earlier and staying later.

"Students are getting the academic needs met that they all require, but there certainly not getting the extracurricular activities they want for that social balance," McConnell said.

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GAMES AND GOODIES: Fun and food were on the menu for these Acton kids attending The Dinner Club with their young parents at the Salvation Army building. While the parents talked about nutrition and parenting, the Macdonald's - James, Shaina and Nathan (standing from left) put on a show with Zachary Allen (right) and a friend. - Frances Niblock photo

Brookville child killed in collision

Halton police are looking for witnesses to an accident that claimed the life of 5-year-old Sarah Boucher of Brookville, who died early Monday morning, five hours after being struck by car on Guelph Line in the village.

Halton Detective Constable Steve Martin said prior to the accident at 7:35 p.m. on Sunday, Boucher was with a group of children on the east side of Guelph line.

Martin said Boucher was in the northbound lane, crossing to the west side when she was struck by a car being driven northbound by a Rockwood woman, Diane Chircop, 26, who was not injured.

The cause of the accident is under investigation. Witnesses are asked to call Halton police at 878-5511, ex: 5169 or CRIME STOPPERS at (905) 825-8477.

Continued on Page 2

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