

WE'RE HAVING A BIRTHDAY!

The New Tanner is three years old.
See Editorial on Page 6.



Search for new chief

The search for a new fire chief is on hold as Mayor Kathy Gastle restructures various Town committees and boards, including dissolving the interview committee and reforming it under a new corporate affairs committee.

The mayor hasn't appointed councillors to the new committee, or the new community affairs committee and Town CAO Steve Andrews said they haven't "sat down yet to strategize about the replacement, yet," adding there's no fixed policy of hiring from within.

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What's Inside



We receive letters from readers on a variety of topics. See Page 4.



Rev. Pieter van Harten was guest speaker at Sunday's unity service which attracted over 900 people. See Page 5.



Acton Legion Ladies Auxiliary members were recipients of long service pins at Saturday's appreciation dinner prepared and served by Legion men. See Page 5.



Wellington OPP canine tracks and helps capture driver in police pursuit that started in County Rd. 124 (Hwy 24). See Page 11.

Student drug use report 'scary'

Fewer drivers charged

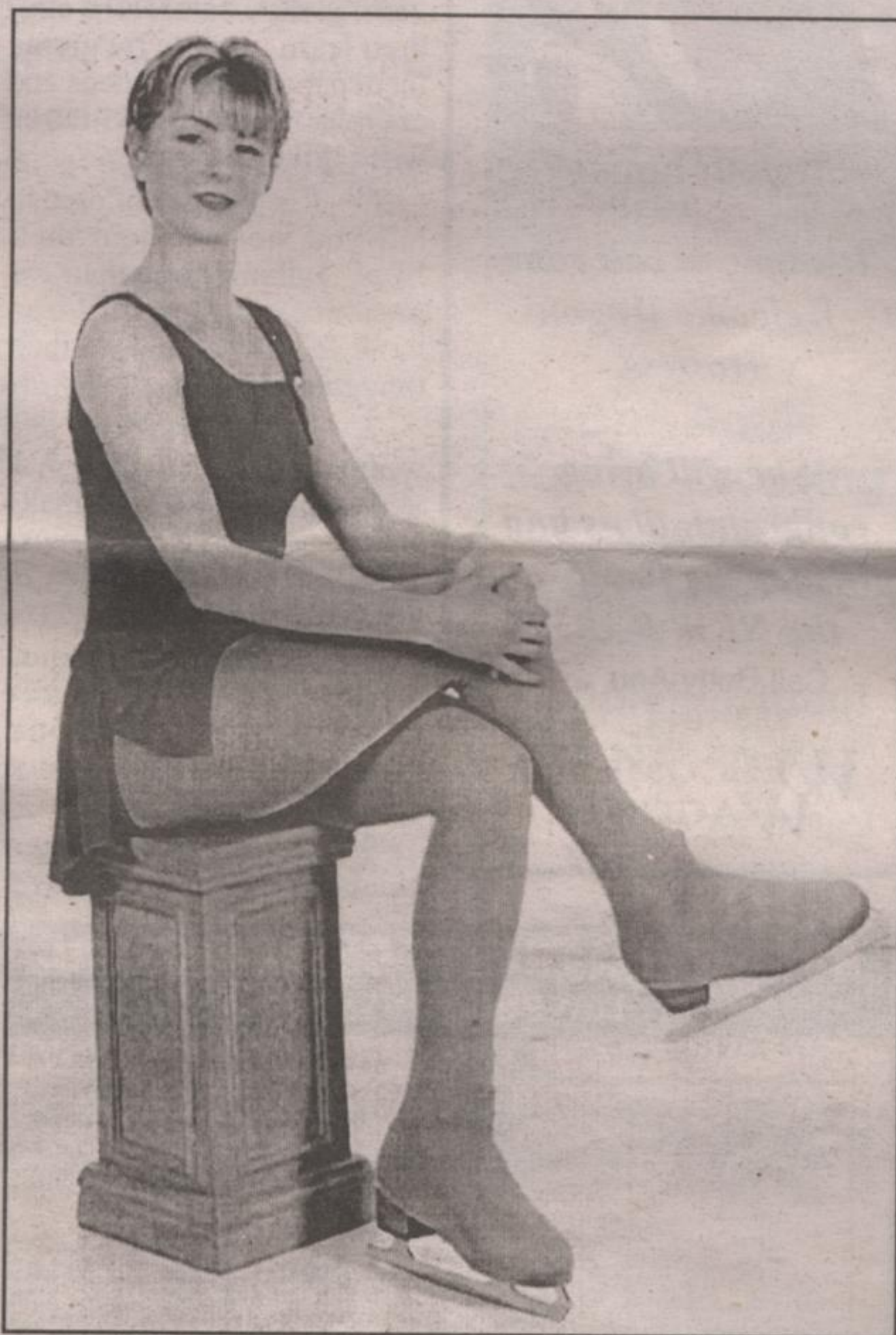
Fewer Halton drivers were charged with drinking and driving this holiday season than last, but year-to-date statistics (as of October) show an alarming 11.1 per cent – to 307 from 276 – increase in impaired and/or over 80 charges over 1999.

Three people were charged during RIDE spot checks this holiday season, the same number as last year and the number of over 80 charges dropped 75 per cent, to one from four the year before.

Twelve-hour suspensions were down 12.6 per cent this holiday season, compared with the year before, but year-to-date figures show a 10.6 per cent increase.

Halton Sergeant Daryl Dalton said spot checks are effective and all of the public education makes people more aware.

"I think they're a little more cautious during that (holiday) time; however, it looks like the problem still remains for the rest of the year," Dalton said.



Rockwood skater Krista Petty

Krista Petty skates at Nationals

Krista Petty's first trip to the Canadian Figure Skating championships was "fun, neat and nerve-wracking," for the 22-year-old skater, a member of the Acton Figure Skating Club.

Petty had several good performances, finishing 20th overall in a field of 37 of Canada's best senior, singles skaters, a "great experience," if not the best skates of her career.

Landing a triple toe loop and two double-Axels, but missing a triple Salchow, Petty finished sixth of 18 skaters in the qualifying round last Tuesday.

Skating in the "huge" Winnipeg arena,

former home to the Jets, with capacity crowds, television crews and "the whole shee-bang," was nerve-wracking, Petty said from her Rockwood home on Monday.

"When I first went into the rink and saw how many people were there and it hit me, 'oh, my gosh,' I'm actually here at the Nationals. It was pretty overwhelming for the first time."

In the short program, featuring eight required elements, Petty doubled a planned triple Lutz-double toe combination, but was "pretty steady" artistically to finish 15th to advance to the free skate final on Sunday.

Continued on Page 11.

Halton drug use mirrors Ontario's

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

In a report called "informative and scary" by one Town councillor and parent, the dramatically rising use of drugs by Halton students was detailed by Halton health department staff to Town councillors in a recent presentation.

Statistically, drug use by Halton students mirrors that of other Ontario students, except Halton teens use less glue and solvents. Students have a variety of reasons for using drugs and a preliminary assessment of mental health data collected in the survey showed those who felt good about themselves were less likely to have used any of the most commonly used substances.

For three months in 1999, 3,304 Halton students in Grades 7 – OAC completed the Halton Students Drug Use Survey, conducted for the Community Action for a Drug-Free Youth committee.

Sixty-nine point six per cent had used alcohol at least once in the past year, 26.3 per cent used cannabis, 11 per cent used hallucinogens and 28.2 per cent used tobacco, the top four most commonly used substances.

Halton public health nurse Lorraine Gold cautioned that frequency of use statistics had to be considered to get more perspective on student drug use, noting over half of the 69.6 per cent of students

who reported drinking alcohol, did so once, at a special event like a wedding or at Christmas.

The survey found gender appeared to have no influence on the reported use of the top four substances – alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other hallucinogens – with the exception of cannabis, with more males than females reporting use.

The survey found, generally, that as the age and grade of the student increased, so did the reported rate of drug use, with Grade 8 students most likely to have tried alcohol for the first time and OAC students most likely to have tried illicit drugs, other than the top four.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health identifies three possible reasons for the increased use, including the belief that drugs are less harmful, drug use seems to be more socially acceptable and drugs are easier to get.

Public health nurse Sharon Every, who works in Halton Hills, said to be effective, substance abuse programs must

Continued on Page 2.

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