

No forced GTA mergers

Queen's Park has lost the urge to force GTA municipalities to merge, but governance is still an issue in Halton and will be the focus at a special meeting later this month of all elected officials in the Region, called by Chairman Joyce Savoline.

Fearing that more forced amalgamations would cost them votes in the 905 (including 519) area, the province said last week that future amalgamations would only be by request of the municipalities, a wise political move according to Acton and Regional Councillor Rick Bonnette.

"Amalgamation has blown up in (Premier) Harris's face, especially the City of Toronto.

I think its proven bigger is not necessarily better," Bonnette said, adding he's been firm on the issue all along, but some Burlington and Oakville councillors still "have an issue with the present system of governance."

"In my opinion, there were a lot of Chicken Little attitudes from the councillors in the south...saying, 'if we don't do it (amalgamate) the government will,' but I said stand firm," Bonnette said, adding the restructuring heat is off and Halton doesn't have to make a "rash decision" about its future.

"If we want to tinker - sure. I'm all for making the system better."



STUDENT AID: Tyler Townsley, a Grade 3 student at Robert Little School, outlined his plan for students to donate money for earthquake victims in India at a school assembly on Friday. Principal Don Warren will ask other Acton schools to participate. - Frances Niblock photo

Aid for poor...

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"He's well aware that there are people a whole less fortunate than those around us," Mrs. Townsley said, adding Robert Little principal, Don Warren, suggested expanding the effort by asking other Acton schools if they want

to participate in the fundraising effort.

Donation jars will be placed in classrooms. If you'd like to donate to the earthquake relief effort, most Acton banks have set up accounts to accept contributions.

18-year-old charged with gas bar robbery

Halton Regional Police have charged an 18 year-old Halton Hills resident with a number of offences after a Georgetown gas bar was robbed at knife point Tuesday night, Feb. 6.

At 9:20 p.m., a masked man armed with a knife approached the lone gas station attendant at Suny's Gas bar on Guelph Street, Georgetown. The man demanded cash and, after receiving an undisclosed amount, he fled on foot. Members of the Halton Regional

Police, including uniform, tactical, canine and identification officers, responded to the incident. There were no injuries.

Aggressive follow-up investigation by members of the #1 District Criminal Investigations Bureau has resulted in the arrest of 18 year-old Halton Hills resident, Eric Kenneth Varley, 18, of Highway 7, Halton Hills. He is charged with Robbery, Disguise with Intent, Breach of Recognizance, and Possession of a Narcotic.

Region appoints new Halton clerk

Halton Regional Council appointed Ms. Tina Agnello as the Regional Clerk for the Regional Municipality of Halton, effective March 1, 2001.

In leading the Clerk's Division at the Region, Agnello will provide support to Regional Council, the Regional Chairman all Standing Committee Chairs, Councillors, and staff on protocol relating to parliamentary procedures, procedural by-laws, and relevant legislation including the Municipal Act, the Regional Municipalities Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Agnello was Legislative Assistant in the City Clerk's Department at the City of Hamilton for ten years. In this position, she gained considerable experience in Committee and Council functions and has intensive knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure and relevant legislation. Before working at the City of

Hamilton, Agnello held the Clerk-Treasurer position at the Township of Georgian Bay.

"Ms. Agnello comes to us with the knowledge and expertise necessary for the Regional Clerk's position," said Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer, Halton Region. "Her municipal experience will be a valuable asset to the Region."

POLICE BEAT

School vandalized

A heavy, unknown object was used to smash more than a dozen glass panels in doors at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School at 2:30 Sunday afternoon. Damage is pegged at \$1,000.

Doors on the north-west side of the school were smashed; nine areas of the mesh-embedded safety glass front doors were smashed and on the east side of the school, the glass door was smashed and a lit safety flare was thrown into the entranceway. It burned out before causing a fire.

Storm damage

Acton firefighters helped secure 15 Side Road between the Third and Fourth Lines until hydro crews could shut off the power to an arcing hydro pole and repairs the lines in the Speyside area at 5:40 a.m. on Friday. There were no injuries.

No permit

Acton firefighters instructed a rural homeowner to apply for a burn permit before burning any more material on his Highway 25 property, located between Five and Ten Side Roads.

Firefighters extinguished an open fire on the property at 7:33 on Monday night.

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Bill Riddle



As you may have seen in this paper, I will be retiring on Feb. 28. I will truly miss working in Acton, and meeting the people of the town. I started here in October of 1988, at that time I was not really sure what the job of a village constable entailed but I thought I would give it a try for the 6 months my inspector requested. I began to learn more about this community and my job, and decided to stay because I liked the job and the people I was working for.

Part of my job was to get to know the community and to get the community to know me. At the start I spent a lot of time walking the beat, visiting store owners and drinking a lot of coffee. If there was a function in town I tried to be involved. I started a community consultation committee to get feedback from the community and ideas about how the community wanted to be policed. Over the years there have been many members of the committee who were all greatly appreciated and I thank them for their contributions.

Over the 12 years I have worked in Acton I have made many friends and have many people to thank for their friendship, their help and their advice. I would like to go to each of them and shake their hands, but this would take a very long time, and I would probably never be finished shaking hands. Luckily I have this column and I can use that to reach out and thank all of them even if I cannot shake their hands. Also, I thank the sponsors of my column who have made this space available over the years and I hope they will maintain the sponsorship of my successor.

The assistance of the Downtown B.I.A. made possible keeping the office on Mill Street. The community spirit of volunteers enabled me to keep the door to the police office open.

The teachers, principals and secretaries of the schools all helped when I had projects such as bicycle rodeos, or helmet clinics; they were all appreciated.

Thanks to all the businesses who have helped me with various projects over the years which showed great community spirit.

There will be many people or committees that I have not mentioned, and I hope they will forgive me.

To all the people of Acton, I enjoyed my 12 years, and I wish I could stay for another 12, but I cannot.

Thank you, Acton.

Braida & Henry

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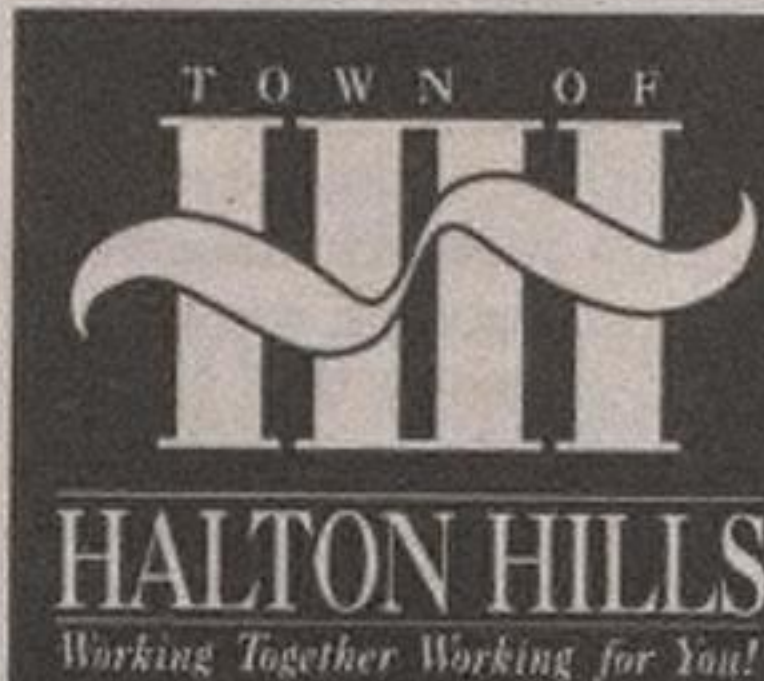
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