

Local woman killed in head-on crash

The police investigation continues into a horrific two-car head-on crash that killed an Acton woman and sent her husband and the other driver, a 31-year-old Rockwood woman, to hospital with serious injuries.

Esther Gay (Nesset) Sutton, 46, of Main Street, North, was trapped in her husband's car, when rescue officials arrived at the scene on Highway 25, just north of 15 Side

Road at 6:25 p.m. She died at the scene.

Her 52-year-old husband, Ron Sutton, was transferred to St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, where he's listed in serious condition.

At press time, police had not released the identity of the second driver, a Rockwood woman who is in serious condition in intensive care at Sunnybrook Hospital.


"The cars were just absolutely destroyed - everyone had to be extricated by the fire department - it was a very tragic and horrific scene," said Halton Detective-Sergeant Jackie Gordon, who was at the accident location, adding there are a lot of unexplained circumstances to be investigated.

"You've got a head-on collision, so somebody was obviously in someone else's lane

and that's what we're trying to find out," Gordon said.

Police said that the Suttons were southbound on the former Highway 25 in a Buick LeSabre, when a northbound Chevrolet Cavalier allegedly travelled over the centre line and impacted head-on with the Sutton's car.

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What's Inside



Acton volleyballer, Jeff Birrell, will likely head to the Olympics. See Page 9.



Yawning pot holes on Queen St. alarmed motorists on Sunday. See photo Page 11.



What's the real meaning of Easter. See story on Page 4.

Elementary teachers and the Halton Board of Education have ratified a new contract. See Page 3.

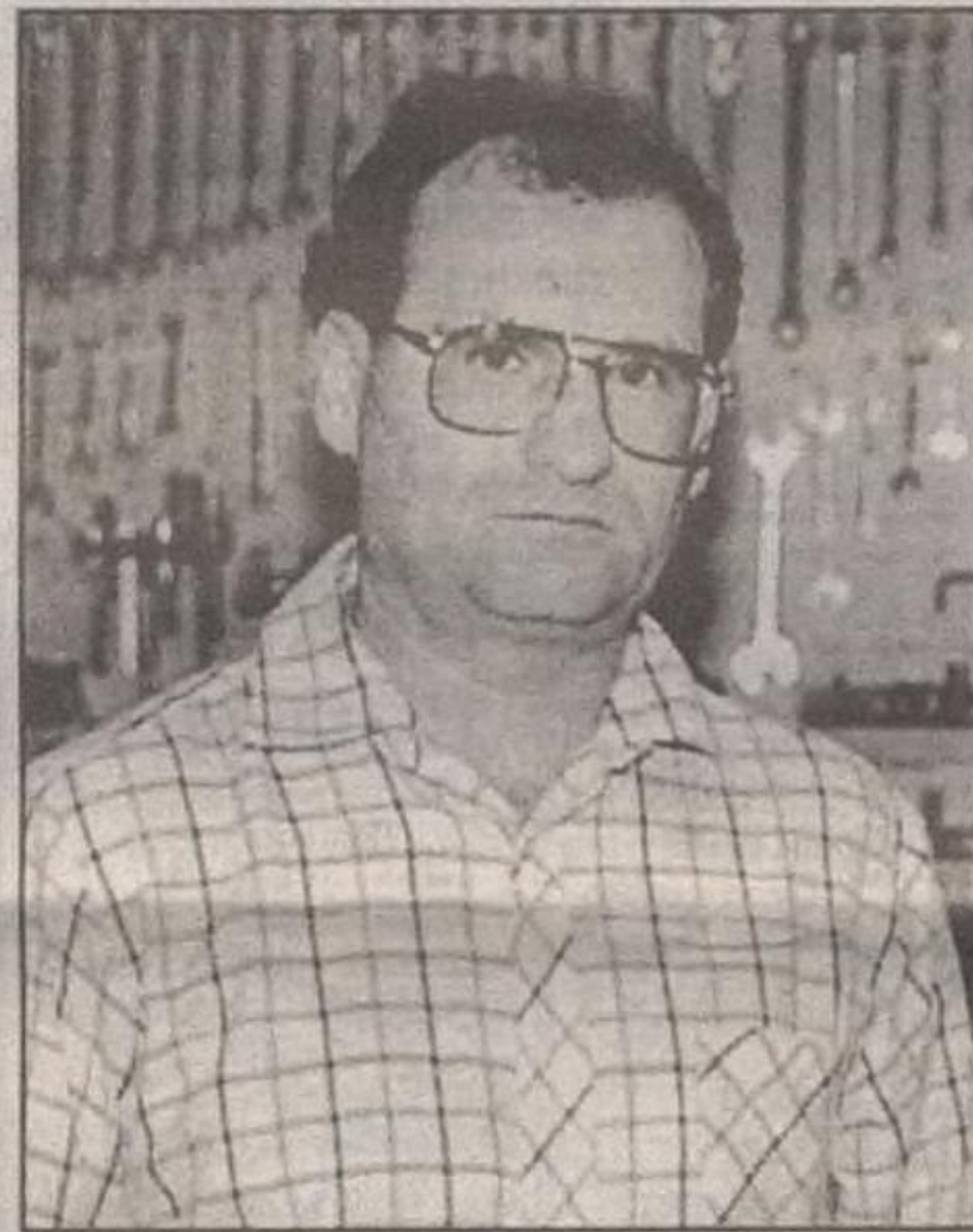
Abducted daughter to come home

Vandals smash windows

Police believe vandals used their feet and an unknown blunt object to smash \$6,000 worth of windows at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School in a wild spree of senseless destruction discovered at 7:15 Sunday morning by patrolling police.

Police said 35 windows were smashed, school officials say it was 21, around the entire school, including the pool entrance doors, the north end entrances and 19 exterior

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Bruce Davitt



Betsy Davitt

U.S. court gives Acton man custody

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
 The New Tanner

Acton dad Bruce Davitt is counting the days until his daughter, Betsy, is returned to Canada after he won a cross-border tug-of-war with his ex-wife over custody of the girl.

Last Thursday, Davitt received news that his American lawyer had convinced the U.S. District Court in Grand Rapids, Mich., to recommend that under Hague Convention rules on international child abduction, Betsy should be returned to him.

Davitt was given school-year custody of Betsy by an Ontario family court in 1997, after the couple separated. Betsy's mother refused to return her to Davitt just before last Labour Day.

Although his ex-wife has 10 days to appeal the decision, Betsy could be home within the week.

"The magistrate judge said she could see that Betsy had been influenced by the adults around her in the U.S. and although she said she wanted to stay with her mother, she was too young to make that decide," an elated Davitt said after receiving the good news.

Although the court order said Betsy was to be returned to him "forthwith," Davitt wasn't sure exactly when he and Betsy would be reunited, but hopes it's soon.

"She called her sister and after saying she was sad

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Acton students average in test

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
 The New Tanner

Sixty-six per cent of the Grade 10 students at Acton High School passed both the reading and writing components of the first province-wide literacy test.

Eighteen per cent of the 119 Acton students failed both components of the test conducted last October. The results don't count this year, but a pass will be required to graduate beginning next year.

Across the province, 61 per cent of all eligible students passed both the written and reading parts of the test and 13 per cent failed both. Students have their individual results and boards of education are now analyzing their individual school results.

Halton's superintendent of program services, Barry Finlay, cautioned against school-to-school comparisons.

"Literacy skills are developmental and learned over a lifetime. We have to

remember the 35 per cent of students who were not successful in the written part of the test, did so because they didn't follow instructions," Finlay said on Monday.

"We don't know what that means until we look at each individual student. For example, a student may be very articulate, both orally and in writing, but only did three paragraphs instead of four (on the test) and therefore was deemed unsuccessful because they didn't follow the instructions," Finlay said adding, "Let's not leap to they're not literate."

As individual schools review their own results, Finlay said they would look for common areas for improvement Board-wide.

Halton Catholic Results
 Seventy-eight per cent of the Bishop Reding High School students (including those from the Acton area) successfully completed the literacy test.

A total of 1,454 Grade 10 students in all five of the Halton Catholic Board's high schools wrote the test. In a press release Diane Rabena, the Board's superintendent of education, said comparing schools might be human nature, but it can be very inappropriate and misleading.

"These test results are of value because they provide additional data to assist us in evaluating where we are and where we want to be," Rabena said.

Both Halton boards are developing strategies to improve literacy, including a Grade 11 course focusing on reading and writing, a teacher adviser program to help develop study skills and test taking strategies.

Immediate help is available for students who didn't complete, or pass, including literacy materials supplied by both Halton boards of education and on-line at the Education Quality and Accountability Office at www.eqa.com

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