



KINETTE DANCERS: Hundreds of kids lined up outside the Acton Arena recently for the hugely popular Kinette Teen Dance.—*Frances Niblock photo.*

Cost \$21,000 to impliment Town's new smoking bylaw

It will cost the Town \$21,000 to implement its new smoking bylaw that made Halton Hills workplaces and public places 100 per cent smoke-free on July 1.

All businesses have received information packages including a copy of the bylaw, a no smoking sign and list of frequently asked questions. The Town bylaw enforcement staff have visited 60 to 75 per cent of 90 establishments most affected by the bylaw.

Establishments will receive a second courtesy call to ensure staff has been trained, and warning letters would be issued to anyone in contravention of the bylaw.

Staff said actual enforcement of the bylaw would be done by "two out-sourced investigators" at a cost of 160 hours over the next year. After that, Town staff would respond to smoking bylaw violation complaints.

If someone refused to put out a cigarette, the owner of the establishment could call police and have them enforce the Trespass to Property Act.

The maximum fine in the

TOWN DIGEST

Town's bylaw for smoking in public or workplace is \$5,000, but Bob Ustrzycki, the Town's Manager of Enforcement Services said the number of people charged and taken to court won't measure the program.

"It is going to be measured by not having to take anybody into court — that will measure how successful we are," Ustrzycki said on Monday, adding staff reported positive comments about the new bylaw from the public on the weekend.

Performance anxiety

How much does worthless information cost?

Two thousand and forty dollars (\$2,040.00) and 43 hours of staff time according to Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary who authored a Notice of Motion asking Queen's Park to scrap the Municipal Performance Measurement Program.

It requires municipalities to supply annual data showing how it measured up in key service areas, including corporate management and governance, the cost of providing water, paved roads and the number of hectares of agricultural land that was re-designated for other uses.

Mayor Rick Bonnette called the town's fourth year of filing performance measurements a waste of money and a "bloody waste of time."

Treasurer Ed DeSousa said Halton's four municipalities have made a conscious decision not to compare each other's results because of differing levels of services in each municipality and differing accounting systems that don't allow apples to apples comparisons.

Councillor O'Leary stressed that it wasn't a case of the information not being available, but it won't be brought together in a report that "doesn't mean anything, other than to some bureaucrat to fill a file."

While the province does not issue a report card on municipal performance results, it does list them on the Ministry of Housing Web site.

Appoint new associate MOH

Halton Region CAO Brent Marshall and Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health announced the appointment of Dr. Monir Taha to the position of associate medical officer of health for Halton.

Dr. Taha has most recently held the position of Associate Medical Officer of Health for the City of Hamilton.

Acton youngster fights deadly SMA disease

By **FRANCES NIBLOCK**
The New Tanner

Four-year-old Rebecca Van Fraassen of Limehouse is in a life and death race against time with Spinal Muscular Atrophy, (SMA) the number one genetic killer of children under two.

The Senior Kindergarten student at St. Joseph Catholic School, who is confined to a wheelchair, is battling the paralyzing disease at a time when a treatment or cure has never been closer.

Recently, the National Institute of Health in the USA declared that it could foresee three diseases being cured or treated within the next five years — HIV, malaria and SMA.

That pronouncement gave "great hope" to Rebecca's family, including mother Theresa Van Fraassen, who recently returned from a SMA conference in the USA, where researchers presented data showing mice treated with sodium butyrate had decreased effects of SMA.

Rebecca has just finished baseline testing in Montreal in preparation for a clinical trial of a FDA approved treatment for SMA using valproic acid, now used to treat pediatric seizures.

"I just heard at the conference — just anecdotal stuff — that said children who could not move their heads were given this drug and now they could (move)," mom Therese Van Fraassen said recently.

"So there's great hope — it's not just a desperate mother thinking that it wouldn't it be nice if there was something to help my little girl. There's actually hope that there's something in the works that could benefit Rebecca in her lifetime," Van Fraassen said.

When Rebecca was diagnosed three years ago, the doctors gave her family a death sentence, saying there was no cure and no treatment, but her mother said she is strong, and because the disease — like a childhood version of ALS disease — progresses slowly and "they have time" to work for a miracle.

Three years ago, Rebecca's aunt, Louise Smith, decided she wanted to help raise money to help



Rebecca Van Fraassen

find a cure, and organized a run for SMA in Newmarket.

The first year they raised \$45,000, that was matched by an anonymous donor, and last year's event raised approximately \$77,000, a "phenomenal" amount of money, according to Van Fraassen, who can't say enough about her sister-in-law's efforts to fight the disease.

"Louise is a runner and she set up a run that was so darn successful that people have a chance to make their donation really count," Van

Fraassen said, adding the whole family will take part in the third annual mastic (the corporate sponsor) Rebecca Run for SMA on July 10 in Newmarket.

Van Fraassen said she is also "overwhelmed" with the response to a fundraiser at the Acton Sobeys store.

A \$2 donation to the SMA Run earns the donor a chance in a draw for a barbecue package donated by Sobeys and Acton Home Hardware. (That prize package was presented to the lucky winner after press time on Wednesday.)

Van Fraassen said Rebecca knows she has SMA and is "pretty accepting of the way she is," partially because of the way she is treated by fellow students and friends.

"It's just one less thing to worry about because they've all embraced her and they all want to be her friend. She just went to her first birthday party sleepover and it is great just to know she can do normal things like that."

New Region Commissioner

Halton Council and Halton CAO Brent Marshall announced the appointment of Peter Crockett, P. Eng. to the position of Commissioner, Planning and Public Works for Halton Region.

Mr. Crockett most recently held the position of General Manager, Public Works for the City of Hamilton. Prior to working with the City of Hamilton, Mr. Crockett held a series of increasingly responsible management positions with Peel Region.

"Mr. Crockett brings a range of experience, including public works operations and transportation planning, to the Region. This combination of skills and experience will ensure Peter is a valuable addition to Halton's Management Team as well as an effective leader within the Planning and Public Works department," said Brent Marshall, Halton CAO.

Marshall recongized the contributions made by Ms. Jane Clohecy as Acting Commissioner, Planning and Public Works for the past few months. "I want to thank Jane for filling in as acting Commissioner, for the great strength and leadership she has demonstrated and for the tremendous support she has provided to me, to Regional Council, to the Planning and Public Works Department and to the Region," said Marshall.



POND PYROTECHNICS: Thousands lined the banks of Fairy Lake and crowded the west end of Prospect Park to enjoy Acton Firefighter's annual Canada Day Fireworks, which were described as "Spectacular" and "best yet." The park crowd also enjoyed the concert prior to the fireworks featuring the Robert Little dance troupe, Jenna Lynn Flesch, Georgetown Seniors Band CNE Idol Casey Manierka.

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