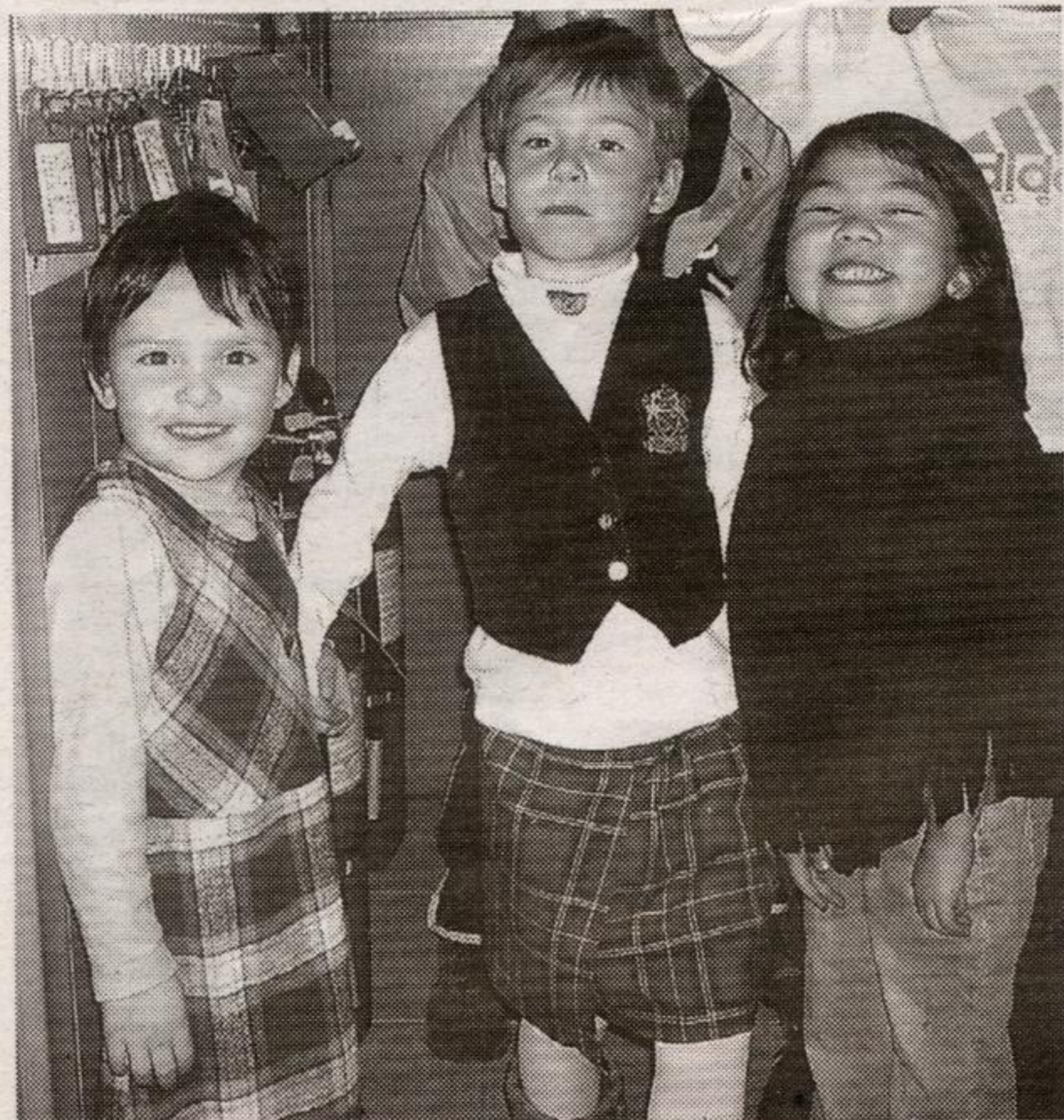


Sale of Town land put on hold



A proposal to sell some Town-owned surplus land beside the Civic Centre for medium/high density development has been put on hold, at the request of Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary, pending a review of Town financing methods.

In 2001, Council voted to sell part or all of the property, with the southerly block designed for single family housing, to help pay \$1.1-million towards the costs of twinning the Alcott arena and help build the Gellert Centre.

In a report to Council last week, staff recommended that the northerly block be marketed for medium/high density housing and the southerly block not be sold for development at this time.

O'Leary cautioned that Council might have long-term regrets if it sells part or all of the property, adding a deferral is an opportunity to look at the Town's capital expenditures and the new pay-as-you-go policy for new facilities.

"With the number of new capital expenditures that we have to make in a relatively short time - fire halls and libraries and other things - to say that financing projects is going to be a challenge is an understatement," O'Leary said, asking for a "critical look" at the financing policy because it will have an impact on whether the lands are ever sold.

Georgetown Councillor Moya Johnson wants an over-all updated review of where various densities will be allowed before selling the property in question.

TOWN DIGEST

TIME WASTED

It would be a waste of staff time to keep track of how much time each councillor puts on the job - and it might be frightening for councillors to see how little they are paid for their "part-time" work.

After a full afternoon and evening of town business at the Civic Centre, Georgetown Councillor Mike Davis asked if the clerk keeps track of council and committee hours.

Mayor Rick Bonnette was not impressed.

"How on earth could the clerk keep track of the hours that councillors do, I mean, unless we are going to be putting in time sheets..." Bonnette said, adding it sounded like a make work project for the clerk, and "frankly, who cares?"

Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary drew chortles from his colleagues when he said he didn't even want to think what the hourly rate of pay for a municipal politician might be. He suggested that anyone who wanted to track their hours could do it in their day-timer.

Ward Two Councillor Joan Robson agreed, and said what is important is the commitment to their jobs, not how many hours they put in, adding they probably make an embarrassing "two bucks an

hour."

Councillors recently voted to forgo a wage increase for this term of office. Town councillors earn \$19,800, and the mayor earns \$46,600.

Two motions from Georgetown Councillor Mike Davis designed to improve voter turnout - 33 per cent in the last municipal election - were rejected by Town councillors last Monday.

The first, which lost on a 5-5 tie, asked the province to review the Municipal Elections Act for comparison with other jurisdictions' voting laws to look at experiences with mail-in ballots, phone-in voting or having polls at train stations to help get out

the vote.

Regional Wards 1/2 Councillor Clark Somerville voted against the motion, saying they don't need to duplicate existing federal and provincial governments voting initiatives.

Davis' second motion, which lost 9-1, asked for a Town committee to look for ways to improve municipal voting.

Davis said he is not critical of how the Town clerk ran the last election, but wants to discuss ways to increase voter turnout.

Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary voted against the motion saying he doesn't think the

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SANTA'S LITTLE HELPERS: Children of all ages celebrated Christmas at the Tyler Transport annual Christmas party last Thursday night, despite the nasty weather. - Danielle Mclsaac photo

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