



**RIDING IN STYLE:** These children enjoyed a ride to school on a fire truck. The ride was a silent auction item donated by the Rockwood Eramosa Fire Fighters Association in support of the Rockwood Centennial Playground fund. Their Christmas sale and silent auction was a resounding success, raising over \$7000. Combined with a recent battery sale ('tis the season) and generous donations, such as Druxler Construction's gift of \$300, the fund has reached over \$40,000 toward the \$50,000 goal. Pictured are fire fighters Bernie Liebig and Gilles Allarie, with Jamie, Penny, and William Richards. Photo by Rebecca Ring

## 41-year-old West Gary woman dies in single car crash Monday

A 41-year-old West Garafraxa woman died as the result of a single motor vehicle collision on the Sixth Line of West Garafraxa Twp. on Monday shortly after noon. Wellington OPP said the collision occurred when a 2002 Hyundai travelling south on the Sixth Line skidded off the roadway, rolled over and struck a tree.

Claudia Hildega Brebaum, 41, the driver, was pronounced dead at the scene. The Sixth Line was closed between Side Road 20 and Side Road 25 while officers conducted their investigation. Members of the Wellington O.P.P. Traffic Management Unit along with the Western Region O.P.P. Traffic Management Unit were called to the

scene to assist with the investigation. Firefighters from the Center Wellington Fire Department were at the scene and assisted with extrication of the deceased. The coroner, Dr. J. Ewen, was also there. An autopsy was ordered and took place at Guelph General Hospital on December 20, 2005.

## Departing principal asks Council to help fund Eramosa P.S. playground

By Rebecca Ring  
The Rockwood Miller

At the last meeting of Guelph Eramosa Township Council, principal Cheryl Van Ooteghem and supporter Ron Hawkins requested funds for Eramosa Public School's playground needs. The Ministry of Education removed playground equipment deemed unsafe but will not fund its' replacement. The Upper Grand District School Board is not responsible for its' replacement and has no available funds. The onus is on the community to provide playground equipment for its' children.

Van Ooteghem is going to leave her position at Eramosa Public School in January. As one of her last acts in office, she came to council to stress the dire need for this equipment and requested \$1000 "in cash or kind." She stressed the stability and success of this school, as it recently celebrated its' 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She said "it will be around for at least another 40 years." She said the community should be proud of the students, as they were the best she ever taught. She added that there are only about 90 families

with children at the school so they need to look to the larger community to share the responsibility, using the adage "it takes a village."

Chris White said he supported the past motion to donate \$500 to each township school playground and would support another \$500 each. He said this is a "school board versus township issue but in reality no government is taking responsibility. In this era of growing obesity and diabetes in children, it is a shame there are no [school] playgrounds in the community."

Les Foote asked if there was any donation funds left in the 2005 budget. CAO Janice Shepherd said there is \$1450.

David McCrae said "I don't like this aspect of getting into this domain. It galls me that I already pay education taxes and the Ministry of Education doesn't step up to the plate." Van Ooteghem responded with "If we don't take responsibility, then who will?"

McCrae asked if the better value was \$1000 in cash or kind. White said that families are volunteering time and cash is harder to get, so cash is better. Mc-

Crae asked what it would take to get the province involved. He said "school boards have no money - so they say. Is there anything to be done?" Van Ooteghem said she does not know what else can be done. Hawkins suggested that council approach the county.

Council resolved to donate \$500 from the 2005 budget and \$500 from the 2006 budget to both Eramosa and Rockwood Centennial Public Schools. The motion carried, with Theresa Gibson Smye opposing. She said "It is a tough call. We are between a rock and a hard place. Municipalities are bearing the brunt of the province's downloading of responsibilities. This is a motherhood and apple pie issue and I hate to be the bad guy but provincial and federal downloading is resulting in higher property taxes." She added that she has contributed funds on a personal level.

Mayor Clint Martin supported the motion but said "I don't like doing this but I see no choice. The federal government is not taking care of this." Van Ooteghem thanked council for their support "from myself and the children."

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