



Paramedics visited the Georgetown hospital recently to raise their concerns about privatization of ambulance service. They would like to see the region take ambulance service in-house when it takes over the service in two years. Joining the paramedics were members of the hospital's staff. Pictured are hospital maintenance technician Andrew Johnston, paramedic Gary Smith, hospital housekeeper/aid Kim Sheppard, paramedics Michael Dick and Carmen D'Angelo. Photo by Herb Garbutt

Region wants to maintain current ambulance service

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Nosal said that is among the possibilities that will be studied before the region takes over.

"We haven't ruled anything out," he said. "All our options are still on the table."

Kearsey shared the concerns about privatization. He recalled a trip to Hawaii about 10 years ago.

"We were on the scene of an incident and before they said, 'How are you,' they said, 'How are you planning to pay for this?'"

D'Angelo said Halton Hills would be better served by an in-house system than by a volunteer service.

"I have the utmost respect for the volunteers. They dedicate their own personal time for the betterment of the community. (But) because they're not advanced paramedics, you're not going to get that same level of service as the people who call (911) in Burlington and Oakville."

Nosal said the region consulted with hospital staff in Georgetown and they expressed no concerns about the service delivered by the volunteers.

"We have to have the same qualifications as paramedics in larger centres," Kearsey said.

Were the Region to take control of the ambulance service, D'Angelo said they could hire the volunteers full-time and invest in training them rather than paying a management fees to an outside organization.

Nosal said that's not the case. He said if the service were to be taken in-house, the management fees would be spent on hiring staff to oversee the service.

"The management costs are similar taking (ambulance service) in-house," he said.

About half a dozen hospital workers came out to show their support for the paramedics. They shared similar concerns about privatization. Kim Sheppard, a housekeeper/aid and president of the CUPE Local 145, said the hospital already contracts out groundskeeping and snow removal— jobs that were once handled by hospital staff.

"We're all in the same boat," she said.

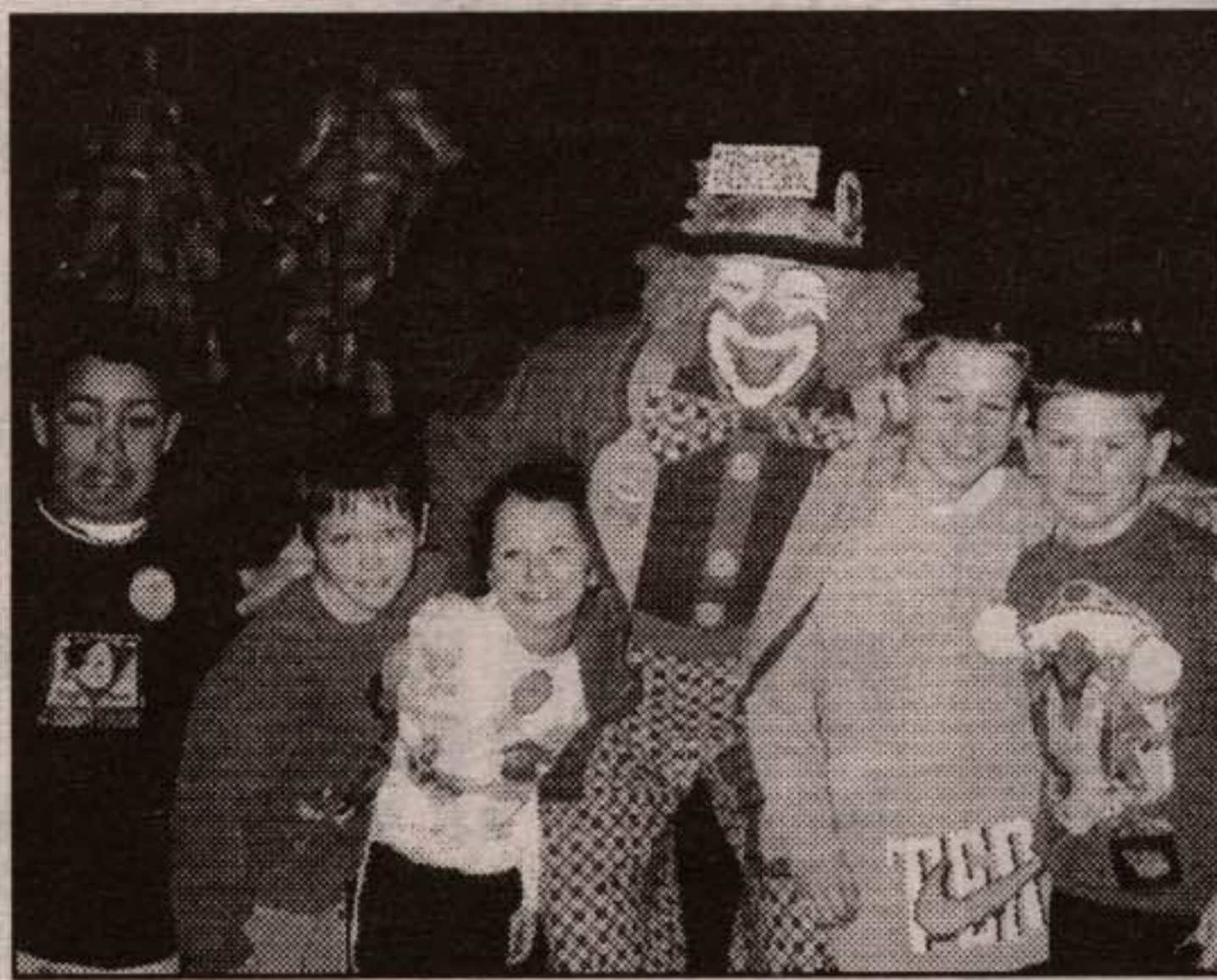
—By Herb Garbutt staff writer, with files from Irene Gentle

Picture this!



Georgetown Citizens of the Year Shell and May Lawr were recently honored with a dinner and awards ceremony as Georgetown Lions Club Citizen of the Year committee chair Doug Penrice (left) presented the plaque at the Lions hall.

Photo by Ted Brown



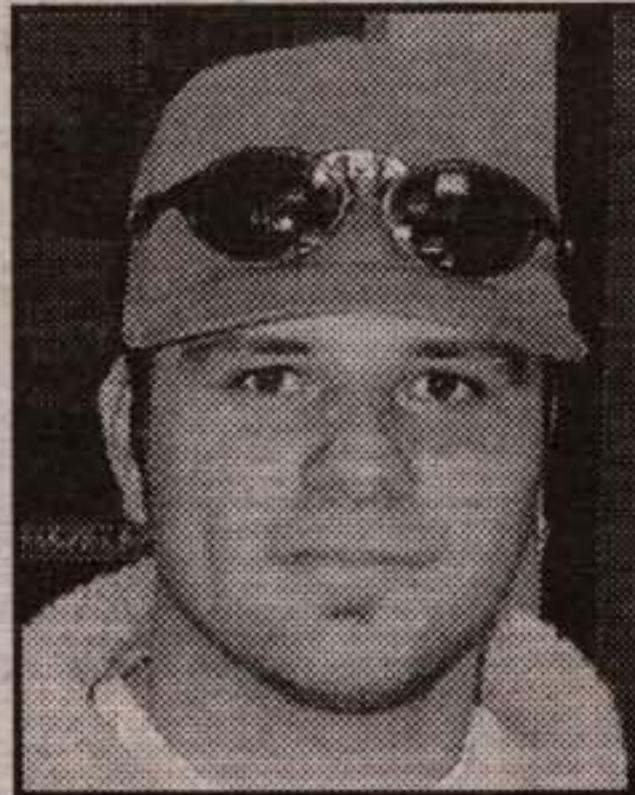
George Kennedy Public School got treated to a day at the circus recently. Garden Bros. Circus provided 750 tickets for all the students and 150 for parents and staff to attend the circus at SkyDome. Clowning around at the circus were (from left) Rafael Shortridge, Brent Jones, Allysha King, Troy Breen and Alex Bowmer. Submitted photo



The annual Zellers Skate-a-Thon for Cystic Fibrosis was held Sunday at Acton Arena and taking part in the many events were, from left, organizer Carrie Gemmel, Zeddy the bear, Kari Ann Hicks, who raised \$824, and Zellers merchandizing manager Greg Pepper. Photo by Eve Martin

What You Said

'Do you think NATO should send ground troops into Kosovo?'



Jay McNeil, Georgetown, student

"I don't like it because I think they have a few more problems to iron out before they decide to take such measures."



Patrick Donoghue, Georgetown, student

"Eventually yes because they've got to make sure the internal security is maintained. Maybe in a week or so."



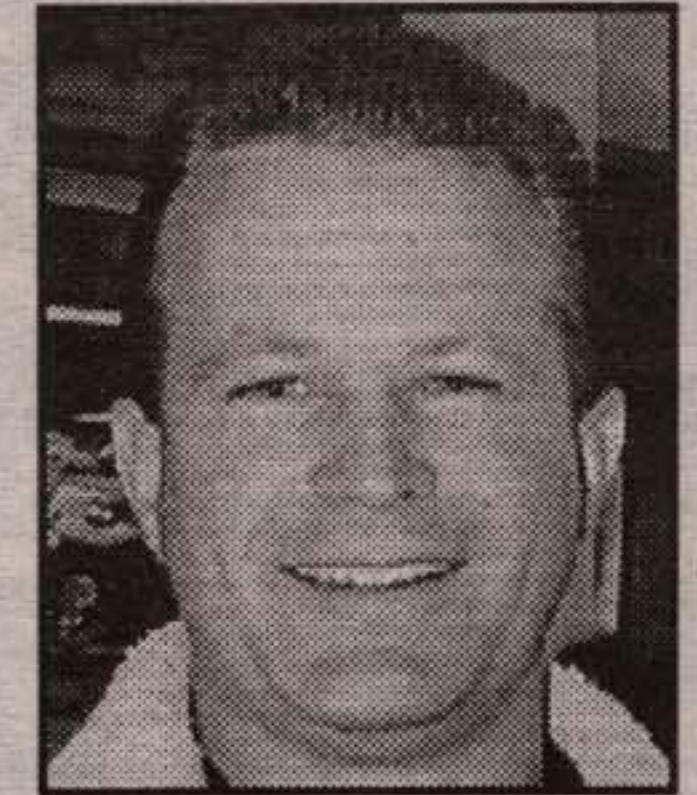
Brooke Ferley, Acton, student

"Yes, I do think they should send the ground troops into Kosovo. It's a threat to humanity and it's been going on for so long that something has to be done to solve the problem."



Katie Gatehouse, Acton, student

"No, I don't think so. I don't agree with the whole thing. I think a lot of innocent people are dying. With the bombing innocent people are being killed and the person they are trying to prove this to is still walking around."

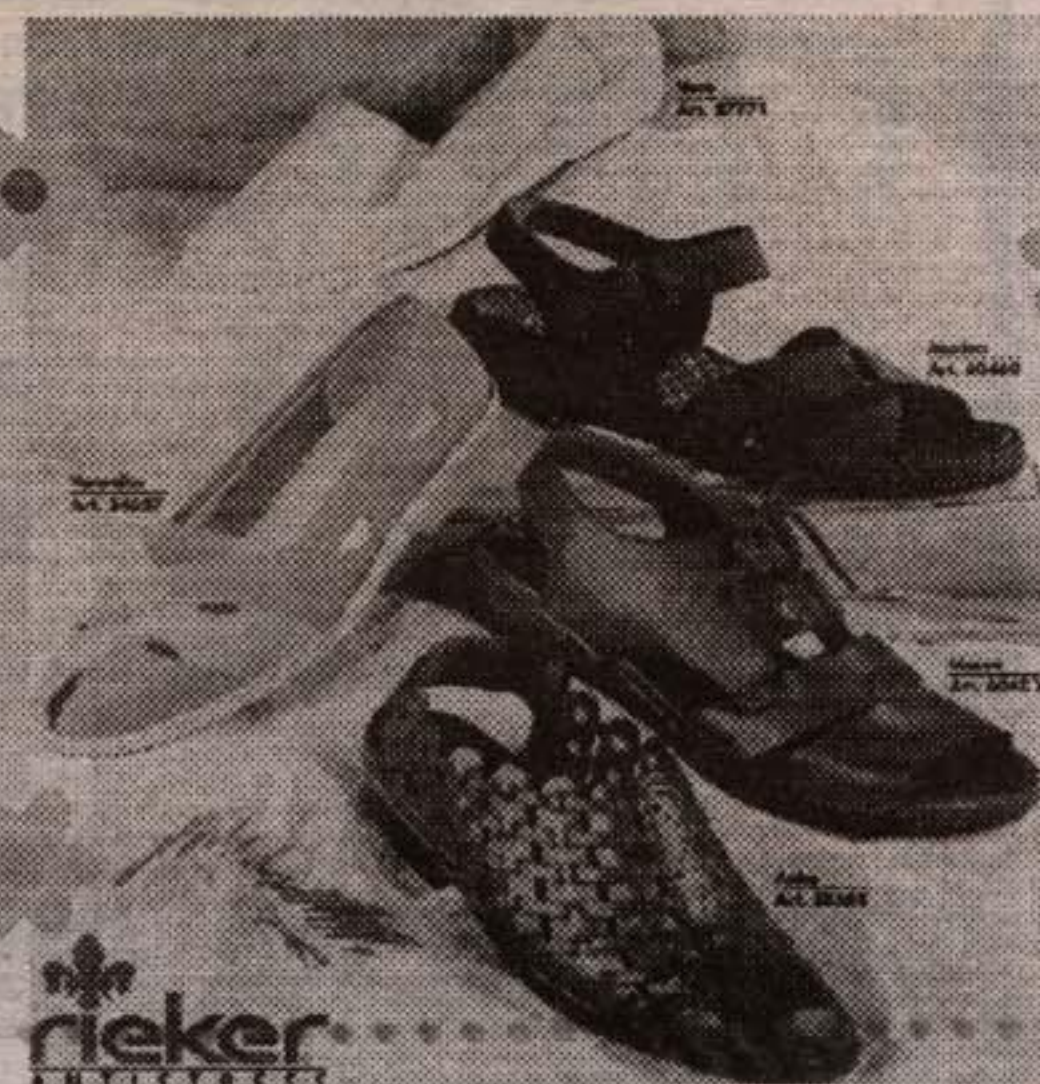


Mike Relf, Cambridge, agriculture/rural rep

"I think they're going to have to. The air strikes are enough to control military capability but without people on the ground they're not going to get to the root of the problem in terms of ethnic cleansing."



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