Councilllors shoot down proposal to reopen budget

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two: to pay for the complex when it's officially approved. Voting for option two: Councillors Rick Bonnette, Ron Chatten, Norm Elliott, Kevin Kuiack and Moya Johnson. Voting against (and supporting option one): Councillors John Day, Jane Fogal, Bob Inglis and Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson. The town will continue to

explore option three.

impacted.

Elliott said the recreational complex is a long way from becoming fait accompli, and when it's a definite go, only then would he be prepared to see taxes

Chatten pointed out the overall taxes were not reduced as result of council's work (town taxes actually increased by \$53), but because education taxes dropped by \$85. He said it would be

unfair to touch that money.

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But Fogal disagreed. "This is an opportunity (the tax decrease) for us to grab onto. I think for most people 2.5 or 2 per cent is not going to make much difference to them—it's money in their pocket. But it allows us a lot of flexiblity to move ahead on these projects... (and) not to have an increase in taxes when we build these facilities."

DeSousa pointed out in his report, "Any new facilities would not only involve the annual debt servicing costs, but the annual operating costs as well. Combined, they will have a significant impact on the operating budget and some definite long-term planning is required."

Budget committee also decided not to reopen the budget to help finance the hiring of consultants to fight developers' plan to build on Main St. S. lands next to Hungry Hollow. An OMB hearing has been set for late fall, and at last week's council meeting, town administrator Steve Andrews estimated it would cost the town about \$80,000. The town's current OMB budget has been used up, he said, with the Georgetown South OMB hearing in February and March and with numerous other cases.

Committee decided to utilize the Contingency Reserve (with a current balance of \$370,000) to pay for consultants up to a maximum of \$75,000.

Final approval of these decisions won't take place until the Monday, May 31 council meeting.

\$40M capital forecast okayed

Talton Hills budget committee approved a 2000-2008 preliminary capital forecast Lamounting to about \$40 million, Monday night.

The 2000 forecast includes an \$8.2 million recreational complex, \$1.5 million fire station and \$2.3 million in public works, including projects on Poplar Ave./Crescent St. in Acton, Fourth Line, Sixth Line, and Park Ave. The forecast also includes \$50,000 to pay for a Georgetown/Norval Hwy. 7 bypass environmental assessment.

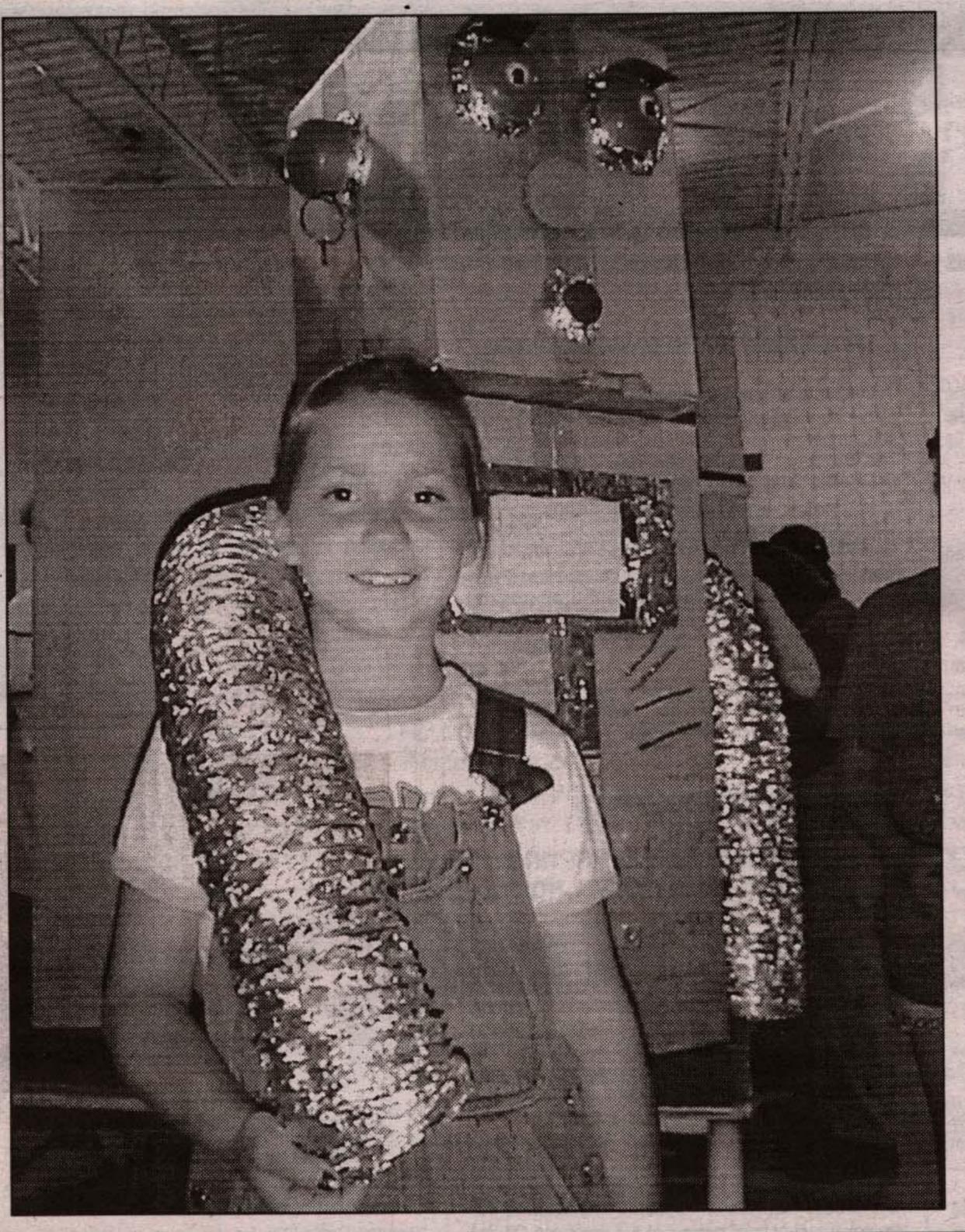
Fire Chief Bill Cunningham said a report on the proposed replacement of a fire station building at the Maple Ave. site will come later in the year, but added the current building does not serve as a functional station.

Besides the recreation complex, the recreation department forecast for 2000 calls for improvements to local parks such as Wallace St. in Acton, trails and and tree planting.

Plans forecast in the remaining years include a library, trail development, fire truck, a second fire station to be located in Georgetown South and a myriad of park, facility and road improvements.

Including a project in the forecast does not mean the town will definitely go ahead on a project. The forecast is only a strategy— a starting point for capital budget deliberations held each year. This forecast's approval is not official until council votes on it on May 31.

-Stories by Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



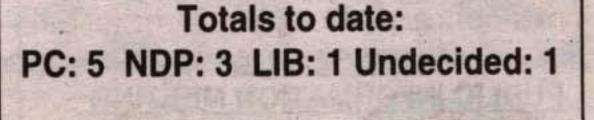
Invention Convention contraptions

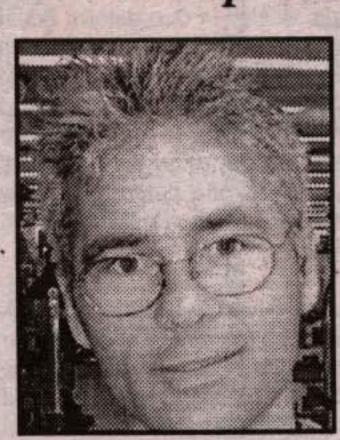
Students at George Kennedy School recently displayed their ingenuity at the school's Invention Convention. Carly Wendt, a Grade 3 student, shows off My Robot Maid, an invention to help out with all household chores. Other inventions ranged from a weekly waterer that keeps plants healthy while people are on vacation and Skat Cat which helped one youngster catch her pet cat.

Photos by Herb Garbutt

What You Said

'Which party to do intend to vote for in the provincial election and why?'





John Stewart, Georgetown, technician

"I'll stick with Harris. He's making some tough decisions someone should have to. I would like to know how he's going to attack the debt. I don't mind paying high taxes as long as (my daughter) doesn't have to."



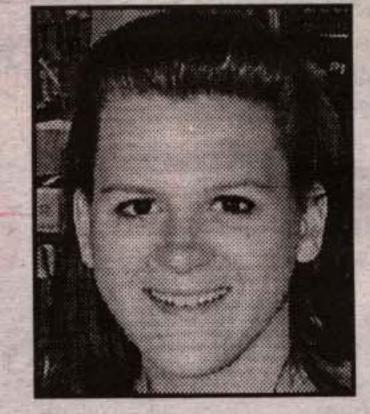
Leah Podaras, Georgetown, rehabilitation

"I really haven't decided. Harris said it was going to be nasty and it was. I don't know about what he said about the hospitals (about discharging patients too quickly), I just had a baby and I was out after 24 hours. I think the tax cuts are unnecessary. We don't need those."



Tom Podaras, Georgetown, computer engineer

"I'm having a hard time deciding. A lot of people I know are, too. I might lean toward the NDP. It will probably come down to health care and education."



Amy Rasmussen, Georgetown, early childhood educator

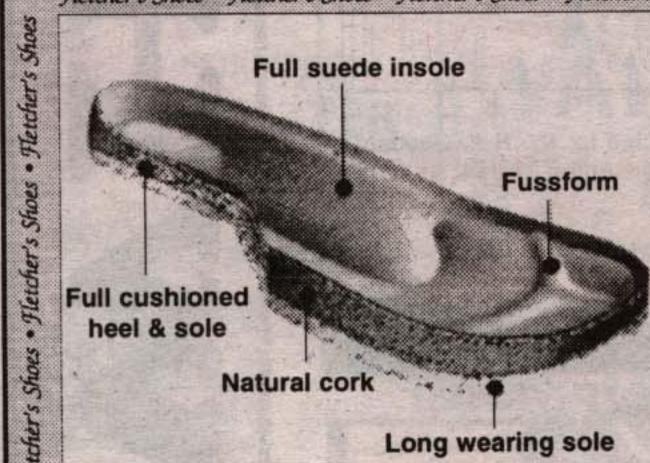
"I'll probably go Liberal or NDP. I don't really like Mike Harris. I'm an early childhood educator and I don't think the school cuts have been appropriate. The NDP have had a good campaign."



Faith Routhier, Georgetown, accountant

"The Liberals. I like their general platform. I usually vote Liberal."

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