

# Sports & Leisure

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## For 22 years of service to minor hockey Hockey Heritage to honour Wayne Pries

By HERB GARBUTT  
Staff Writer

The face of minor hockey has undergone many changes in the past 20 years and Wayne Pries has been like the local plastic surgeon.

Pries played a major role in two of the biggest changes in Georgetown minor hockey. He helped to amalgamate the Georgetown Minor Hockey Support Group, which presided over rep hockey, and the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association, which oversaw house league hockey. He would later serve as president of the merged group from 1985 to 1990.

Pries was also instrumental in forming the Halton Hurricanes, which opened up a new opportunity for local hockey players looking to play at a higher level.

Pries' 22 years of contributions to the local hockey scene extend well beyond those two events and it is for that reason that he has been presented with the 2001 Georgetown Hockey Heritage Award.

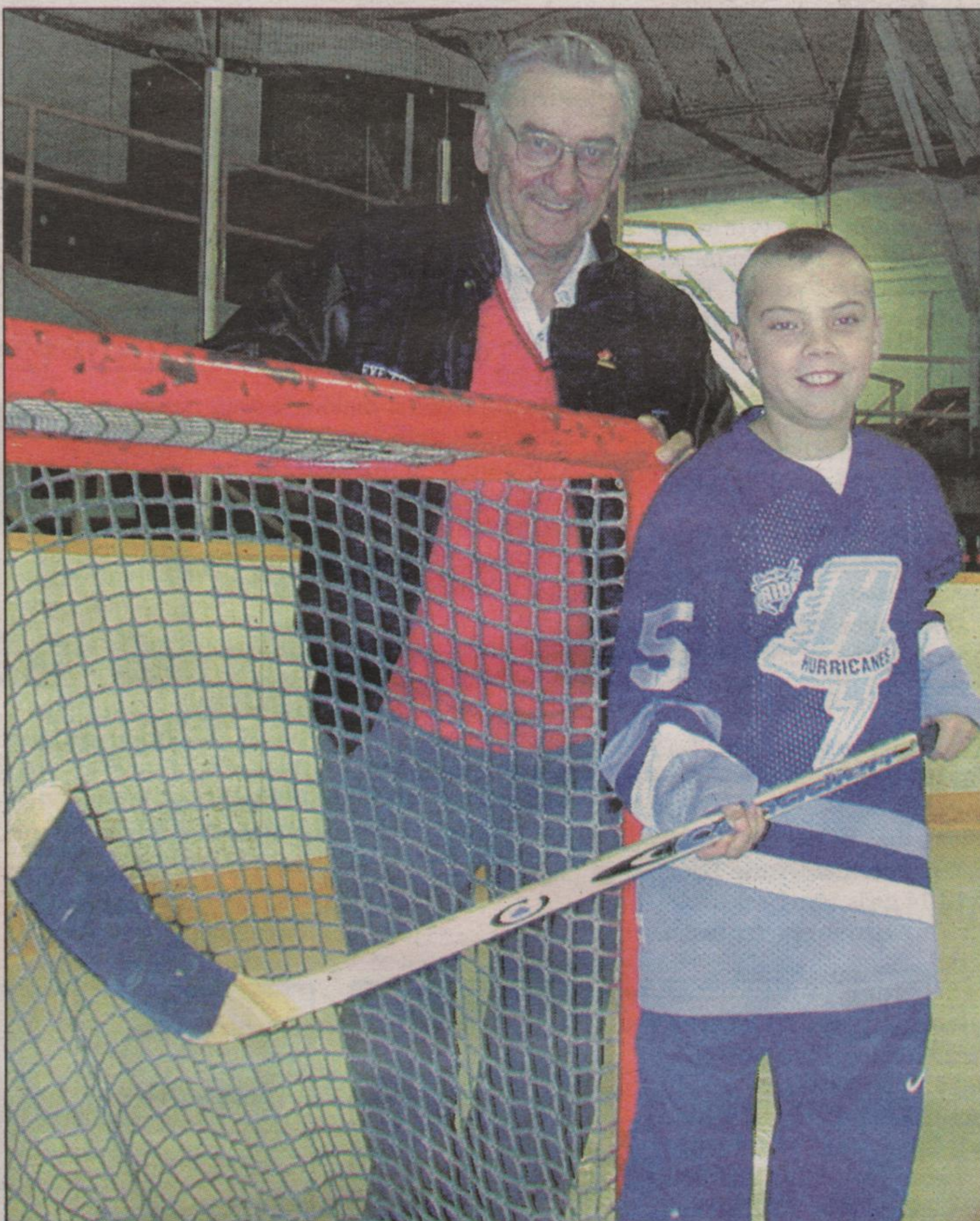
"It's quite an honour," Pries said of his selection. "For them to pick out 30 people in the history of hockey in Georgetown and to think that you're one of them.....Frankly, I think there are others but I'll take it."

Pries was hooked on the game of hockey from his first day in Georgetown.

"I was walking down Mill St. with my father and I saw this big yellow building (Memorial Arena) and people were waiting in line. It was 6 p.m. and they were waiting for an 8:30 p.m. game."

With his father managing the arena for five years and his mother running the canteen for more than 20 years, it was no surprise Pries spent much of his time at the arena. He played in the Legion Minor Hockey program and moved on to the Industrial League. Admittedly, Pries "never accomplished much in hockey" as a player but the same could not be said once he got involved as a volunteer.

He first joined the Georgetown Minor Hockey Support Group when his son Mark made the rep team and



Adam McGourty, who has played in both the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association and Halton Hurricane organizations, is just one of the many hockey players who has benefitted from the work of Wayne Pries. Pries is the 2001 Georgetown Hockey Heritage recipient. He will be honoured March 5 at Holy Cross Hall.

Photo by Herb Garbutt

the elder Pries served as treasurer and scheduler.

"Wayne was always the quiet guy but you knew the wheels were always turning," said Karen Harrison, who was president of the organization when Pries joined in 1978. "When something vital came up he always had something positive to add."

Later, as president, Pries sensed some resentment growing between the two Georgetown hockey programs. He

and others felt the groups could work better together if they merged.

"(Operating independently) just wasn't being a benefit to either of them," Pries said. "It also gave us a better bargaining position with the town (for ice time)."

The merger was completed in 1981 and Pries was vice-president of the new group and would become president in 1985. During that time he also served as the Georgetown Internation-

al Bantam Tournament chairman for five years and held a similar position for midget and house league tournaments.

There would be more changes coming. The 1980s were a controversial time in minor hockey. Many players looking for a high level of hockey were forced to leave home in order to play AAA hockey. It often involved living with relatives, turning over legal guardianship to someone other than the parents or lying about where they lived.

Pries had managed the Georgetown midget team in 1990, which competed at the AAA level. He felt more players should have that option.

"There was no opportunity for elite players in Acton, Georgetown and Milton without lying," Pries said. "There was a lot of pressure on the kids and a lot of pressure on the parents. It was felt they should have that chance and why not keep them at home."

That led to the formation of the Halton Hurricanes, AAA teams drawing players from across the region, with Pries as chairman. Now entering their 10th season, the Hurricanes have nine teams with 144 players, 40 per cent of them from Halton Hills.

Shortly after forming the Hurricanes, Pries became involved with the Ontario Minor Hockey Association. He joined the organization's executive in 1992 and served two terms as vice chairman. He continues his involvement today as chair of the classification review committee and he sits on the strategic planning committee.

The Hockey Heritage Award is the latest in a line of honors bestowed on Pries. He has also received the Government of Canada Honor Award, the 1987 Canadian Amateur Hockey Association Volunteer of the Year and the Tri-County Minor Hockey League Honor Award.

But of all those who have benefited from Pries' contributions, he says he is the luckiest because of the opportunities hockey has presented to him.

"You enjoy the people you meet," Pries said. "I've made some friends, even in Europe. All you can hope is that we've counted, that our influence had an impact on the kids."



GEORGETOWN TOYOTA

GAMES OF  
THE WEEK

GEORGETOWN JR. A  
**RAIDERS**  
vs  
HAMILTON KILTY "B's"

Friday, Nov. 17th  
7:30 pm  
Gordon Alcott Arena

GEORGETOWN JR. A  
**RAIDERS**  
vs  
OAKVILLE BLADES

Saturday, Nov. 18th  
7:30 pm  
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