

## Town defends work on cemetery

# Widow upset after husband's marker stone is moved

An Acton woman is upset the town didn't contact her about work being done at Greenwood Cemetery, and believes workers "have totally desecrated" her deceased husband's sacred ground.

Lori Ball said she was devastated when she arrived at the cemetery Friday, the seventh anniversary of her husband Michael Ball's death, and found his marker stone, along with about 100 others removed from the cremation plots near her husband's and lined up near a fence. She said there was only dirt where the graves were and a trench had been dug.

She also said there was also a pile of trees and bushes including her artificial yellow roses, and other items people had placed on the graves.

"I crumbled," said Ball, who spent the weekend crying. "It devastated me when I saw nothing."

"This is a total lack of respect for the dead and the people who were left behind," said Ball.

She is also worried the town will not be able to put the stone exactly back where she had it placed.

She said if the town had contacted her in advance of the work she could have told them what she was worried about.

Warren Harris, the town's manager of parks and cemeteries, said the town did not send out notices



**Town of Halton Hills Parks and Cemeteries staffers (from left) Danny Dobreen, Roger Vanderham and Sue Wilson work to reset the grave markers in the cremation area of Greenwood Cemetery as part of their ongoing maintenance program.**

Photo by Ted Brown

on the work because that would have involved pulling 300 files, and often the addresses have changed.

Instead, as it has in the past, the town posted a notice outlining the work on a notice board at the entrance of the cemetery beginning a week before it was to start, and Harris believes also a year ago.

He said the work was being done because many of the flat stones on the cremation plots had shifted and were no longer level. The town had received several complaints about the state of the stones.

He believes the work will result in a better tribute to the people buried there.

The town lifted the stones to re-level them, and is re-sodding the pathways.

Harris said the stones were all

labeled when they were removed and stacked in an organized fashion.

"The stones will go back where they came from," said Harris. "There might be a shift of an inch or two."

He said the town has a lotting plan for the cemetery, and the plots are marked by iron bars in the ground, so they know where each grave is.

He said the cremation plots are 2 ft. by 2 ft. and the stones are just a little smaller and nearly cover the entire plot, so the remains will be covered.

Regarding the removal of plants and other items Harris said some of them may have been items not permitted in the cemetery.

He encourages Ball to call him with her concerns.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

# Developer gets go-ahead to build 472 new homes

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The settlement also reduces the amount of area to be developed and the number of HHVHI homes to 472. HHVHI also agreed to a number of "significant" development controls on the lands to be built on in exchange for town approval of the new subdivision design.

An OMB hearing has been scheduled for Friday morning at the Civic Centre. While the subdivision plan may now get a smooth ride at the OMB, there is still no water yet in Georgetown to service the subdivision. Halton Region is expected to, yet again, inform the OMB Friday an additional water source for Georgetown has yet to be found after the Sixth Line well recently failed to produce satisfactorily.

Will the deal protect the environment—a key concern of many local residents?

"Absolutely," said Planning Director Bruce MacLean, who pointed to many design solutions and conditions put into place that will safeguard the sensitive areas of the valley. These include buffers, setbacks, shifting of home lots, elimination of interior roads, movement of a sports park closer to the valley, fencing, valley edge management, restoration, continual monitoring, grading and storm water management controls.

The Credit Valley Conservation has also signed off on the new subdivision proposal.

Halton Hills Village Homes Inc. representative, Roy Hylkema of KMK Engineering, was in the public gallery to hear the announcement. He said the deal works well for both sides. He called it a good compromise that removes the antagonistic atmosphere between the town and the developer and allows the development to move forward in a more conciliatory atmosphere.

He is confident the region will find an additional well source for Georgetown to allow building to begin.

Contacted Tuesday, Bert Zonneveld, president of Save Our Ravines (SOR), a coalition of residents opposed to development on the lands since 1999, said his group must carefully review the deal before making a comment.

He was informed Tuesday about the deal.

"But we are upset and we feel betrayed, and we feel locked out of the process as we just found out about this this morning (Tuesday)," Zonneveld said. "That we have not been involved in any way in the settlement process, is disappointing."

Zonneveld said council knew his group represents a large section of the community but yet did not tell anyone about the deal. Zonneveld said SOR's position at Friday's OMB hearing will be the same.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer

# Police, school board won't identify teacher facing sex assault charges

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his school did not send home a letter to parents and that they have not been instructed to send one.

Stewarttown Public School officials referred inquiries to board officials.

Police say the victim of the alleged incidents was a then-13-year-old male student of the teacher, who was involved with her in inappropriate activities during the first six months of 1998, ending with the finish of the school year. The victim was 14 by then. There has been no contact between the victim and the accused since that time.

Halton Police Public Affairs Officer Val Hay said police have not released

the woman's name because investigators feel "if they identify the teacher, the school or the area she's teaching in, it has the potential to identify the victim."

She said police don't have a problem releasing the name of an accused person unless by doing so they could identify the victim.

"We want to protect the victim as much as possible and not have them revictimized," said Hay.

Hay would only confirm the teacher was teaching at a Milton, Acton or Georgetown school at the time the assaults were to have taken place, that the teacher left that school in June 1998, and was currently a teacher at a differ-

ent school in north Halton.

Hay said police began their investigation in September of this year after the victim disclosed his involvement with the teacher to an adult, and she said the investigation is not yet complete.

"These were not minor sexual assaults," said Hay.

She said investigators are confident that there is only one victim from the school during the six-month 1998 time period, however, she added police are still open to any information.

The teacher is to appear in Milton court November 29.

Dawn Beckett-Morton of the board's

human resources department, says the board knows it may be questioned as to why a teacher facing sexually-related charges continues to be paid. Beckett-Morton, however, insists the reasoning to assign paid duties is sound.

"You have to remember that everyone is obviously innocent until proven guilty," she said.

"So unless we can do our own investigation ... we don't have a lot of options. You end up potentially prejudicing your case down the road if you've assigned an unpaid situation. That's what we have to be careful of."

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

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