

Mixing it up

Since the regional Ultimate Mix competitions have been placed on hold due to school board teacher negotiations, students and staff at Christ the King High School decided to run their own independent competition, as students concocted their own non-alcoholic drinks for the coming summer. Among those students in the running were (from left) Daniela Spatola, Stephanie Rowe and Kaylyn Dorland, who flogged their drink entitled Bedrock Fizz Pop, after *The Flintstones*.

Photo by Ted Brown



Halton board to adopt balanced school day

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Suzanne Earle, the assistant superintendent of education who delivered the decision to go with the balanced timetable, tried to allay some of the criticism at the board meeting.

"The idea of a balanced day has been discussed around the board for about two years, and most intensely since September 2002 and the implementation of the pilot project.

"We don't deny there are concerns out there from small groups of parents and communities. It is the intention of staff to review the implementation of the balanced day timetable some time next (school) year," said Earle.

Earle's report to the board noted parents, students and staff at the eight pilot schools completed surveys about the balanced timetable at the end of March with the "majority of survey respondents from all three groups" agreeing the new schedule was an improvement over the old one.

Board chair Ethel Gardiner said school councils in her wards in Halton Hills were leery of the concept at first but like it now.

"I've not had one call or letter from a parent with a concern about the balanced schedule. We have a lot of data based on the eight pilot projects," she said.

One area where Gardiner can see some difficulty is with parents who like to have their children at home for lunch.

"The schedule is at odds, there is no doubt about it," she said.

Trustee Peggy Russell of Burlington asked how many school boards in Ontario are using the balanced day approach.

Earle responded that the Simcoe board has about 11 schools while the Peel public board had two and the Hamilton-Wentworth board just one.

She added that other boards were still deciding whether to go with the new schedule as a family of schools or board-wide.

Papke jumped into the discussion saying he believes Simcoe has "significantly" more than 11 schools utilizing the balanced day schedule and that the two in Peel had employed it for "quite a few years now."

More information on the balanced day timetable can be viewed on the board's Web site at www.haltonsb.on.ca.

...and the survey says

The Halton board surveyed parents, students and staff at the eight pilot schools about the balanced day timetable.

A little more than half of the 1,104 Halton parents surveyed, and nearly half of the teachers and students involved, responded to the questionnaire.

Fifty-nine per cent of parents thought the balanced day was a benefit in some way to their kids, 80 per cent of teachers thought the same way but only 55 per cent of students agreed. The remaining percentage for each group was made up of 'no' and 'don't know' answers.

—By Tim Whitnell, special

Fun runs from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Riverfest celebration set for Saturday

Life on the Credit River will be celebrated in Norval again this weekend during Riverfest.

The annual event will be held Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., primarily in Norval Park and Willow Park Ecology Centre, with some activities also at Canoe Country and the Adamson North bridge.

The day will begin with a pancake breakfast served by Georgetown Rotary Club at 8 a.m.

Official opening ceremonies, hosted by Norval resi-

dent and author of *To Walk a Country Mile* Mary Maxwell, will be held at 8:45 a.m.

Following the opening ceremonies those who attend the festival will have a chance to take a hike on the Bruce Trail with Maureen Smith of the Bruce Trail Association. Historian and author John MacDonald will provide a historical perspective for those who hike along the Credit Valley Footpath.

At noon Halton Hills firefighters will put on a cold-water rescue demonstration at the Norval bridge.

Also at Riverfest this year will be performances by New Classic Folk, Nonie Crete and Dave Hadfield.

Kids can enter the new environmental Quest, a variation on the old-time scavenger hunt at the Info Centre, where they can pick up their instructions and a passport for completion at various stations in the park.

Returning this year will be Paddle to the Sea, an adventure where kids can decorate their own wooden boats and enter them in a river race. The winning boat will carry an environmental message down the Credit River.

At Willow Park Ecology Centre those who attend the event can take in Credit Valley Conservation's electro-fishing demonstrations, Wye Marsh's "Wet and Scaly" amphibian display, Jack Imhof's "River Critters," Teresa Rigg's "Buckets and Funnels," University of Toronto's "River Detectives," and "Birds of Prey." There will also be butterfly releases in the Butterfly Garden at regular intervals. Those interested in being a fly fisherman and angler can take in demonstrations and lessons.

Riverfest-goers can also go on their own self-directed tour of the Ecology Centre, and for a small donation have a chance to win a recreational kayak. The suggested donation is \$2 for children, \$4 for adults and \$10 for a family.

Cabbie's condition improves

The condition of the Milton woman who was driving the taxicab involved in the accident that claimed the life of a Georgetown boy last Wednesday is improving in a Toronto hospital.

Lisa Broatch, 36, was reported in fair condition Tuesday afternoon, upgraded from serious but stable on Thursday.

Halton Police report the accident, which resulted in the death of Alex Bonehill, 9, of Albert St., is still under investigation. Anyone with information on the accident is asked to call police at 905-878-5511 ext. 5108.



Jumping through hoops

Grade 4 student Krista McShane, 10, was among the dozens of Harrison Public School students who took part in the annual Jump Rope for Heart fund-raiser at the school recently.

Photo by Ted Brown



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