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GEORGETOWN

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Police, youths clash at fall fair

Officers use rubber bullets, pepper spray to disperse rock-throwing teenagers

Halton Regional Police fired rubber bullets and water hoses were used to disperse a crowd of about 500 people Saturday night outside the Georgetown Fairgrounds.

But there are two very different versions of what sparked the clash between the police and the largely teenage crowd at the Georgetown Fall Fair.

Police say they were pelted with rocks, bottles, beer

cans and pieces of wood by an increasingly aggressive crowd. The teenagers say police used excessive force in making arrests on the fair's midway.

The incident lasted for about two-and-a-half hours after police were called to the fairgrounds at 11 p.m. because a person kicked out of the park for fighting earlier in the night had returned and was refusing to leave. Police say the person resisted arrest and a second person began interfering with the arrest.

However, witnesses say police were breaking up a fight between two girls. A 17-year-old Georgetown high school student who witnessed the fight said it was the way arrests were made that got those around them so angry.

"The cops were using such excessive force. They were hitting kids with sticks and that's wrong. It was scary."

"They pepper-sprayed one guy, beat him up, and

then pepper-sprayed him again," said an 18-year-old Georgetown resident.

Inspector Ron Welsh of Halton Police said a person resisting arrest "is going to be met with a higher level of force. If that means taking them to the ground to immobilize them, that's what going to happen when people resist."

A growing crowd threw water bottles and cans at the three officers and four auxiliary officers. The officers led several people to the cruisers in the parking lot. A call was made for additional officers and police began moving people out of the park through the entrance at Park Avenue and Charles Street and blocked the entrance to the park.

What happened next again differs greatly.

Two teenagers who were among the crowd said

See POLICE, pg. 3

The motor vehicle licensing office on Main St. in downtown Georgetown became an unwanted drive-through operation Monday when a Mazda slammed through the north wall of the building. According to office owner Dave Clark the office was filled with clients less than an hour before the accident, however, at the time of the crash only Clark and five staff members were inside, all of whom escaped injury, as did the driver.

Photo by Ted Brown



No one injured as car slams into licence office

The owner of the Georgetown licence office says it's very lucky nobody was injured when a car plowed through the wall Monday morning.

Dave Clark said Monday is a busy day for licence renewals but only himself and five staff members were in the building when the Mazda 323 crashed through the brick wall.

"Forty minutes or an hour earlier there were people lined up to the door," Clark said. "There would have been at least four people standing right where the car came through."

Clark said the elderly driver had just been in the office renewing his licence moments earlier. Halton Police said a car was parked on the north side of the building. The driver told police something caused the car to lunge forward and crash into the wall. A mechanical inspection is being conducted on the car.

The driver was not injured nor was anyone in the building.

A structural assessment of the building is being conducted.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer

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