

Outgoing councillors say farewell

Today, Kathy Gastle ends her three-year reign as mayor of Halton Hills and 12 years of service as a town council member.

"Saying good bye... after 12 years in public office is very hard," she said in a farewell speech at the final council meeting of the 2000-2003 term Monday. "My role as an elected official has been a labour of love, despite the many demands on my personal time."

She paid tribute to faithful and loyal town staff, singling out former CAO Steve Andrews, Treasurer Ed DeSousa and Economic Development Officer Allan O'Neill for their work in getting servicing to the 401 Corridor.

"The door is now open for development of our employment lands and I feel rewarded for my contribution to this legacy which will benefit our community for many years to come," she said.

She recalled many events such as the SARS crisis, the August hydro blackout, the visit by the Duke of Kent, protecting the 300 acres in Hungry Hollow ravine, the opening of the town trail system, showcasing local artists and working with Communities in Bloom.

"It has indeed been a great honour and a privilege to sit and hold this very honourable place in the town of Halton Hills for the past 12 years," said Gastle, who begins a new job as a management consultant for a Brampton development firm.

The Norval resident, who began her career representing the Ward 2 residents in 1991, handed the mayor's gavel over to mayor-elect Rick Bonnette, with kisses and good wishes.

Bonnette takes over the town leadership in an inaugural ceremony at the John Elliott Theatre on Monday.

He praised Gastle's professionalism and goodwill in allowing for a smooth transition of power over the last couple of weeks.

"Kathy never backed down on an

issue...she could be really feisty, but she was always a professional," he said. Gastle's involvement with the 401 Corridor has put "footprints" on our community for years to come.

Councillor Ron Chatten said Gastle has never been satisfied with the status quo and always looked for innovative solutions and over the past three years, "the bar has risen" on the office of mayor.

Longtime regional councillor John Day, who lost his bid to become mayor, said he had no regrets running for the mayor's job.

He said he had fond memories on working to establish transition housing in Acton and Georgetown, campaigning to keep the youth centres open and working on the millennium projects such as Remembrance Park and downtown Georgetown mural.

To the incoming council, Day said, "Halton Hills is a special gem within the GTA and it needs your love and your nurturing if it's to be kept special."


To the community, he quoted Canadian suffragist Nellie McClung, "Never retract, never explain, never apologize, get the job done and let them howl."

Councillor Bob Inglis called Day the "social conscience" of this council who has been tireless in supporting youth, seniors and the homeless.

Acton councillor Dobbie Frizzell, who served for three years, thanked the staff and councillors, and said "I'll tell you the people are great in this town and I thank you for your support."

In his tribute to Frizzell, Chatten said, "caring, compassionate, quiet, humble. He didn't speak much, but he was always well prepared and knew the issues. Dobbie has worked a long time in Acton over 30 years as a volunteer firefighter, on the hydro board and just as a good Acton citizen."

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



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