

## Construction barrel blamed for crash

A 23-year-old Mississauga man and two passengers—a 14-year-old Mississauga girl and 17-year-old girl from Brampton—received serious injuries in a single-car accident on Winston Churchill Blvd. south of 17 Sideroad early Friday. Halton Police report the driver of a 1998 Audi A6 swerved to avoid an object on the roadway, believed to be a large flexible construction barrel, at a set of railway tracks, lost control, left the roadway and struck a tree. The car ended up upside down in a field, with the roof crushed, about 12 metres from the roadway. Halton Hills firefighters used heavy hydraulic rescue tools to free the three people from the crumpled wreckage. Police report alcohol was not a factor in the crash. Anyone with information on the accident or how the barrel may have got on the tracks is asked to call Det. Const. Rich Solecki at 905-878-5511 ext. 5108.

Photo by John Lawson

## Weather unkind to area farmers

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changes soon, farmers may not even be able to sell their soybean crops.

Norval farmer Harry Brander said his soybeans are immature and few in number.

"We hope we get enough sun so they'll mature. But if we get an early, killing frost, we're doomed," he said.

Brander said the weather has also left some farmers in the predicament of still trying to get off their first crop of hay, which usually happens in early July.

He also fears it will be too late to plant fall wheat by the time he's able to harvest the current crop.

"We are running at least 15 days behind on everything," said Brander.

(OMAF) cereals specialist Peter Johnson said most farmers have harvested their wheat, and "the yields in general were good—average to slightly above average."

He said, however, damp weather led to a disease called fusarium, which downgrades wheat from milling to feed quality.

"We were borderline with the bulk of the crop," he said.

He said with the soybean crops coming off later than expected, that will delay farmers from planting their winter wheat in late September or early October, and if they have to wait until late October, they will be facing lesser yields next year.

Environment Canada senior meteorologist Dave Phillips said in actuality the daily temperatures this summer are not that different from the 30-year average but more cloudy days gives people the perception of colder temperatures.

"We are also 100 hours short of sunshine. This year we had 620 hours of sun, the average is 723 (from June to today)," he said.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer, with files from Torstar News Service



## Hurricane Gerty strikes

Children's performer Hurricane Gerty blew into town Saturday as her 45-minute show of puppetry, songs and comedy captivated youngsters at the Georgetown branch of the Halton Hills Library. Here, Nevada Boisclair, 6, of Terra Cotta, lends Gerty a hand.

Photo by Trish Wilkinson

## Council wants to fast-track town defibrillation program

Halton Hills council narrowly approved a decision to begin a Public Access to Defibrillation (PAD) program in the town's arenas and seniors' centres by December 1, 2004.

PAD is a program in which Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) are installed in public places for use if someone is suffering cardiac arrest. The report, presented at the August meeting, on whether to install the AEDs at all town facilities recommended that council enter a "due diligence" phase—consulting with seniors, coaches and volunteers to determine their level of comfort using the machines, determining the costs and town liability, assessing the potential for public fund-raising to buy the machines and resolving questions about the level of program to offer.

Preliminary figures show that it would cost about \$50,000 to buy the machines, and about \$10,000 a year to operate the program.

But Wards 1 and 2 Regional Councillor Clark Somerville was unwilling to wait out staff's due diligence phase and instead introduced a motion that the town proceed with a PAD program, that staff work with Halton Region's PAD co-ordinator to have the arenas and seniors' centres equipped no later than Dec. 1, 2004, that staff report back with an implementation schedule during the 2005 budget meetings for other sites within the town and that staff contact seniors' centres and arena user groups to explore fund-raising opportunities.

Six councillors voted to bypass the staff recommendation and support Somerville's motion instead—Mayor Rick Bonnette and Councillors Jane Fogal, Hurst, Mike O'Leary, Robson and Somerville. Voting against were Councillors Ron Chatten, Mike Davis, Inglis and Bryan Lewis. Councillor Moya Johnson was absent.

Every year in Canada, about 36,000 people die as a result of sudden cardiac arrest and in most communities, the survival rate for those who are not at a hospital at the time, is 5 per cent, according to a staff report. A Windsor study showed that 15 of 23 people survived when there was an accessible PAD.

Somerville said it's important to get the machines into facilities where they are needed most—the arenas and seniors' centres—and "we can

get wrinkles out as we move out to the other facilities."

But Councillor Bob Inglis warned this decision would impact the town's budget for years to come. He said he needed more information about the actual usage of the machine and suggested council follow the staff recommendation by slowing down the process.

"It sounds like we could implement a more effective program by going through the due diligence process," said the Ward 4 councillor.

"A little bit more information on this (is necessary), so someone isn't defibrillated when they don't need it."

"They're (the AEDs) almost idiot-proof, I've had my training on them," said Somerville. "They can't shock somebody unless it's needed."

Somerville was insistent that it would take too long to go the "due diligence"

route—a minimum of a six-month delay. There is fund-raising potential out there, he said, if the town shows its commitment.

Ward 2 Councillor Joan Robson made an emotional plea for the defibrillators, saying if there had been one in the regional council chamber, her husband would still be alive. Nine years ago, Halton Hills' regional councillor Bill Robson died of a heart attack while attending a regional council meeting.

"I would like to address it from a slightly different perspective," she said. "I lost my husband; he was 61 years old. We can talk about delaying this. We can talk about two weeks (until the September meeting) not meaning much. Two weeks to me is the difference between being a member of a family and being a widow, and that changes a lot of lives."

Conversely, Acton Councillor Jon Hurst said he has a family member alive today due to the presence of a defibrillator.

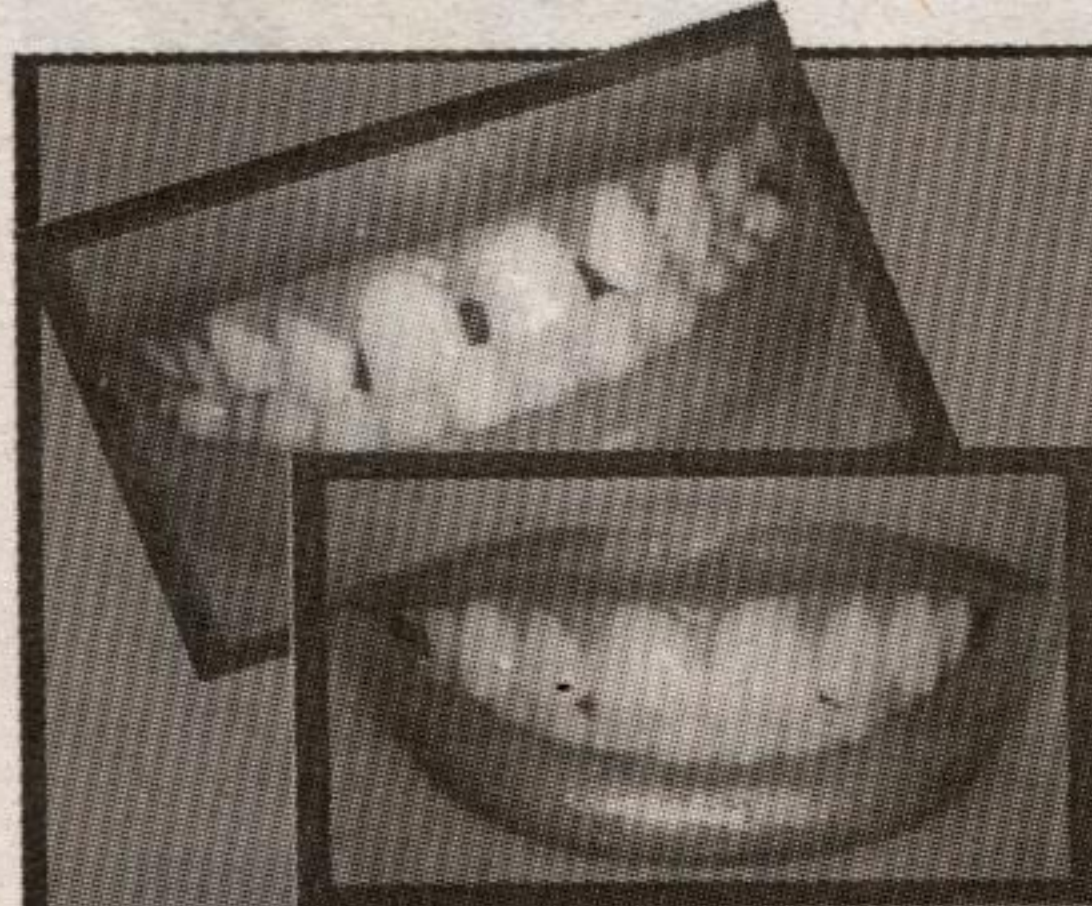
"Whether the person is your husband or your wife, your brother or your sister, your son or your daughter, you realize that if the cost is \$50,000 or \$250,000 or \$500,000, when it's your loved one it's money well spent," he said.

The decision still needs to be ratified at the September 13 council meeting. Inglis requested the regional PAD co-ordinator of the program make a presentation at the September meeting. Staff will issue the invitation.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



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