

## Algar's contract expires in 2006 Halton's top cop to step down

Halton's top cop is hanging up his holster. Chief Ean Algar revealed at a private session of last Wednesday's Halton Regional Police Services Board meeting that he is retiring next year.

The 38-year veteran of policing formally notified the seven-member board that he would not be seeking a further extension of his contract when it expires at the end of 2006.

The police services board chair and other members of the board commended Algar for his dedication to the service and to the community.

"The board is proud of the chief's many accomplishments and looks forward to his continued leadership in the transition period," said Keith Bird.

Algar, 61, has spent his entire career in Halton and was the first chief to be promoted through the ranks. He is the fourth police chief of Halton, dating back to the region's formation in 1974. He replaced Peter Campbell as chief on Jan. 1, 1999. Campbell had replaced W.I. James Harding, who in turn had taken over from Halton's first police chief, Ken Skerrett.

It's the second retirement announcement of a GTA police chief in the last two months. Neighbouring Peel Region is in need of a new chief as Noel Catney is leaving at the end of 2005. Algar, who lives in rural Burlington, will be involved in the hiring of Halton's new chief.

"The board will allow me to work with them in the process. We'll do a selection and transition period," which could see him leave before the end of 2006.

Algar danced around the issue of whether the board should be looking internally or externally for its next leader.

"I think that's the board's choice. We have quality people inside (Halton)," he said.

As for his retirement, he said he has mixed emotions.

"There's still things I want to do in the service and I will give my full attention to the service until the day I walk out."

He said he's proud of the continuation of community policing initiatives and the strength of the region's ethnic diversity.

As for any regrets of things left undone or missed opportunities, he said he has a couple.

"We are well equipped as a service (but) I'd like to be around to see the entire new computer system," he chuckled.

On a more serious note he said, "If I have any regret it's not being able to spend more time with the rank-and-file (officers). I've been busy elsewhere."

Algar has been chair of Criminal Intelligence Service Ontario and is a past president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police.

The police services board has called a special private meeting for today (Wednesday) to consider the process it will undertake to

appoint a new chief for Halton.

Algar earned \$162,000 in salary and almost \$9,000 in benefits in 2004, according to provincial public sector salary disclosure.

Chair Bird expects a smooth transition to Algar's replacement. However, the parameters of that process will be decided by the board, he said.

*'If I have any regret it's not being able to spend more time with the rank-and-file (officers).'*  
—Chief Ean Algar



"You look internally and externally. That's been the pattern in the past (in Halton). There are pluses and minuses on either side. Internally, there's a comfort level with your own personnel. Externally, there's

almost a fiduciary responsibility to (try to) have the best person at that point in time in the (top) position.

"There are a lot of quality people out there. It's going to be a tough decision," said Bird.

If the board looks from within, candidates might include longtime Deputy Chief Gary Crowell or relatively new Deputy Chief Mike Kingston. The service also has four veteran superintendents.

As for Algar's legacy, Bird said he accomplished much in seven years.

"He's positioned the police department well in terms of growth and diversity. Ean has spent a lot of time with various cultural groups and met head-on that fear factor.

"His legacy is responding to change and seeming to know where we should deploy resources to avoid a problem."

—By Tim Whitnell, special

## Local officials praise chief

Colleagues and admirers say that when Halton Police Chief Ean Algar retires next year the policing community—locally and across Ontario—will be losing one of the greatest professionals to don a uniform to serve and protect.

Locally, Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette said the outgoing chief has always been well-respected and praised him for being "down-to-earth" and "people oriented."

"Ean is really a quality person who came up through the ranks," said Bonnette. "He's done a terrific job as police chief."

Halton Hills regional councillor and Halton Police Services Board member Clark Somerville said Algar has always put the interests of Halton first.

"He should be commended. He's the first chief to retire from Halton whose spent his entire career in Halton," said Somerville.

He added Algar is recognized across Ontario and Canada for his work.

"He'll be missed," said Somerville.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer



## Holiday house tour

Karen Watts and her mom Elda checked out the Christmas decorations in the Singleton house on Cindebarke Terrace Saturday during the United Way of Halton Hills Holiday House Tour.

Photo by Yves Desjardins

## Four vie for local seat

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Candidates in the riding's first election in 2004 were (in order of finish), Chong, 21,479; Bruce Hood, Liberal Party of Canada, 19,173; Noel Duignan, New Democratic Party, 5,974; Brent Bouteiller, Green Party of Canada, 2,725, and Pat Woode, Christian Heritage Party, 826.

While Chong didn't know yet if Tory leader Stephen Harper will make a stop in the riding, the MP said the campaign here will get the message out what the Tory leader stands for.

The Tories will be opening campaign offices in Georgetown, Acton and Fergus.

Wellington-Halton Hills federal Liberal candidate Rod Finnie is ready for the campaign, although he doesn't agree with the timing.

"Personally I think it was wrong to have it right now," said Finnie, 58, who has taken a leave of absence from his position as Erin mayor during the campaign. Finnie is also the principal in the land surveying company J.R. Finnie O.L.S.

He believes Prime Minister Paul Martin's plan to hold the election 30 days after the final Gomery Report is filed would have made more sense because he believes the report will make suggestions for structural changes that would make a repeat occurrence of the sponsorship scandal, or one similar to it, unlikely.

"That way the electors can really hold all the parties' feet to the fire and say, 'Are you going to imple-

ment these changes?'" said Finnie.

Finnie said a holiday campaign may not be well received by many of the voters.

The Gomery Report will be a key issue in the campaign, said Finnie.

"People are going to be upset, and rightly so," he said.

But he credited the PM for calling an inquiry into the scandal, said only one current MP was found in the report to be at fault, and he has been fired.

He also stressed the Liberals are committed to paying back the money.

The Liberals have plans to open a campaign office in Halton Hills, and also to have a recreation vehicle to serve as a mobile office.

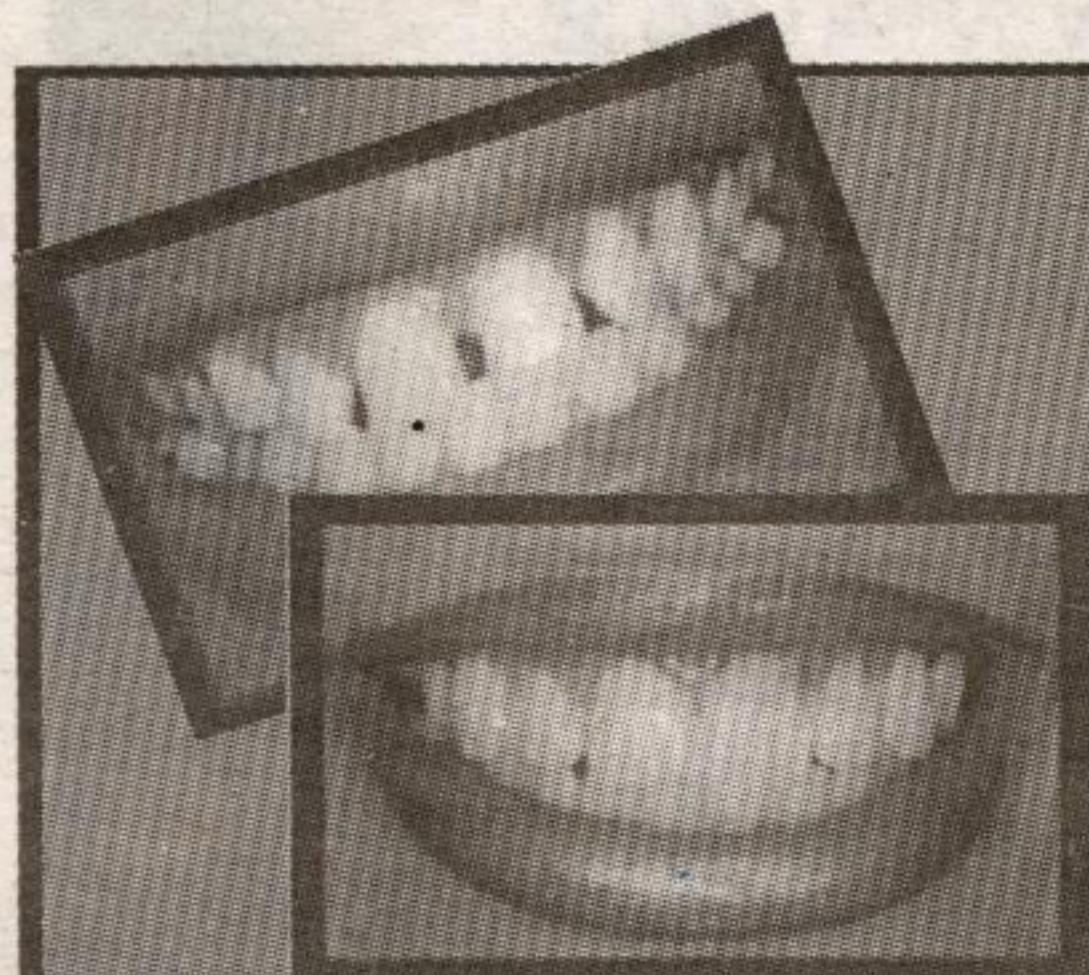
The riding's NDP candidate is former Halton North MPP Noel Duignan, who at press time was not available for comment.

Duignan, 56, of Georgetown, has been an NDP activist for almost 30 years and jointly owns a property management and mediation business.

Bouteiller, 37, of the Fergus, was nominated as this riding's Green candidate last week. "We're ready to go," he said. "The timing is not great, but we're definitely willing to get out there."


Jeffrey Streutker, president of the Christian Heritage Party in Wellington-Halton Hills, said his association has no plans to run a candidate.

—By Lisa Tallyn and Cynthia Gamble, staff writers



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