

# Tamblyn says farewell to AHS after 38 years

**EAMONN MAHER**  
Staff Writer

A fixture at Acton High School for nearly four decades, Marg Tamblyn recently retired as Head of Student Services, concluding her career as an educator that began as a maternity leave fill-in French teacher in 1968, just a few days after graduating from the University of Guelph.

"It was a leap of faith, going from being a student to a teacher with basically just a week-and-a-half lead-up time," the Leamington native said of her first class of Grade 9-10 students— some of whom are now grandparents. "By no means was I a trained French teacher, but they hired me anyway. We would do skits and little plays, and even today I'll have parents come up to me and say, 'Remember that French class.' We had some wonderful times."

Tamblyn went on to teach subjects such as math, physical education, French immersion, leadership programs and later oversaw various aspects of the special education program at Acton High, taking time out to give birth to her three children during the early 1970s. It took several years until the Fergus resident was able to secure her vocation as a guidance counselor. Students arriving at her office with a crisis to deal with usually left with a feeling that it was now at least manageable.

"I don't usually have more than 10 to 15 minutes break between kids coming in to talk or ask about something, or problem-solve. It wasn't always that way," added Tamblyn, whose daughter Heather died in a 1995 fire at the age of 22. "We're not trying to shape their minds as much as we're trying to shape their hearts and their futures."

It seems that there haven't been many Acton High projects, extra-curricular activities and initiatives that Tamblyn hasn't had her fingerprints on in some way. Beginning as a somewhat reluctant yet nonetheless enthusiastic gymnastics and volleyball coach, she would later play the piano the school's yearly musical productions, including *Grease* and *Guys & Dolls*, practising for hours with students.

"It's been so wonderful to have someone with that continuity as we've had with Marg and to work with someone who is a leader ahead of her time. We've been blessed and



Longtime Acton teacher Marg Tamblyn retired last week after 38 years at the school.

*Photo by Eamonn Maher*

we'll sorely miss her," said Acton principal Bert O'Hearn.

A town that former Halton Hills school board trustee Ethel Gardiner called the 'Jewel of the North,' in part because of its two-thirds success rate in sending students to post-secondary institutions, Acton has different challenges for its young people than other than municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area. But Tamblyn noted that even the brightest in the class require direction and support.

"There's this group of kids in the middle who maybe aren't as good in school and they think that if they can't go to universities, then there's no place for (them), and that's so far from the truth," Tamblyn added. "We don't need more kids going to university; we do need more kids going to college and getting into apprenticeships and trades. Everyone who has training will be able to get a good job, I think, and yet there is this discouraged group. It doesn't have to be that way. The world is your oyster. Which part do you want to swim in?"

# Council loses patience with long-delayed developments

**CYNTHIA GAMBLE**  
Staff Writer

The clock is ticking on three proposed rural estate subdivisions after Halton Hills council decided to set a deadline for action for an Acton area plan.

Sanmike Construction requested an extension of its draft plan approval of a rural 20-lot estate home project at the southeast corner of Regional Rd. 25 and 32 Sideroad, north of Acton. The subdivision was previously known as Halton Greens or Debryn-Pecan when it was originally draft approved in 1988. But little action has taken place on the site in the last 19 years.

Planning Director Bruce MacLean is recommending council extend the draft approval until October 30, and he has made it clear to the developer that this will be last time.

Current delays have been attributed to a Land Titles Act appeal by neighbours and draft plan conditions revisions required by Halton Region. Settlements on both issues are imminent, said MacLean, and he sees no reason why Sanmike couldn't register the subdivision by the fall deadline.



**BRUCE MacLEAN**

The actual project is now contrary to the new Official Plans of both Halton Region and the Town, pointed out Mayor Rick Bonnette, who seemed to have lost patience with the project.

He wanted a list of other similar proposal languishing on Town planning books.

"I think we should give all of them nine months, and say 'either get in or get out!'," the mayor said. "Because, quite frankly, today they would never have been approved."

"After 19 years, surely to God they've could have come to some resolution on this...It's a joke in my opinion by the developers. I think they're just stretching everything so they can try to wait for the land value to increase in value."

His sentiments were echoed by many councillors around the council table, some of whom were even reluctant to even grant the nine-month extension.

"I think council has sent a clear message tonight," said MacLean, who plans to bring forward a report on the two remaining long-term developments and what processes are necessary to ensure no further extensions or approvals to allow their continued existence.

These two are the Churchill Valley Estates (23 homes) on Winston Churchill Blvd. and Esquesing Developments Ltd, (20 homes) on Sixth Line. A similar deadline was imposed last year to a proposed rural estate project in the rural cluster of Bannockburn at the corner of Hwy. 7 and Fourth Line (now a temporary golf driving range). Its deadline is in March.

The Town of Halton Hills decision is a recommendation only to Halton Region, which has the final authority.

*(Cynthia Gamble can be reached at cgamble@independentfreepress.com)*

# Region facing shortage of child-care spots

**STEPHANIE THIESSEN**  
Special to The IFP

Halton's exploding population has led to a dire need for child-care spots, with a shortage of almost 9,000 licensed spaces recently revealed.

"It's daunting," said Mary Beth Jonz, Halton's director of Children's Services.

This information arose from data collected for the Region's Integrated Early Learning and Child Care Plan. The plan was endorsed last week by the Region's health and social services committee after a presentation by Jonz.

The plan, which is completed every five years, also outlines a need for fee subsidies and integrated services for children with special needs.

There are currently 225 children with special needs in Halton who aren't receiving these services, Jonz told committee members.

Another issue outlined in the presentation is a shortage of funding to pay wage subsidies for early childhood

educators.

All in all, the projected cost of meeting child care needs from 2007 to 2011 is \$94.5 million.

"It is a staggering amount," Jonz said.

Most of the information— including the need for more child-care spaces and an increase in wage subsidies and services— isn't a surprise, Jonz said.

What was surprising was the amount of growth that occurred since the last plan.

"We knew we had growth, but we didn't know how much growth there was through all of Halton, with Milton the highest," Jonz said.

From 2000 to last year, Milton had a 301 per cent increase in births, she said.

Fortunately, there are new child care spaces being developed. Yesterday, a groundbreaking ceremony was to take place for the new Bruce Trail Early Learning and Child Care Centre in Milton.

Through the Best Start initiative, another 200 spaces will be created in Halton this year and next, Jonz said.

The message that needs to be communicated through the plan is that "With our growth, our funding can't keep up. We can't meet the needs," Jonz said.

The child care plan reinforces the need to push both the provincial and federal levels of government for funding.

Planning for this child-care plan was already in the works when the Ontario government announced its Best Start initiative last year for kids up to six years old. Since Halton's Child-Care Plan focuses on kids up to 12 years old, this plan was broader than Best Start, but had similar goals, a staff report states, and the two initiatives were melded together.

The next steps will include the development of a financial plan, which should be in place by the fall, Jonz said.



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