

INDIAN RIVER DIRECT
CITRUS TRUCKLOAD SALE
GEORGETOWN
 Tues., Feb. 5th, 10 am - 12 noon
 Yoyo Japanese Restaurant 357 Guelph St., (beside Ford dealership)
ACTON
 Tues., Feb. 5th, 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm
 The Olde Hide House (Eastern & Mill)

20 LB. BOX OF FLORIDA Seedless Navel Oranges or Ruby Red Grapefruit	\$20.00 PER BOX
--	---------------------------

Georgetown District Seniors Centre
318 Guelph Street, Unit 9
Georgetown, ON

Annual General Meeting
Thursday, February 14 at 1:00 pm

For more information please call
905-877-6444

QUIK AUTO REPAIR

Now!

CAA Approved Repair Shop

10% OFF
 Labour for CAA Members

For all your Automotive Maintenance.

Featuring **KROWN**
 RUST CONTROL

905 877 8220
354 Guelph St., Unit 21
Serving Georgetown & Halton Hills for 23 years

Halton Police insist graffiti is not the work of 'gangs'

CYNTHIA GAMBLE
 Staff Writer

A Halton Police staff sergeant "emphatically" denied there is any gang activity in Halton Hills when explaining the launch of the police service's new graffiti removal program.

Halton Regional Police Staff Sgt. Ray Bruce told members of Halton Hills council recently, "We do not have any active gangs in Halton Hills."

The remark was in rebuttal to a suggestion by a local resident, Michael Jander, who wanted to initiate a graffiti removal program last fall with the help of corporate sponsors. At that time, Jander, who runs an international security company, said rampant graffiti occurring in Halton Hills could be evidence of gangs moving into the community and it must be stopped in its tracks. Subsequently, Halton Hills council gave Jander approval to start a graffiti eradication program that would be funded by corporate sponsors (about \$51,000) and use the efforts of volunteers to wipe away the evidence of graffiti in the town.

The Town had agreed to try Jander's program for one year, if it got the full co-operation and collaboration of Halton Regional Police. But it did not.

Bruce said there are different types of graffiti—gang (used to mark turf and convey threats); copycatting (mimics gang graffiti); tagging (the most common form involving initials, scribbles, or more artistic type); conventional graffiti (isolated spontaneous acts often attributed to youthful exuberance) and ideological (usually motivated by hate or racism).

"I can stand here before you and emphatically say we do not have any active gangs in Halton Hills," said Bruce, noting Halton Police's Intelligence Bureau and Criminal Intelligence Service of Ontario back this statement.

Bruce said the rash of graffiti experienced last fall was copycatting graffiti and since Halton Police arrested four young offenders there has been a significant reduction of graffiti, he said.

"I think it's important to make a distinction between actual gang members doing gang graffiti and those who are copycatting or mimicking and that's exactly what we were experienc-

ing in Halton Hills," said Bruce. Instead, Halton Police initiated their own "simple and effective program" based on "education, engagement and enforcement."

The education component involves the use of high school liaison officers working with boards of education, increasing the public's awareness about graffiti and the importance of immediately reporting graffiti to the police, and working with local young groups and suspects to understand the motive behind graffiti.

The engagement component involves all members of the community—police, government and the public. One of the most beneficial alliances so far, said Bruce, has been Halton Police's close working relationship with the Town's public works

department. Other actions include the formation of a simplified reporting process.

The enforcement component includes establishing a photographic database with offender and geographic profiling that helps identifies hot spots. Other enforcement actions will include youth diversion programs, Town bylaw enforcement and the establishment of a private property owner notification protocol for immediate removal of the graffiti.

The goal, said Bruce, is removal of the graffiti within 72 hours (24 hours if it's racist or obscene).

Bruce said it's unreasonable to expect that graffiti can be eradicated, but it can be managed effectively. If left unchecked, he said, the perception is left that nobody cares about the community. This program is primarily targeting Halton Hills at this time.

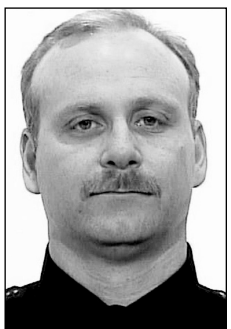
"Graffiti is not just a Halton Hills issue. It is everywhere," said Mayor Rick Bonnette. "It seems to be the latest fad for the last five years. It's something that is costly and unsightly... I think the police have stepped forward on this."

The Town will give the police program a try for a year, and if it's not successful, then revisit Jander's plan.

In the meantime, the Town's Public Works department will continue with its graffiti removal program from municipal facilities, and the Town's Enforcement branch will use property standards bylaws and orders to get graffiti removed from privately-owned buildings.

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

'We do not have any active gangs in Halton Hills.'



STAFF SGT. RAY BRUCE

AUDITIONS FOR STAGE!

GEORGETOWN LITTLE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

LOVE, SEX and the IRS
 by William Van Zandt & Jane Milmore

33 Stewarttown Rd., Georgetown

Ladies from 25 to 50+ Gents from 25 to 65

Present a short Comedic Monologue
 January 26th, 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm
 February 2nd, 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

For Appointment, contact Assistant Director at 416-417-5279 or jenniferhumeniuk@gmail.com
Callbacks on February 5th, 7:30 pm - 10:30 pm
Must be available from Feb. 10th thru Apr 26th

Stick with your high blood pressure treatment, or you may be in for a nasty surprise.

Canadian Coalition for High Blood Pressure Prevention and Control
<http://orla.library.mun.ca/bp>