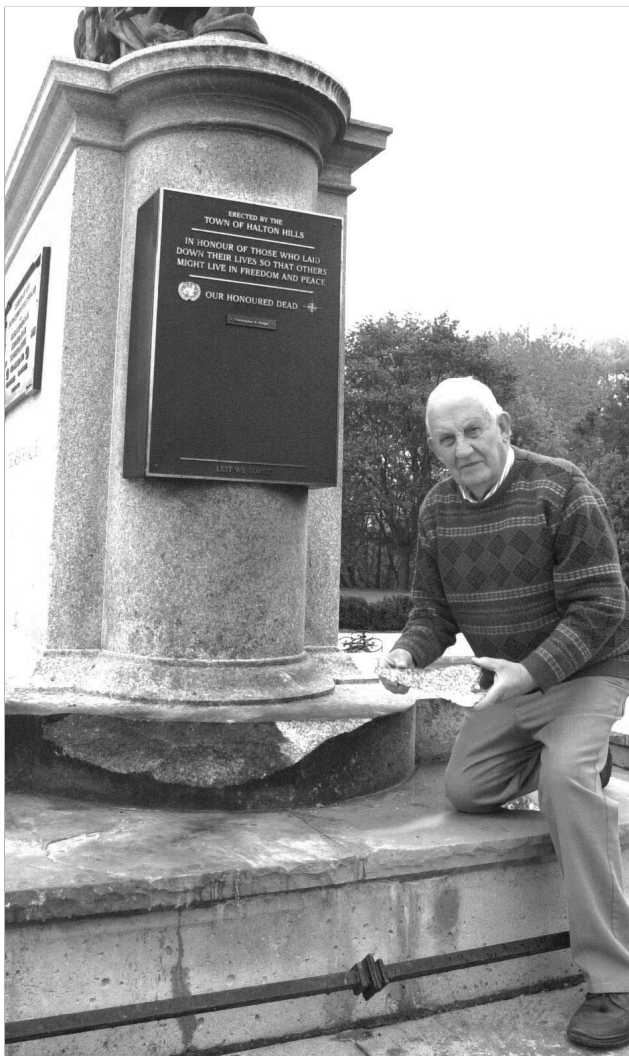


Tom Schenk (right) of the Candlelight Tribute Committee holds a piece of the cenotaph that broke off after vandals burned the Georgetown monument early Saturday in Remembrance Park. Candles that had been lit earlier as a tribute to Canadian soldiers were stacked up by the unknown culprits causing the fire. Below, graves at the Fairview Cemetery in Acton were also vandalized Saturday morning and Town of Halton Hills staff are upset and concerned about the frequency of these incidents.



Photos by Eamonn Maher



# Mayor calls vandalism 'absolutely disgusting'

Continued from pg. 1

The idea for the candlelight tribute, held each year on VE (Victory in Europe) Day came after a group from Halton Hills visited the Netherlands six years ago and discovered that Dutch children lit red candles on Christmas Eve that burned through the night on the gravesites of fallen Canadian soldiers in silent tribute.

This year's tribute was held last Thursday.

Schenk said the committee will likely have to post overnight security at the cenotaph in future years for the ceremony.

"It's really disappointing to keep seeing this sort of thing, especially for people coming to visit the cemetery on the Mother's Day weekend," said Karen Ford of the Town's parks and recreation department.

She added that the newly-constructed Rotary Centennial Pavilion in Prospect Park in Acton has been damaged frequently since it was completed last summer. As well as trying to burn down the structure,

graffiti is frequently scrawled on its walls, plastic siding has been torn off and empty cases of beer are often found by Town staff.

The park in Glen Williams wasn't damaged on the weekend but has become a favourite place for late-night mischief, say Town staff. Two portable toilets in Cedarvale Park were also "torched" last week.

"The discouraging part is that the recent (vandalism) sites have included Remembrance Park in Georgetown and Fairview Cemetery in Acton which should be places of respect and dignity," said Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette.

"It is absolutely disgusting that such acts of senseless vandalism would happen in our community, especially in these special areas. We hope that these individuals who have committed such a heinous act will come forward and turn themselves to the police. If not, with the assistance of Crime Stoppers, we will track them down."

(Eamonn Maher can be reached at emaher@independentfreepress.com)

# Habitat makes dreams come true for three families

LISA TALLYN  
Staff Writer

Three families' dreams for homes of their own will come true in a just a few months when they move into houses built by Habitat for Humanity Halton on John St.

Ground was broken Friday on the properties where, over the summer, three raised bungalows will be built simultaneously—one for Bonita Smith, Chris Kearsy and their three children Nicholas, Alexander and Brianna, another for Renee Herman and her children Kyle, Josh and Cody and the other home for Millicent Walala and her children Austin and Donna.

The three families couldn't be happier.

"We will finally have a backyard for the kids to play in," said Bonita Smith, a stay-at-home mom. "It's in the perfect area. Our kids don't have to change schools."

The Kearsy/Smith family is from Georgetown and lives in an apartment in the area. Chris works at a local warehouse and the single income family of five spends a high percentage of its income on rent, meaning there is not always money left over for healthy food, new clothes or to pay unexpected bills.

Brampton resident Renee Herman, who works as a GO Transit bus driver, had been on a waiting list for some time for Brampton's Habitat for Humanity and was thrilled to get a call from the Halton organization.



The newest Habitat for Humanity project in Georgetown held a groundbreaking ceremony Friday as Habitat staff, sponsors and Partner Families broke ground at the 51 John Street site. Taking part were, (from left) Kathrin Delutis, executive director, Habitat for Humanity Halton, Partner Family Millicent Walala and her children Austin and Donna; Partner Family Cody and his mom Renee Herman and brothers Joshua and Kyle; Partner Family, Bonita Smith, Chris Kearsy and their

children Brianna, Nicholas and Alexander; Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette; Patrick Cadieux, senior marketing manager, Whirlpool Canada; Michael Thier of Thier Architect; Mary De Sousa, director marketing and communications, First Canadian Title; Habitat for Humanity Halton Chairman of the Board Ed McMahon and Ted Arnott, MPP Wellington-Halton Hills.

Photo by Ted Brown

"It's amazing. We have been living in basement apartments. Where I live right now is always flooding and it's cold," said Herman.

Burlington resident Millicent Walala, a nurse, and her two children are excited to be getting a home of their own.

"I'm really happy. It's a dream come

true," said Walala, who came to Canada after her husband's death, in the hope of creating a better life for her family.

See HABITAT, pg. 10

what's missing in your backyard?



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\*Offer expires May 31st