

Man ends up with houseful of hamsters after finding abandoned rodents nearby

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When Kevin Schendal went to bed Sunday he had five hamsters in his basement, 12 hours later, he had 23.

That's a lot of hamsters for someone who up until about 1 a.m. Sunday was hamster-free.

That is until he drove home from his brother's house and saw two hamsters, obviously discarded by someone, on top of a pile of shavings beside the road about 200 metres from his driveway on Sixth Line.

A former hamster owner, the 22-year-old Sheridan student couldn't believe that someone would dump the animals outdoors. He scooped the pair up, placed them on his front seat, and took them home.

Wanting to share the bizarre tale with someone, he called his friend Richard Roskam, who lives a few miles down the road.

Roskam rushed over, and on the way, spotted two more hamsters in the same area where Schendal had found the other critters earlier.

The two friends decided to go out to the road with a flashlight to see if there were any more hamsters, and found one in the grass beside the road.

They brought the fifth hamster back to Schendal's house and set the gang up in a couple of aquariums he had around the house from previous pets.

Within 12 hours, Schendal says he

was shocked to find the five hamsters had multiplied to 23, because three of them, unbeknownst to him, were pregnant.

Schendal, who's had to quickly become an expert on how to raise hamsters, isn't upset about the instant family in his basement.

He contacted Ruffin's Pet Centre in Milton and storeowner Rick Vickers says he will take them, ensure they're healthy and "make sure they go to good homes."

Vickers says leaving a hamster outdoors in this temperature "would basically kill it."

"If the weather didn't kill it, the foxes and hawks would," says Vickers.

Schendal plans to take care of the hamsters for a few weeks until the babies get a bit older. He'll probably keep a couple, he says his girlfriend plans to take one and Roskam likely will too. He'll take the rest to Vickers to be sold.

"I can't believe someone would do that (discard the hamsters outdoors)," says Schendal.

"All they had to do was make one phone call. Ruffin's in Milton would take them."



Kevin Schendal (left) and his friend Richard Roskam display the two male hamsters they found on the Sixth Line at Five Sideroad, early Sunday morning. The pair also found three female hamsters (left) that have since given birth, giving Schendal a total of 23 hamsters in his house.

Photo by Ted Brown



Playground opens

Junior and Senior Kindergarten classes from Tiny Town Daycare Inc. (TTDI) of Georgetown, owned by Tina Standish, recently joined with (from left) Mark Taylor (Halton Hills Recreation and Parks), Mayor Rick Bonnette, Katie (TTDI), Betty (TTDI), Ward 4 Councillors John Duncan and Bob Inglis, Wards 3-4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal, Angie (TTDI), (top) Allison and Stephanie (TTDI) to officially open the Barber Drive playground.

Photo by Warren Harris, Town of Halton Hills

Around town in pictures



Knit total climbs

More than \$15,000 was raised recently from the annual Knit for The Cure held at Georgetown Yarns and Crafts. Among those participating were, from left, Carol Pelletier, Dianne Crawford owner of Georgetown Yarns and Crafts and Carol Caverly. A total of \$11,000 was raised from the women collecting pledges and \$3,000 from the month-long silent auction. This brings the Knit For The Cure's three-year fundraising total for breast cancer to \$33,000.

Photo by Shawn McAlpine

Eye candy

Justin McKendry, 4, eyes a chocolate lollipop during the annual arts and crafts show held at Georgetown District High School recently. The two-day sale drew hundreds of craft-lovers.



Photo by Sabrina Byrnes