

Waste reduction does not come cheap

By Frances Niblock

Region-wide organic recycling, enhanced Blue Box diversion and Energy from Waste – Halton's waste management plans, existing and proposed, are designed to protect and conserve capacity at the Region's landfill site and meet a 60 per cent waste diversion target.

Peter Crockett, Halton's Commissioner of Planning and Public Works, walked Halton Hills Council through the Region's recently approved 2006-2010 Solid Waste Management Strategy (SWMS), noting that Halton can expand the life of the Milton landfill, but at a cost.

Crockett said it cost \$21.1-million last year to divert 41.6 per cent of waste from Halton's landfill, which has 17 years of remaining life.

"The proposed (solid waste management) strategy will get us to about 62 per cent diversion, extend our landfill life to 24 years, but it will have an annual operating cost of \$28.5-million," Crockett said.

Halton spent \$100-million to develop and open its waste management site on Highway 25 in Milton in 1992. Crockett said it would cost approximately \$240-million to replace it.

"The \$6-million (per year more to operate) is significant, but the value of that landfill site, and why so much effort is being put into extending the life of that landfill, is because of the cost of replace-

ment," Crockett said, adding the main cost is expanding the GreenCart program – basically a Blue Box for kitchen scraps.

Crockett reported that in 2005, Halton disposed of 195,000 tonnes of waste and 113,000 tonnes of the total was residential waste. Through various 3-R diversion

programs, recycling for condos and apartments, maximizing capacity at the landfill, expanding the Blue Box program when viable, enhancing industrial/commercial and institutional recycling and investigating Energy from Waste, sooner than anticipated.

Crockett details key components in the updated solid waste management strategy including a Region-wide household organic separation program, possible partnerships with neighbouring municipalities, more promotion and education about diver-

to dispose of its own ICI waste, it would reduce the life of the Milton landfill by half, to the year 2017.

Both Acton and Regional Councillor Clark Somerville and Mayor Rick Bonnette asked Crockett if the incorrect headline indicating Halton would take outside waste from Toronto, had generated many phone calls.

Crockett said Halton has been "very clear" that its interest is in providing the best waste management solution for Halton and its residents, and it is looking at different plant sizes and technologies to its needs and then "we'll decide how much, and with whom we can partner from a municipal standpoint."

Bonnette said he also wanted to raise his pet peeve – the six-bag limit on the number of garbage bags each house can put out for weekly pickup. He said it should be reduced because it doesn't encourage people to buy products with less packaging and follow the 3Rs.

Crockett said the number of bags and a per bag user-pay system will be considered, and that typically households puts out two or three bags per week.

He said they would look at reducing the number of bags once the other diversion programs were expanded the philosophy being that "you have to provide the alternative before you significantly restrict the residential garbage."

Millions to extend life of dump

programs, 47,000 tonnes of recyclable materials were separated from the waste, and the organic recycling program diverted 33,000 tonnes from landfill, resulting in 42 per cent waste diversion rate.

That's up one per cent from 2004, but falls short of Halton's goal of diverting 60 per cent of waste from the landfill by 2010, up from the target of 58 per cent set in 1999.

Crockett said the Region's GreenCart organics recycling program is the "single largest untapped diversion opportunity" that the Region has, adding GreenCart material makes up approximately 45 per cent of the average residential garbage bag.

Expanding the program Region-wide could increase the diversion rate by up to 20 per cent more, but would cost approxi-

mately \$6-million to expand by 2010.

The prospect of Energy from Waste, burning garbage to produce energy, sparked a lot of debate recently when a Toronto newspaper headline mistakenly reported that Halton's proposed EFW plant would accept garbage from Toronto.

Waste to U.S.

Halton said it is looking at EFW now, sooner than anticipated, because 150,000 tonnes of industrial/commercial and institutional waste from Halton is trucked to the U.S.A. for disposal, and if Halton had

O'Leary says...

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so he had no personal axe to grind.

Gill was a sociopathic killer, pure and simple. He might just as well have sprayed bullets in a mall or on a street corner. He might have been stopped by his acquaintances when he was spewing his particular brand of loathing, but young people today are too cautious when it comes to turning in friends to authorities. Perhaps there's a lesson to be learned there.

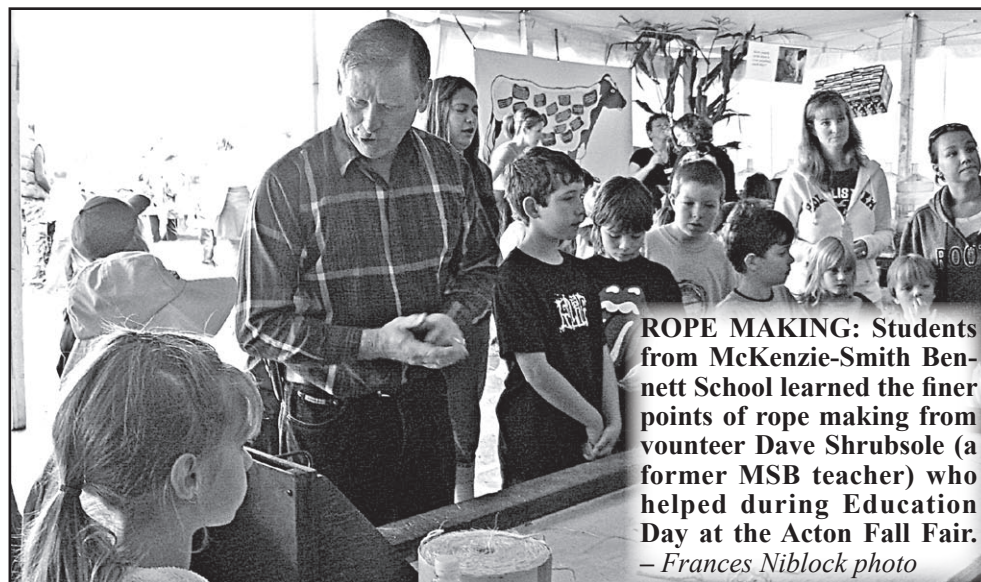
Maybe the police could have identified him if they had the funding and staff necessary to search the internet sites that are springing up like weeds. While many internet sites labour under

the impression they are immune to court action, the answer is for us to commit the resources necessary to enforce reasonable regulations. Nobody objects when pedophiles are arrested because of internet traps. Why would anyone object to hunting for murderers electronically?

We may not be able to stop the likes of a killer like Gill. Proper allocation of human and financial resources would certainly help. In this case the responsibility lays solely with Gill.

Sadly, all we can do for Anastasia DeSousa and the other victims of Dawson College is mourn the dead and pray for the wounded.

And wait for the next time.



ROPE MAKING: Students from McKenzie-Smith Bennett School learned the finer points of rope making from vounteer Dave Shrubsole (a former MSB teacher) who helped during Education Day at the Acton Fall Fair. – Frances Niblock photo

Arthritis Society's fall campaign

Losing weight may be the answer to controlling the disease and pain of arthritis, an affliction from which 4 million Canadians suffer.

The Arthritis Society says even small improve-

ments in weight can make a big difference. Losing 10 lbs., for instance, translates into a decrease in stress on your knees by 40 lbs.

To help people deal with it the Society has initiated a 4-week Lifestyle Makeover Challenge, a commitment that could not only improve your health but delay the onset and reduce the disability of osteoarthritis.

To register or receive more information visit www.arthritis.ca/lifestyle or call 905-455-6273 or 1-888-434-0009.

Volunteers are already knocking on doors to support The Arthritis Society's residential campaign. Halton Hills coordinator Jos Bosboon can be reached at 519-853-0738 if you don't have anyone call or wish to volunteer.

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