

# Sports, septic waste, pesticides meeting subjects

By Rebecca Ring

At the All-Candidates Meeting in Rockwood on October 18, candidates answered some tough questions from the audience.

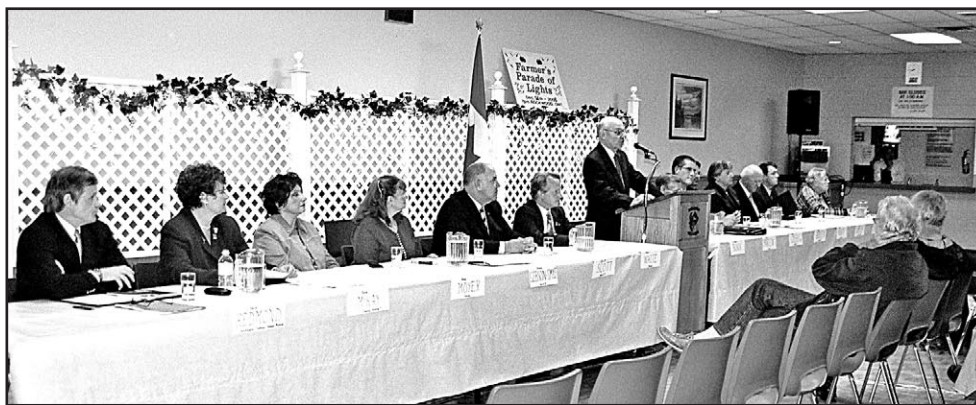
Rockwood Soccer Club president Pete Williams said there is a shortage of activities in the community, especially for older kids. He asked, "As the township grows, how will you deal with strategic issues with sports clubs and the shortage of facilities?"

Martin answered, "I am aware of the shortage of soccer space, and you are the type of guy we want on a committee." He went on to say that a lot of money has been wasted in Parks and Recreation with nothing to show for it. He would fight for a board of commission to manage Parks and Recreation.

White said, "We need long term strategic plans for soccer, baseball, skating." He would involve the Minister of Sports (the local MP), the health promotion industry and partner with local sports groups and all levels of government.

Scott said it is important for the community to be active together. He would be proud to chair a committee on sports and fitness. He also wants to see better outdoor skating rinks with youths participating to make it work.

Liebig said he has "lived and breathed sports," having been on a professional volleyball team in Europe. He



**ALL EARS:** Many tough subjects were aired at the all-candidates' meeting Oct. 18. - Rebecca Ring photo

would involve the community in developing plans.

Gibson-Smye said she brought forward the idea of mobile skateboard parks to council on behalf of interested youths, stating that "money is always an issue." She wants better use of the Rockwood Hydro Fund (public money from the sale of Rockwood Hydro, held in trust for Rockwood residents) to make special projects happen.

Breen said the population has been growing but Guelph/Eramosa has only added one new sports field. He wants to partner with MP Mike Chong for opportunities to develop sports facilities for local use and market them to surrounding organizations. He added, "The potential is endless."

Knapp said he supports sports and recreation, but not all kids are into sports. He wants to see a whole realm of activities for children to do, including supporting 4H Clubs, boy scouts, etc.

Moyer agreed that the issue is important. She wants to see more activities for kids with warm, inviting places for them. She said, "We don't need strategic planning, let's do it and quit talking about it."

#### Septic systems

Susan Caruthers from Everton raised the issue of disposal of septic system waste, as farmers are no longer accepting it for fertilizer due to environmental and health issues. She asked how high of a priority this is in the township and county.

White answered that as vice chair of ROMA, he sees that septage is a huge issue. He said the township needs to partner with the county and the province for solutions. He said, "This is not passing the buck, but the municipal budget is too small. The province needs to get involved."

Martin joked that it is a "stinky problem." He said the county is working through AMO and the province, agreeing that the province has to be involved because of the high cost.

Breen agreed that there needs to be a provincial and county solution, but added that the municipal government "is the closest level to you" and needs to do a better job lobbying higher levels and working together.

Gibson-Smye told of new approaches she has seen in Eden Mills using new technology. She would push for exploring alternatives and partnering. She said she will have open doors, be receptive to ideas and be proactive.

Liebig said he did not know a lot about the issue, adding "If it's important to you, it's important to me so I would make it a priority."

Scott joked, "This is part of being an effluent society." He told of the problems that Kelowna, B.C. encountered because septic systems were damaging the lakes. They initiated their own sewage system and attached \$5,000 to each property tax bill, spread over 25 years. He said this may work for a community like Everton, and options need to be explored and worked through, with lobbying the provincial and federal governments for funding.

Moyer said she has experience with these issues. She said research needs to be done on existing facilities around the world, adding that she does not want to wait for the provincial and federal governments, as the township needs to spearhead. She is confident that something already exists that can be used here.

Tosh said the county is studying available options

for treating septic and land-fill effluents, and is at the proposal stage.

Gamsby said he is a quick learner and would try to find the best engineering solution.

McKay said she would look into bio-filters, tertiary systems, and partner with cities who take our waste water and may take treated septage.

#### Pesticide problem

Cameron MacLean, of Pesticide Free Rockwood, said he can choose not to spray his lawn with harmful pesticides but he has no choice when neighbours treat their lawns. He added that the Canadian Cancer Society and others stated that cosmetic use of pesticides is dangerous and should be eliminated. He asked the candidates how they would protect him, his children and pets from residential pesticides.

Martin said the pesticide and lawn care companies have fought to prevent legislation banning cosmetic use of pesticides and have found ways around it, stressing the importance of wording by-laws. He added "I agree with you."

White supported a ban for pesticides on residential lawns, but would work with the agricultural community to balance urban versus agricultural needs.

Liebig said he has spent the last 16 years protecting children and would look into the issue and do the proper leg work.

Scott said it is "tricky to balance urban with rural use." He added that he is in favour of banning pesticide use "in town."

Breen said he deals with pesticides as superintendent of a golf course and teaches pesticide safety courses. He would support allowing cosmetic use of pesticides by a licensed applicator, but added he does not spray his own lawn as it is "a waste of money and time."

Gibson-Smye said she would look at by-laws in other municipalities that have banned cosmetic pesticide use and see how a similar by-law could be developed here.

Knapp said people can use these chemicals with no formal training whereas farmers and golf course workers are trained and know how to use them. He added he would support a ban on residential pesticide use.

Moyer brought in the issue of carpenter ants and termites when talking about a total ban. She said controls would need to be in place for integrated pest management.

#### Open Hydro fund?

Larry asked if the candidates were willing to open up the Rockwood Hydro fund so people in Rockwood could decide how to use it. The fund, from the sale of Rockwood Hydro, is about \$1.9 million according to White.

Martin, White, Gibson-Smye and Breen agreed that the principal should be protected, and the interest used for municipal projects, with public input. Liebig said it is the people of Rockwood's money, and he would do what the people want. Scott said he would look at all resources and spend the money for the most good. White said it is self-financing and has been used for wells, the new fire hall and COMRIFF (for infrastructure).

Bill Robson asked about MPAC and why the taxes in Guelph/Eramosa were higher than Milton and Halton Hills (averaging \$3,671, \$2,582 and \$2,992 respectively). White said MPAC is dysfunctional, but not responsible. He explained that costs are divided among the population, so higher populations have lower taxes.

Martin said MPAC is only a vehicle laid down by the provincial government. He said the government needs to change the system of assessment so people are paying the same amount for the same services. He added that in Wellington County, Guelph Eramosa was the only township that did not increase taxes in the last two years. The tax hikes were on the county level, which he said he and a few other county councillors fought to reduce.

## Castle's

### TeaBerry Cafe

Join us for  
Jazz Guitarist  
**GERRY MACKAY**  
Every  
Saturday night  
in November

111 Main St., Rockwood  
(519) 856-0188  
Reservations Accepted  
Fully Licensed

(519) 856-1531

**SATURDAY MORNING SPECIAL**  
**DRIPLESS OIL SPRAYING**  
**\$10 OFF ANY CAR/TRUCK/VAN ETC.**  
**8AM-NOON**  
**108 Station St.**  
**ROCKWOOD**

**ROYAL LEPAGE**  
Meadowtowne Realty, Brokerage  
Independently Owned and Operated

*James Wilson*  
**905-877-8262**

324 Guelph Street  
Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4B5  
Fax: (905) 877-0705  
Toll Free 1-866-865-8262  
E-mail: jameswilson@royallepage.ca

Sales Representative