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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Down to earth

St. Peter's School celebrated Earth Week Monday by planting seeds and plants around the school and adjacent park. Here, Chantelle Kennedy (left) and Ashley Richardson, both 8, water a lily plant.

Fighting vandalism must be community effort, residents told

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Vandalism can't be effectively battled without a collective community effort.

That was the message at a meeting at St. Peter's School Monday night.

About a dozen concerned citizens attended the St. Peter's School Council-hosted meeting to address what can be done to curb the growing problem of vandalism.

While no sure-fire solution was presented, Halton Regional Police Const. Brenda Fraser — guest speaker for the night — stressed that more community input is needed.

A number of residents admitted they've been reluctant to report incidents of vandalism in the past. Fear of reprisal by local youngsters as well as general pessimism about actually stopping those involved were given as reasons for not coming for-

ward.

But Const. Fraser said a lack of community involvement will only ensure the problem continues.

She admitted that many vandals aren't going to be caught the first time around, but that with enough detailed information police can target areas for patrol and possibly nab repeat offenders.

"We need to establish what the high priority areas are," said the high school resource officer. "If we get calls of an ongoing problem, then it's one more place for us to check."

Const. Fraser also told those in attendance that "willful damage is willful damage" — no matter the amount.

One argument raised during the meeting related to school lighting. Some parents said they've seen youngsters standing under lights at public schools smoking marijuana while others believed increased lighting would scare off vandals.

Const. Fraser said parents need to know where their children are at night and who they'll be with. "You need to maintain communication with your kids. Kids want boundaries," she added.

Open house to honour Hadfields

Local residents are invited to meet Roger and Eleanor Hadfield, parents of astronaut Chris Hadfield, at an open house tomorrow evening.

The event, sponsored by Times Own Travel, will take place in the Community Room on the second floor of Loblaws on Nipissing Road from 5 to 8 p.m.

"We're thinking of expanding the Chris Hadfield Bursary to include all three of the high schools and then chose one winner," Ms Hadfield said.

"To do that we have to increase the money in the trust fund. We'll be talking about that and the launch."

Currently, Milton District High School is the only school offering the bursary.

Refreshments will be served and Mayor Gord Krantz will be in attendance.

For more information, call Times Own Travel at (905) 875-9988.

INSIDE

Comment	6
HS Report	8
Lifestyles	12
Dateline	13
Sports	20-22
Classified ...	23-25

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 - Cashway* • Cristello's Village Market*
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