



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## So long, Mr. Murray

E.C. Drury High School's retiring student services head Greg Murray receives a carnation and good-bye card during a farewell presentation at the school Wednesday. Presenting the card is student government member Alicia Visconti (right). Mr. Murray officially retired Friday and began a job with the Halton Industry Education Council yesterday.

# School board will no longer use taxis after crash that killed boy

By KIM ARNOTT  
*Special to The Champion*

The Halton District School Board has been asked to stop using taxis to transport students to school.

A petition with more than 1,200 signatures was presented to trustees Wednesday night, along with a plea by Karen King to end the practice.

Ms King made the request on behalf of Kelly Bonehill, a Georgetown woman whose nine-year-old son was killed when the taxi bringing him home from school was involved in a head-on collision with a transport truck.

"The use of taxi cabs to transport small children to and from school places those children at risk," said Ms King.

Alex Bonehill, a Georgetown student attending a six-week program at the board's

Learning Centre in Milton, died last May when the Milton Taxi cab he was riding in tried to pass another vehicle on Ninth Line and ran into a truck.

Cab driver Lisa Broatch was charged with careless driving and eventually sentenced to 45 days in jail. Her licence was also suspended for 12 months, she was fined \$300 and received 18 months probation.

During her court case, evidence was introduced suggesting Ms Broatch had passed two vehicles travelling at or near the speed limit prior to the collision.

Ms King noted that cab drivers aren't trained specifically to deal with the safety of children, and don't operate on a fixed schedule.

"Their primary operating consideration is the number of fares that they can get," she told trustees. "The more fares they get, the more money they make."

Ms King added that the second student riding in the car wasn't killed, but was severely traumatized by the accident and will now only travel with one of his parents.

And she told trustees about a number of incidents involving students riding in board-hired taxi cabs that have been disclosed since the accident, including small children being allowed to ride in the front seat and children being dropped off at a different location without permission from parents.

Ms King argued that the higher standards of training imposed on bus drivers, as well as the size and visibility of buses, help to keep students safer.

In earlier interviews, a school board spokesperson said the board has been using taxis for more than 20 years to transport a small number of students who attend out-of-town programs, have behavioural or medical conditions, or live on busy highways where it is not safe to stop a bus.

Trustees held no discussion of the request to ban the practice of using taxi cabs. Board Chair Mary Chapin noted that the accident is currently in litigation, so there would be no comment from the board.

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## Corrections

- Incorrect information appeared in a story in Friday's issue of The Champion. The article, 'Youth facility says striking union's claims untrue', reported Milton's Transitions for Youth facility is operated by Kinark Family Services. This isn't the case. Transitions for Youth is a private, not-for-profit organization that has provided services in Halton since 1981. MacMillan is one of the programs Transitions operates.

- Incorrect information appeared in an April 25 business story.

Expressway Trucks is actually leasing 39,000 square feet of a 40,000-square-foot, Lawson Road building. It didn't buy the building, as incorrectly stated. The space was previously occupied by a business that shut down.

The Champion apologizes for the errors and any inconvenience they may have caused.