



COMMENT

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No-rules compost

The latest fad in waste disposal, composting, is novel only in the scope of its planned implementation for the 1990s. Composting has been around a long time in people's back yards. But now it seems everyone wants to get into the act.

That's all well and good, as long as there are some clearly defined rules to the game. But there aren't, at present, or at least no rules that make any sense.

So far in the Milton area we have one large private composting facility up and running at Scott Farms in rural Hornby. Nearby residents, according to municipal officials, are complaining because it allegedly smells bad. One municipal official called it "trial and error" composting.

In fairness, it should be pointed out that Scott Farms appears to be working steadily at alleviating odors. But it is also apparent that not enough forethought, on the part of the firm, or monitoring, on the part of government, went into this effort to keep the neighbours satisfied.

In addition to the operating composting centre, we have at least two other tangents being explored, and these initiatives have become entangled and confused.

Halton Region has outlined a plan to build a composting plant on the new landfill site in south rural Milton. A variety of different schemes are being considered that involve some sort of partnership between private industry and regional government. But they all stipulate the processing plant itself be within the confines of the landfill property.

That is not the approach being advocated by Equity Environmental Services Corporation, a firm that has an option on 48 acres of land along First Line, across the road from the rear portion of the 250-acre landfill site.

Equity representatives say they would like to work with regional government by processing municipally collected waste into compost. But company representatives have also stated they plan on going it alone, which means competing with Halton, if a deal can't be struck.

In a worst-case scenario, which various elected officials maintain won't happen, Halton would pay somewhere between \$10-20 million to build a taxpayer-funded composting centre only to see it operating a stone's throw from a privately built one determined to underbid regional business.

Because, let's face it, composting is a business. Ideally, you make money by charging people to dump food and yard waste, and you make more money by processing it into marketable garden-boosting mulch. The private sector wants a piece of that action.

If there was some sort of clearly defined agenda as to who controls what aspects of waste disposal in Ontario, we wouldn't be facing the prospect of financing a government-run composting centre that competes with a privately-funded one.

If that agenda had included more quality control measures, no "trial and error" process would have been sanctioned initially.

One way or another, roughly \$100 million went into the Milton landfill site, and haulers are taking their waste to landfills elsewhere because in order to recoup some of that \$100 million, Halton charges \$150 a tonne for waste disposal. Others charge much less.

Unfortunately, given the fiscal black hole that waste treatment in Ontario has become, the only solution is for government to set the prices for disposal at all facilities, and police them.

Otherwise, private operators who haven't accumulated a mountain of debt searching out landfill sites or running blue box programs are going to undercut them. And taxpayers will still be on the hook for the municipal expenditures anyway.

LOOKING BACK



Milton Public Library opened for the first time in May 1964 at the former Adams Store on Main Street after many years in the basement of town hall. At total of 14,000 volumes of literature crossed Main Street to their new home. Mrs. Joseph Connelly of R R 6 Milton was the first to check out a book. Clerk Mrs. G. Hamilton stamps out the book while librarian Mrs. Brown and clerk Mrs. Lynde look on. Next week, Public Library Week will be celebrated at the modern version of Milton Public Library with a special musical event Friday evening October 23.

PAGES OF THE PAST

One Year Ago

From the October 16, 1991 issue

□ Milton's Boy Scouts and Cubs were soon to hold their annual Apple Day. During the annual fundraising event beavers, the youngest members of the scouting organization were to polish apples at the fairground's Boy Scout Hall. The older boys, cubs and scouts were to sell the fruit at various locations in Milton, including the Milton Mall. On the weekend, there was to be door-to-door sales. The boys were also to be judged for the best decorated apple basket. Between 200 and 300 boys were to sell apples during the event.

□ Over the Thanksgiving weekend, Halton celebrated fall in style at Crawford Lake Conservation Area. There were wood-crafting demonstrations, as well as opportunities to romp in fallen leaves and feast on candy apples.

□ A Campbellville resident, Calvin Snow, 37 had recently run in the Shopper's Drug Mart Toronto Marathon. He finished in three hours, 32 minutes and 27 seconds. It was Mr. Snow's first marathon, however he had competed in the Coors Light 10 kilometre race and a half-marathon during the season. He was a former Milton Flag Football League player and competed in oldtimers hockey.

20 Years Ago

From the October 18, 1972 issue

□ Attendance was down but enthusiasm and sponsorship was up when the Halton and Peel Association for the Hearing Handicapped held its fourth annual fundraising walkathon in the Milton-Acton area. 94 walkers trudged a 32-mile route around the north Halton roadsides. In total the walkers expected to collect \$2,444.44

from their sponsors. Proceeds from the walkathon were to go towards sending a team of deaf Canadian athletes to the World Olympics for the Deaf, being held in Sweden the following year.

□ Milton Tennis Club handed out trophies to the winners in their summer season at the clubs awards dance held at the Boyne Community Centre. The mixed doubles winners were Steve and Ann Wallaston. Ladies doubles winners were Joan Smith and Ann Berry, while Don Aikenhead and Carl Smith took the men's title. The singles winners were Steve Wallaston, Pat Hector and Carl Smith.

□ The Milton Fire Department opened its doors to the public for their annual open house as part of Fire Prevention Week. Youngsters were handed free balloons and pencils, while parents received tips on fire prevention. There were displays of firefighting equipment such as oxygen masks, fire posters and two showings of three fire prevention films. Two lucky draws for fire extinguishers were also held. The winners were Neil Ford and Norm Lane, both of Milton.

50 Years Ago

From the October 15, 1942 issue

□ Frosty nights and nice sunny days had made Milton's surrounding district a riot of colour.

□ Lorne Evans, a star goalie of Milton's Junior Championship hockey team was training with the Maple Leafs in St. Catharines. Evans was slated for the Marlboro juniors but would receive a tryout with the Leafs.

□ Mr. Cooper, who had been managing the Carroll store in Milton for several months had been transferred to a Hamilton Branch store and would be replaced by Miss Isabel Woodman of Brantford.

PUD

BY STEVE NEASE

