

# The Canadian Champion Weekend

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## NEWSLINES

### Earth Day festival at Crawford Lake

On the calendar, Earth Day is this coming Monday — but Crawford Lake will be celebrating a little early again this year with their sixth annual Earth Day Festival Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Mohawk elder Albert McArdie (Chief Top Leaf) will share his unique insights about the planet throughout the day, with stories, songs and hands-on learning. He will be joined by photographer and naturalist Dave Hawke, who will present several slide shows focusing on wetlands (11 a.m. and 3 p.m.) and art in nature (1 p.m.).

Visitors can explore the reconstructed 15th century Iroquoian village to learn how Canada's first people lived and take a guided walk through the spring woodlands at 1 p.m. Meanwhile, plenty of nature games and activities will be available for children.

Crawford Lake is located at the corner of Guelph Line and Steeles Avenue, five km south of Hwy 401. Regular gate fees will apply Sunday, with \$3.25 for adults, \$2.75 for students and \$2.25 for children and seniors.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINÉ

## A puzzling private place

Two levels of action greeted those in attendance at the recent Tacky Fair garage sale at St. Paul's Church on Main Street. Shoppers considered merchandise on top of the tables while six-year-old Carrie Wentzell worked her Mickey Mouse puzzle on the floor.

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### MOUNTAINVIEW VETERINARY SERVICES

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By KIM ARNOTT  
Special to The Champion

It's taken several weeks worth of marathon meetings, but the end is finally in sight.

Halton public school board trustees could finalize a 1996 budget as early as next Tuesday night.

However, it's unlikely the budget will satisfy everyone, admits trustee Tim Kingsbury, chair of the board's finance committee.

"You cannot guarantee that there will be universal happiness," he says. "Ideologically, we're in completely different times than we've ever been — we're in uncharted waters."

The budget will mean layoff notices for at least 400 Halton Board of Education staff.

For the board's 43,000 students, it will mean cuts to classroom computers and supplies, buses and school support services.

And despite all the cuts, local ratepayers may still see tax hikes. Trustees need to reduce the proposed \$286 million budget by \$16 million in order to keep taxes from rising.

*"You cannot guarantee that there will be universal happiness, we're in uncharted waters."*

- TIM KINGSBURY  
Milton Trustee



At this point, they've chopped about \$7.5 million, which would mean a 4.39 per cent mill rate increase for taxpayers. That translates to a \$60 tax increase on an average residential assessment of \$6,700.

Final budget numbers won't be known until Tuesday, when trustees debate a motion to ask for \$6 million worth of salary and benefit concessions from teachers and other unionized employee groups.

If that motion passes, approved budget cuts could total about \$14 million.

The finance committee will also look at the possibility of transferring \$1.4 million from board reserves to cushion the tax impact.

So far, trustees have agreed to eliminate school lunchroom supervisors, cut more than 80 administrative and secretarial positions and lay off 25 per cent of the counsellors, therapists and instructional assistants who provide support services to students.

They have also cut the budgets for classroom computers, staff training and school renovations.

But the finance committee has backed away from some of the most controversial money-saving proposals.

Trustees rejected a plan to make kindergarten a full-day, alternate day program to save on transportation costs.

They have also turned thumbs-down on proposals to eliminate busing for French immersion students and urban high school students.

All decisions made by the finance committee will require ratification by the entire board.

• see CUTS on page 10

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