

GRAPE VINE

Lookin' good, Acton east!

The downtown of Acton is not the only locale that's gone upscale. The eastern entrance to town looks pretty good thanks to recent spruce-ups at Queen's Tire and Tyler Travel and Transport. Owner Vito Manchini at Queen's says he put stone facing on his building to make it look more attractive to women buyers. He plans to finish painting the sides and install refurbished signs this week.

Next door at Tyler's, owner Ted laughed that someone mistook his building for a restaurant with the new hanging flower baskets and awnings out front. For Ted the spruce-up was for cosmetic and psychological reasons. "We needed a little self-improvement and I think there's a different feeling out there that the recession is over. Times are a little better and I think a spruce-up makes us and our customers feel better."

Bon Voyage

One Tyler customer who definite is feeling better is Acton's Mary Mancini. She won a trip for two to Florida in Tyler's 20th Anniversary Draw on Saturday. Mary and husband are off to the Gulf coast in December for a week in the sun.

Under the "B"

Over \$1,600 was raised for the Acton Soccer Club at its regular bingo session last Wednesday

night at Bingo Country on Highway 25. Bingo organizer Anne Stewart said it was an exceptional night with soccer volunteers selling \$6,000 worth of cards. "Bingo is big business for us," Stewart said. "We have used the profits to buy new equipment, uniforms for the rep. team and ultimately hope to make enough to help pay for a new soccer field in town."

Calling all young adults

Want to learn how to make earrings and barrettes? Want to stencil your own T-shirt and get some up-to-date make-up tips? If you said "yes" then head to the Acton library. The library is offering a new program starting next week called the Young Adult Club, or YAC. It's aimed at 11 to 14-year-olds and librarian Marie Vickery says it's an attempt to keep young teens interested in what is happening at the library. "We don't have any programs for that age group and we want to make sure that they don't drift away." You must register in person at the Acton library. The \$10 fee covers the materials. The YAC program will be held on Wednesdays, Oct. 7, 14, 21 and 28 from 6 to 7 pm.

Parking peril

Illegal parking is about to get a whole lot more expensive in Acton. Politicians have okayed whopping increases in the fines for parking or stopping illegally. For instance, if you stop within three metres of a fire hydrant the fine will be \$50, five times the old fine. If you park in a designated fire zone you can expect to pay \$50 also. The fines are being increased because staff say the old ones were not enough to be a deterrent.



WHERE'S MY STOCK? Peter Vidic, owner of the new Leathertown Fashion's on Mill Street is waiting for \$57,000 worth of clothing that was lost after being shipped from Montreal several weeks ago. Vidic, shown here with wife Donna, will offer a full line of men's, women's and children's clothing, once his stock arrives.

Oh, a scouting life was the life for me

PETUNIA PATCH

With Esther Taylor



Back in the days when boys wore short pants, I was a Wolf Cub leader for 10 years. I was conned into the job, which aged me prematurely, but the experience and education were unique.

In Jungle Book jargon my title was Akela, meaning Old Wolf, and my assistants, when available, were Bagheera, the Black Panther, and Baloo, the Bear. Our Black Panthers and Bears wore out faster than the Old Wolf, who was much younger and tougher than she is now.

In retrospect, Akela must have been more than a little dotty to undertake her leadership role without any previous training and with a minimum of maternal instincts. I am not, and was never, one of those exemplary females who love kids. While I wish them well, I can take them or leave them.

My only claim to scouting knowledge was as a girl guide in Acton's first guide company. Under modern scouting rules, I wouldn't last a week as Wolf Cub leader. I still marvel that I lasted 10 years without losing a boy—or my sanity.

At weekly meetings, my pack learned how to tie knots and acquired some nature lore, when they weren't attempting to murder one another all in the name of clean, boyish fun. More than once, in the absence of Bagheera or Baloo, I had to apply the toe of my boot to obstreperous beholds as an aid to discipline. I understand modern Scouting officials frown on such direct methods of communication.

I confess that our jungle powwows, first in the YMCA and later in Hodenawsonnee (Scout Hall) were endured rather than relished by the Old Wolf. For me, they were exercises in survival.

However, I remember with honest delight our many treks into the Great Outdoors. I really enjoyed this phase of Cubbing that revealed my young wolves in a different

and more endearing light. I learned, much to my surprise, that some 8-year-old boys are delicate flowers compared to little sisters of the same age. When the Old Wolf cast off her shoes to ford a cold stream in early spring, howls of horror emanated from youthful throats. These new cubs obviously had never before seen an adult taking such terrible risks.

If my charges learned nothing else from the Old Wolf, they did master outdoor culinary skills. Regardless of the season, we cooked our chow, bacon and beans, in sooty frying pans on smoky fires. True, the bacon got singed and the beans looked like nothing on earth after being mixed with leaves and unwary bugs.

I had a remarkable dog in those years, Smutts by name, who went with us on our cook-out hikes. As Smutts thought she was a person, it followed that she should share the food at her own speed and inclination. Her sneaky sharing outraged diminutive cooks who lost strips of bacon to the hungry canine.

As proof that I was a pickle short of a jar in those years, I scheduled one Saturday hike in mid-February. Ghastly weather, but about 30 of us struck out down the old radial tracks. The cook-out was a disaster. No dry wood, and a bleak wind that snuffed tender sparks. The kids whined and complained going and coming back and who could blame them? We were wet and cold, and the return trip seemed endless, until Akela had a brilliant inspiration.

We would take a short cut through the swamp, Old Wolf lead-

ing the way. So, floundering in deep snow, and mourning their condition, the pack followed an intrepid guide across the creek, which should have been frozen solid. It was NOT frozen. Into the icy drink tumbled Akela, followed by a half dozen trusting Cubs. Words cannot describe the rest of the journey home. I phoned parents on my return to explain why their sons had drenched pants and boots full of water.

For a week, I had nightmares about an outbreak of pneumonia in my pack. Somehow we all survived, never to repeat that February disaster.

The highlight of my Cubbing career came after an invitation from Guelph Scout officials to attend a Sports Day. I knew there were natural athletes among my Dib-dibbers, but how to prepare them for competition was another matter. I sought the help of an elderly Actonite who had been an outstanding sports figure in his youth. He put the Acton hopefuls through their paces, instructing them in running and jumping skills.

His training paid off handsomely. The Acton pack cleaned up, winning the trophy over Guelph and Fergus competition. We sang ourselves silly on the triumphant bus trip home. The next year, Acton athletes repeated their triumph. A feather in the cap for the Old Wolf, who won only one race in her lifetime—a Time race.

I feel ancient when I encounter some of my Cubs still living in Acton. I wonder if they remember the pack exploits and adventures of another decade when small boys wore short pants.

HEY!

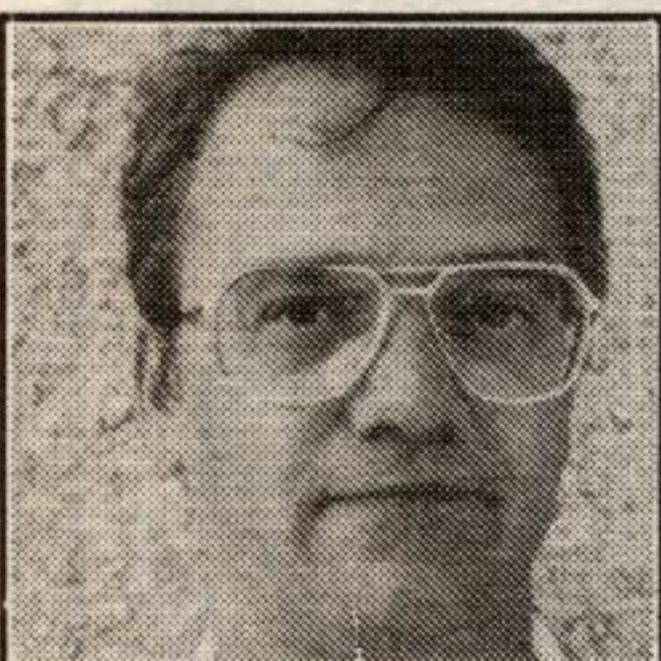
Do you have enough information to make an informed decision in the referendum on the Constitution?



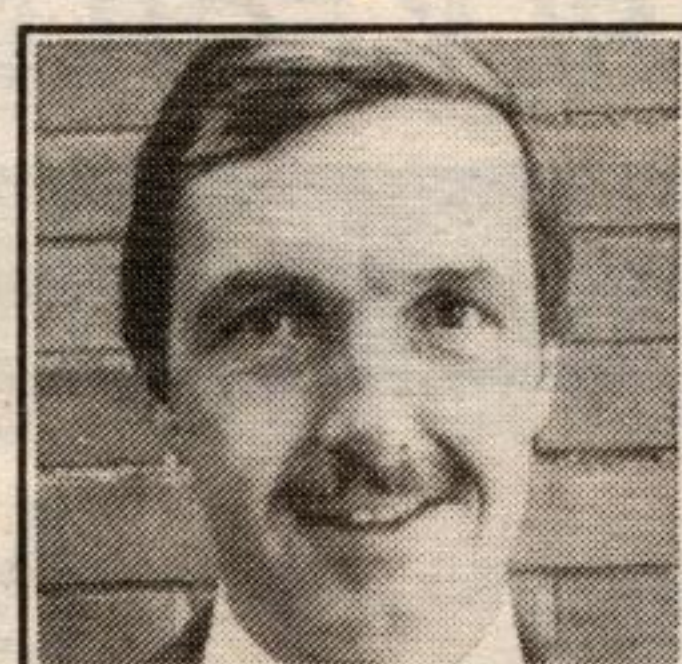
"I think I can answer the question based on all the information I've read and seen on TV. Maybe the government should have sent out some information, but from what I've seen in the papers I plan to vote No."
Teressa Hanley, R.R. 4, Acton



"Just last night I saw an ad on TV saying you could send away for a booklet if you call a 1-800 phone number so I plan to do that because I don't have enough information to make an intelligent choice."
Eileen Dix, Rosemary Road



"I've followed the story in the papers and you can't turn on the TV news without hearing about the vote. Enough is enough. I say have the vote and get on to important issues like the economy."
Peter Vidic, Acton Boulevard



"I really haven't seen any information from the government. I watch TV and read the paper but that is hardly unbiased information. I will vote Yes just to end the issue once and for all."
Jim Cruickshank, R.R. 4, Acton