

Effects of chilly, damp summer felt by camps, stores

It's been a dull, rainy, chilly summer — especially on weekends. We have had the lowest number of sunshine hours in July and August in 30 years.

There were just 212 hours of sunshine in July, and August wasn't any better.

Temperatures were 1.3 degrees Celsius below normal. Rainfall was two inches above normal.

Rain fell mostly on weekends in July and August with both Dominion Day and Civic Holiday rainouts. Labor Day was clear and sunny but cool.

People are still trying to get suntans.

Here's what it means to some Acton businessman and women.

Mike Kinal of Home Hardware finds he is ending the summer season with a surplus of camping equipment, coolers and chaise lounges. But he sold plenty of sleeping bags!

He also notices that pool chemicals have not sold as well. Last year in one memorable weekend he sold 100 electric fans. But this summer he has only sold 20 altogether!

On the other hand, it's been a pretty good season for fishing tackle.

The Morses, at Pro Hardware, haven't been here long enough to compare summers, but they do know that rainy days are the worst for business.

"I could go through my books and show you which days were rainy," Mr. Morse says.

Although it's business as usual this summer at A-B Supermarket, Don Lindsay notices sometimes bad days are good for business. When the weather is stormy, he thinks people stay home and shop in Acton instead of driving through snow and sleet to the plazas.

Slower Corie von Merkestein, behind his counter at Acton Chicken, contemplates about business being slower this summer. He has sold less salads and even chicken this year, but he thinks the cause is more likely the overall increasing cost of living.

He's optimistic about business picking up when he introduces submarine sandwiches soon.

Hard on kids The summer has been a hard one on kids, says Gary Barton of Glenlea Pharmacy. He has noticed many colds and an increase in cases of pneumonia. Some children have had prescriptions filled a couple of times before they recover, Gary says.

He still has a stock of summer items on hand—sunglasses, suntan lotion etc.—but it's no problem. These things will be purchased later when people start heading south... still searching for sunshine.

Ice cream With more people in Acton than ever and many out-of-town customers, Ed's In and Out store on Main St. didn't notice any drop in volume of ice cream sales this summer. Hot weather probably would have produced even more sales, though, says owner Ed

Crimless. The ice cream cone business seems to come in spurts, with some days very busy.

The ice cream is scooped into cones in the old-fashioned way at Ed's, and people from out-of-town often stop there for a treat.

Different campers At Northton campgrounds just outside Acton, Merv Barber found that the poor weather produced a different variety of camper this year. He had fewer campers in small tents and canvas-top outfits, and more in trailers and big campers. During the season some dedicated campers turned in their smaller equipment for larger trailers with more conveniences.

His business was up 15 to 20 per cent over the summer. "We could've done more, but you can't knock it, he says.

Park slow Rockwood Conservation area reports a much slower summer than last year. However, with only 55 camping spots, the campground has been filled most weekends in spite of the weather.

Last year there were several days when the park was crammed full and the gates had to be closed to further vehicles. This only happened once this past season, way back in June.

Swimming lessons were quite well attended despite the weather. The first sessions had the youngsters facing the chilliest water; temperatures were some-

what better for the second and third sessions.

Gate keeper Lois Hamilton, R.R. 5, Rockwood, admits she hasn't got much of a tan, but then she works inside. She's part of a staff of 17 or so, most of whom finished work Labor Day and head back to school now.

The park closes officially October 15.

Garden plots The unusual weather early in the spring got gardens off to a bad start, say Jack and Pearl Rol of Caroline Garden Centre. In April there was a heat wave, bringing on blossoms which were later killed by snow. They notice the effects of that cold spell much more here than at Milton.

Home gardens also show the effects of the cool summer, with smaller vegetables and fruits in some cases.

Some apple and pear crops here have been lost due to a blight caused by dampness.

Tomatoes and cucumbers in particular are not as good as they should be, the Rols think. Potatoes are OK.

They noticed frost on their squash and cucumbers Monday morning and twice last week, giving an omen of more cold to come.

But grass has been particularly good this year, with little insect damage.

Business at their garden centre has been good. "What have we got to complain about?" laugh the Rols. "Even the goldenrod is beautiful. In England, it's

cultivated as a lovely plant. This is the best country in the world to live in."

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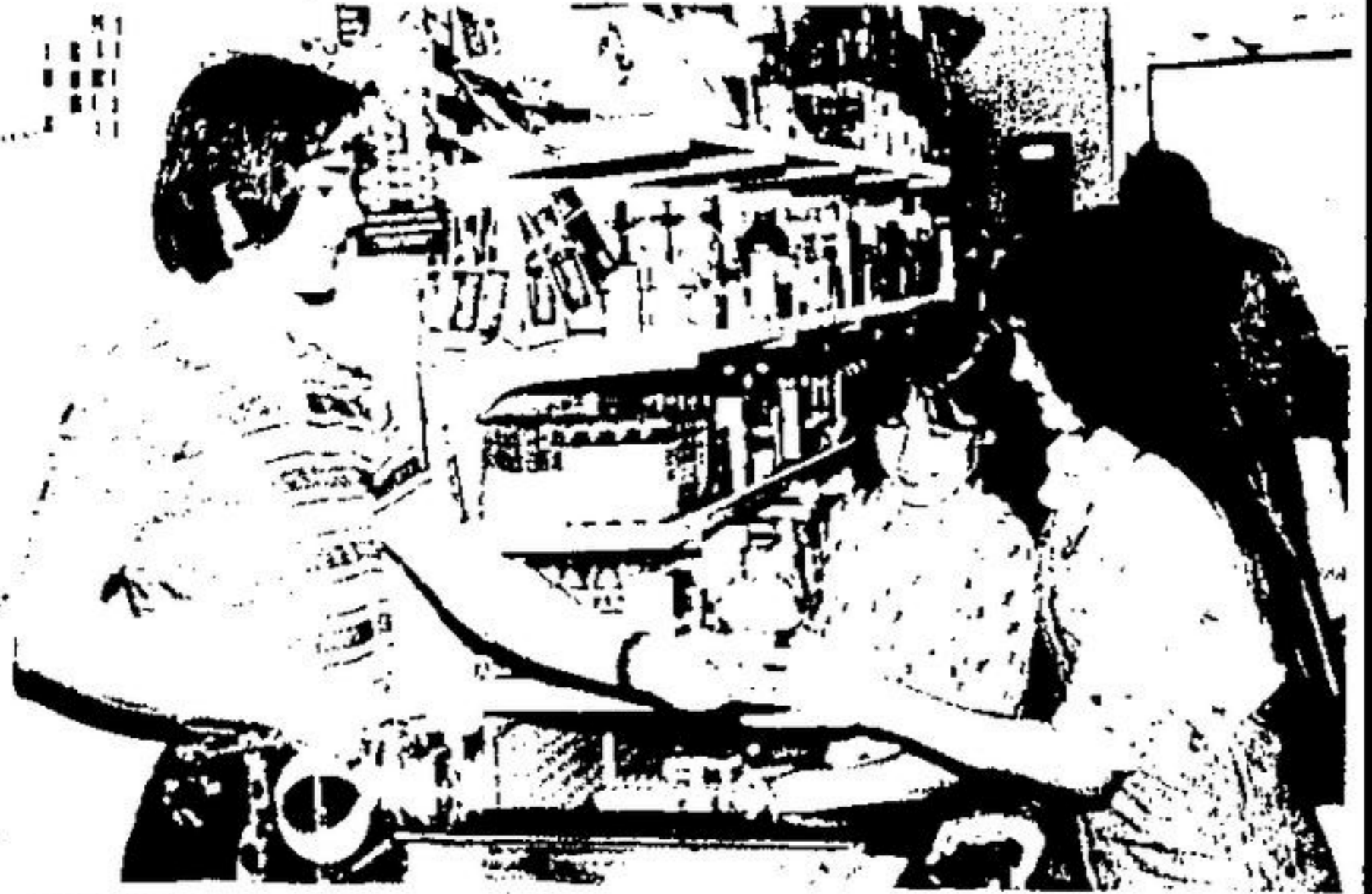
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COOLERS AND camp stoves are on sale at Home Hardware. Mike Kinal found camping gear slow to sell this cool, wet summer. But sleeping bags were a big item.



ICE CREAM sold in spurts this summer at Ed's In and Out store, where it's scooped in the old-fashioned way. Here Marvin McNabb supplies Tina Gunn, Kingham Rd., with a butterscotch cone and Marie Louise Turnbull, Lake Ave., with chocolate chip. They are regular customers.

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GLAD FREEZER BAGS 65¢
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Potatoes 69¢
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Consider regional centre

Development of a Halton regional centre for business, cultural and recreational services is impossible due to the geography of the region, Acton Area Council Pat McKenzie told the Regional Planning Committee last week.

The development of such a centre emerged as one of the objectives that will be considered in the region's efforts to develop an official plan.

Not possible?

Planning Director Ed Cumming agreed that it might not be wholly realized for the entire region but suggested the possibility existed for Milton, Oakville and Burlington.

Mr. Cumming suggested that without such a centre, people are encouraged to go outside the region for that sort of service.

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