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Don McDonald, Publisher

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Tough choices for parents

This Friday is a crucial day in the brief history of separate school education in Acton.

Friday is the deadline parents of children attending antiquated and full to flowing over St. Joseph's School have set to receive a letter of intent from Halton Separate School Board to build a new school here.

If, as expected, the letter doesn't materialize, then the parents will be sitting down to map out strategy to force the board and province to provide proper school facilities here.

So far the parents have acted reasonably and restrained over this issue.

Now they plan to ask Education Minister Bette Stephenson to come out and see the conditions under which their children are being schooled for herself.

They doubt she will come so they plan to go see her to make their case for funding. That probably won't do any good either. Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed has already taken the parents' case to Stephenson without any results but a promise to review funding in September. Of course that promise of a funding review was made before the parents uttered a word of protest.

The parents will then have some very tough decisions to make.

Several of their options involve using the children as pawns, which won't be easy, but possibly necessary.

The parents will consider not sending their children back to St. Joseph's in September and instead enrol them again in local public schools. That won't please the board but shouldn't bother the province a bit since the youngsters will be in classes and they'll still be giving grants for their education, except now to a dif-

ferent jurisdiction.

Not sending their children to any school this fall would be effective. It will draw a response from both the board and province. However, do parents want to set an example for young people of not obeying the law which requires parents to send children to school until they are 16 years of age? Do they want to leave impressionable young minds with the idea you only obey laws you agree with?

Parents will consider switching their elementary school tax support to public while continuing to send their children to St. Joseph's. This will annoy the board but not likely the province. Queen's Park will be able to give the public board a little less to operate since it will have some extra tax revenue and give the separate board a little more.

Another thought is to keep their children in school but not pay elementary school taxes to either board.

The two options involving school taxes aren't likely to get them the new school they've been promised and deserve. It will only slow up their battle while courts straighten out the tax mess.

A fifth plan, to sue the board for breach of contract, won't likely succeed. Promises were made, but on the basis of provincial funding being secured. The best moves would appear to be the ones involving the children being used as pawns.

Children have been withdrawn from classes by parents elsewhere in Ontario to get the local board and province moving and it has worked.

It is sad though that children must be used as pawns to get adult politicians to fulfill promises.



Make Smiley an offer grandaughters for grandsons

People keep asking me if I have any plans for the rest of the summer, such as going on a trip, renting a cottage, learning to scuba-dive or whatever. To each and all of them I have one answer: "I'm going into a rest home where nobody under the age of 50 can get near me."

We've just had a lengthy visit from our grandboys, the first in more than six

If you have any druthers when your children are expecting children, put in an application for girls.

There is no girl or girls on earth who could have put their Grandad through the physical obstacle course I've been through in the past week.

When school ended in June, I thought I'd hang around for one more year before making way for a real teacher. I was in pretty good shape and another 10 months in front of the chalkboard would be no

sweat. This week, I've almost decided to retire on the third of September. Somehow, I don't think either the authorities or the students want an English department head cranking around in a wheel chair.

The bursitis in my shoulder is killing me, after throwing a baseball to a potential Babe Ruth for hours. My right foot is bruised, battered and sprained from trying to prove I can still kick a football over a big spruce tree. My knees are scraped, my hands are raw, my torso is thoroughly pierced from climbing trees to bring down small boys who can get up, but like cats, can't get down.

My back door had to be removed and repaired after being slammed approximately 3,000 times by the boys and their buddies up the street.

My face is burned to lobster-like hue from being out in the sun as long as seven

. .

hours at a stretch. The boys never burn. They're moving too quickly for the sun to

hit them a single direct blow. I don't know much about girls. I had one about 28 years ago, and she was no problem until she became a teenager. The only idiosyncracy she had was wanting to go to the bathroom at the most inopportune times, such as sailing along on the threelane highway at 60, with two turkeys tailgating you, and not a tree or bush in sight.

But I'm sure girls are not as curious, daring and dicey as small boys, who want to climb as high as possible, go as fast as possible, lean as far as they can over a dock or cliff, and hit each other as hard as they can over the head with a fist, a stick or a baseball bat.

Do little girls get all cleaned up, dressed up, and then dash through the lawn sprinkler immediately and frequently?

Do little girls go down to the docks with you, ask how deep the water is, then lean over at an angle of 65 degrees to look down and make sure you're not prevaricating? Do little girls plague you because every-

one else on the highway is passing you, and when you tell them the other drivers are turkeys, suggest with a grin that maybe you are a chicken? Do little girls put on boxing gloves and

try to hammer the daylights out of each other, no quarter asked or given? Do little girls, the moment they've

arrived for a visit, ask that everything be turned on: the fireplace (in July), the hi-fi, the fans, and the lawn sprinkler?

Do little girls go from six in the morning until nine at night without stopping in one place for more than nine seconds, aside from the odd four-second pee demanded by Grandad?

Well, maybe little girls are not as angelic as I've suggested, but little boys

are just as demonic as I've intimated. In fact, my wife heard at the hairdresser's that little boys are more honest, more affectionate and more lovable than

Smiley

little girls, who of course, are practising to be big girls. That may be. However, I'm about as bruised, battered, bewildered and burnt as though I'd climbed a mountain without any ropes, or

crossed a desert without water. 'Gran doesn't take the punishment I do. Oh, she does a lot of work. The washing machine is thumping most of the day, there isn't a dry towel in the house, she's about run out of Band-Aids, and she spends hours in the kitchen, whipping up such delicacies as honey-and-peanut butter sandwiches and strawberry shortcake.

(Guess who picks the berries?) She had a whirl in the backyard one day, batting, fielding, being shot with the hose, did nobly, but hasn't been out of the house since, and spent most of the next day in bed.

Thank goodness for good neighbors. John "fixeded" the car doorts when the boys, through some miracle of mechanics, had made it impossible to close them. He also "fixeded" the sprinkler. (Ballind, the little guy, wants to make sure the just tense is quite clear, so he adds an extra "ed").

Jim another neighbor, fixeded the door, which was about to fly away by itself. All in all, however, it hasn't been too

bad, except for the sleeping arrangements. The boys are peripatetic while somnambulant. You go to bed in one room, alone, wake up at midnight in another bed, another room, three of you, and may wind up in the morning in still another, four of

you. I wouldn't trade them for all the Samanthas and Mary Ellens and Joannes in the world. But make me an offer.

issues 10 years ago August 12, 1970

Back

An Acton woman, Mrs. Emma Cossar, 43 Alice St., has been commended by the federal Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, the Hon. Ron Basford, for her help in preparing a report on hearing

Acton council thinks the town could still use one more dentist although a new one, Dr. Robert Steen is establishing in the Alteo block at the corner of Church and Main Sts. Fairy Lake is one of the cleanest bodies of water in Ontario, according to a recent test for bacteria. Acton Board of Parks

Management exulted over the results. Residents of Rockwood may soon benefit from a provincially-owned waterworks and sewage system, if the OMB approves the two projects for the village at a cost of \$1,391,740. Poliution problems in the village have become apparent; a number of residents have trouble with their wells, other with their septic tank system. Contamination could leach into the uncontaminated water supply. Unless the new system is installed soon, there could be epidemics of hepatitis or some other communicable disease. The villagers are asking many questions.

Acton OPP will no longer be allowed to have auxiliary policemen.

20 years ago

August 11, 1960

Disregarding a recommendation from Ontario Hydro, Acton Hydro Commissioners decided to give their services free of charge again for this year at least. On the spot treatment is given to casual-

ties at Fairy Lake by the St. John Ambulance brigade every weekend. Linda Braida passed her lifth figure test,

Joan Cook her second and Barbara Cook her Ten Fox Trot.

Acton Legion Minor Sports Association is many dollars richer thanks to their threeday carnival. Moira McKelvey was crowned Popularity Queen by last year's winner, Trudy Scott. Runners-up were Gloria Latimer, Gayle Roszell, Lorraine Richardson and Jackie Dawe.

Soap box derby winner was John Price, Ernie Waller second, Allan Robinson third. There was a midway, go-kart races, parade, pony rides and booths. The parade was one of the longest in the history of this

carnival. Best decorated doll buggy winners were Debbie Drinkwalter, Darlene Johnson and Lynda Ralston.

Bob Loutett, Herb Cook, Mr. and Mrs. Gord James and Sam Brunelle acted as clowns. Acton Public Schools float was judged best with the firemen second and 4-H third.

50 years ago

August 14, 1930

A letter from Ontario Hydro advised the Public Utilities Commission that after a study of operating conditions in Acton, Hydro rates are to be lowered by \$1.00 per horsepower. The rate is now \$33 instead of \$34 per h.p.

The meeting of the Women's Institute was held at the home of Mrs. William Hall, The ladies again decided to serve hot dinners and hold their booth at the fall fair. Taking part in the program were Miss Nellie Hall, Miss Lizzie Orr, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Andrew Dobbie and Miss Verna Murray. Union services are being held with the United and Baptist congregations.

The re-union of Ospringe Old Boys and Girls fully realized the anticipations of those who conceived the happy idea. Between 400 and 500 gathered. The program included ball games, races and horse-shoe contests. After a bounteous supper the crowd was assembled at the platform to hear speeches. Mrs. Roy Hindley was chairman. J. H. Miller gave an interesting account of the history of Ospringe.

Other speakers included G.H. Pearen, J. Swackhamer, Rev.J. Grant, Rev. P. Theinsersis, J. Stewart. An umbrella was presented to Mr. James Kirkwood, ex-M.P.P. who was 85 that day.

Later in the evening the Ospringe orchestra supplied the music for an old-time dance in the school house.

100 years ago

August 12, 1880 Summer Complaints, or infantum, which is carrying off the infants and children by the thousands at this season of the year, can always be surely checked and cured by Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild

Strawberry. (Advertisement) There is talk of a post office being opened

at Crewsons Corners. Today is Georgetown's civle holiday. An excursion to Collingwood and return over the N. and N.W. Railway, for \$1.00, will take the majority of the inhabitants away from

The freight and passenger returns for Acton station, of the G.T. Railway, are very satisfactory, and show that business is fast improving in our village. For the six months ending June 20th, the increase was \$7318.24 which is that amount in excess of any other 18 months since Acton was made a depot on the G.T.R.

Uur readers write

Fox coverage disgusting

It was with absolute disgust that I leafed through the July 30th issue of the Acton Free Press to find a few small paragraphs about the arrival of Terry Fex through this

This fellow has touched the hearts of all Canadians. He has become a national hero in his enormous undertaking to help raise funds for cancer research. His journey is updated on national TV, but yet you cannot even see fit to print his picture in your paper nor to give the coverage that obviously is so important in his campaign to raise funds.

His arrival in this town was the most important event which took place in Acton last week, as I am sure that many people who lined the streets would agree. I suggest that you read the Georgetown Herald and see the heartwarming pictures and read the articles of praise for this marvellous person. Your priorities are obviously distorted when you print a picture of strawberry pickers and nothing about Terry Fox. To put it politely, your lack of coverage was disgusting. Sally Leatherland

Editor's note: Whose priorities are distorted on the subject of Terry Fox? In reviewing our coverage, not just the coverage in one issue (July 30) seven days after Fox's visit, we feel it was comprehensive. July 9 we carried two stories, both on page 7, headed 'Acton on the road map of 5,200 mile Fox Trot' and 'Strawberry Festival helps runner.'

July 16, the issue prior to Fox's visit, this newspaper contained two pictures of the runner, one in full color on the front page of him running in Halton, and another photo on page B9 of Terry greeting fans. We also published a story on page two, 'Terry Fox to trot in town Tuesday', as well as two other stories about Terry, "He's determined"-volunteer and 'Hero

welcomed in Halton' on page B7. July 23 we carried a photograph on the front page of Terry running just outside Acton as well as a story about his run through the area, 'Greet hero this morning, just a few hours after his visit.

On July 30, seven days after his visit, we published a story dealing with how much Acton had raised for cancer research, asking remaining pledges and donations be turned in and recapping Fox's visit here, as well as a photograph of a local man who played a big role in making his visit here a

big financial success, Lorne Doberthien, who rode his bike ahead of the runner.

August 6, this newspaper carried an editorial in tribute to the local cancer volunteers and Terry, 'Hats off to cancer crew,' and a letter from the local cancer society on page 4, a story on the final fund raising total, 'Fox visit raises \$5,500', on page 5 and a photograph and story on an Esquesing resident's efforts to have Terry appointed to the Order of Canada on B6.

Mrs. Leatherland asks we give Fox "the coverage that obviously is so important in his campaign to raise funds." We think 10 stories and four photographs (three of Terry) is giving coverage, particularily when the advance publicity for his visit is examined. We believe the advance publicity greatly helped bring out the crowd and assisted in raising \$5,500.

This reader notes it was the most important event which took place in Acton that week. We agree, that's why we had it on the front page the day it happened. We saw no sense in repeating the coverage

seven days later on July 30. Mrs. Leatherland refers to the coverage of Fox in another area newspaper. This coverage was of Fox's visit to Georgetown.

We cover Acton and area, not Georgetown. Certainly had there been a reception for the runner here or Terry had been here longer we would have run more pictures and stories. Efforts to interview him both on Tuesday July 22 and on the day he was in Acton falled. This of course was through no fault of his or the local cancer organizers. We wonder how many pictures of Terry running down Mill Street, which is the Acton story of his visit, would have

been viewed as adequate. I offer this editor's note not so much because of the contents in Mrs. Leatherland's letter, but because we have received considerable comment about our coverage of Terry's visit.

Some readers, like Mrs. Leatherland, have been captivated by Terry, and expect to see many photographs of him running through town, expected us to cover his visit to Georgetown, and some have asked we have weekly updates on his run in

otherparts of Ontario. We have also received about as many comments that we carried too much about Terry Fox, that from the look of the paper he was the only news event in Acton last month. They say we went overboard and should have given more space to other events of more interest to them.

-Gord Murray



It's a bit of an inconvenience, but I'm now taking part in Divide and Conquer. (That's when you separate your garbage, one bundle for newspapers, one bag for cans and one for glass). It's tough though when there are just the two of us. We burn all our newspapers in the fireplace, and could go weeks or months before we finish a jar of something. However, not being a traditional homemaker and making a lot of things from scratch, I go through a lot of

lot of tin from me. We don't have that much to divide and conquer, but we are making an effort to help the town in their recycling project. It does take an extra small plastic bag a week (for a family of two). But it's worth it

canned goods, so the town usually gets a

knowing I'm doing my bit to help solve Halton's garbage problems. Now if they would just quit sending us tax bills for a house we don't own!

Well known Acton resident Scott Malcolm of 139 Tidey Ave., travelled to Montreal with the Guelph Pipe Band on August 1 and won a silver medal in Solo March Piping out of 21 Pipers. Congratulations Scott.

Paul Brunelle a son of Stella Brunelle,

Acton Blvd. has gone to the west to seek his

fortune. Paul is a hotel management

trainee at a resort hotel in Alberta. The Public Health Seniors Clinic, specializing in preventative medicine will soon be moving their office to the new senfor citizens' apartment building on Elizabeth Drive. The clinic has been held at the Community Services Centre in the Y the first Wednesday of every month. The elinic moves in September.

Lately, with everyone heading west or east, or south or north, Acton seems to almost have emptled before our eyes. The Monday of this past long weekend had me

thinking everyone had been mysteriously transported to another planet. Here at the Free Press, not many of us are lucky enough to have the Mondays or long weekends off. We usually get the Friday (unless it's Christmas, then we get the same day as everyone else). This past week, while pedalling my blke on Mill St., across the railroad tracks, it was really eerie not to see one car, truck, bike, or person from the Mill St. curve to the stop light many blocks down. Usually at 7:45 a.m. the street is bustling. There was not a soul. I was relieved when I got to work and there were a few cars in the driveway.

Acton residents seemed to have travelled to all parts of Canada and U.S. this summer. Trips to Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Vancouver, Victoria, Boston, The Dakotas, California. Have you been on a vacation lately? If so, let me know, Others are interested in where you were

and how your summer's been. People have been complaining for sometime now there are no "personals" in the paper. However, we don't know them unless we're told. Call me at 853-2010 or 853-3224. We're smart here at the Free Press, but not mindreaders.