

# Acton Optimists honor youths

A star basketball player and president of the Student's Association are this year's recipients of the annual Acton Optimists Youth Appreciation Week awards.

Blaire Smith and Rob Faber were presented with a plaque, a book and a \$25 cheque, each, last Tuesday night, Nov. 11, at a dinner at Family Restaurant.

The award, presented on an annual basis honors a boy and girl student at the local high school for scholastic, extra-curricular and community achievements.

It's the third year the local Optimist group has handed out the award.

Faber was center of the junior basketball team at Acton High and is a member of the Halton Gospel Temple.

Blaire, 18, a newcomer to Acton, was a volunteer worker at M.Z. Bennett and Halton Developmental Centre and headed the Fellowship Committee at Trinity United Church. She is president of AHS Student Association this year.

Dave Hall, president of the Acton Optimists, said the prize winners were selected carefully. The chairman of the club selects a committee, which draws up the guidelines for the search. The guidelines are approved by the board of directors before the school is contacted.

The principal then conducts her own search and presents several worthwhile candidates to the Club.

After a process of elimination, two names are selected and presented to the principal for approval.

Then the recipients and their parents are invited out for dinner by the Club to receive the award.

Hall said Rob Faber, is a good choice. "He's an exceptionally good basketball player, helps his father and sister at home and is a good example of a decent, upstanding youth. All this has been confirmed by his principal, teachers and parents."

"Blaire is a good member of both the church and the community."

Last year's recipient, Chris Geggie chaired this year's selection committee. Hall said after Geggie learned of the Optimist goals and creed, he joined the group and asked to be a member of the committee.

Hall said the Optimists are a youth-orientated club, with all funds raised going towards the community's youth. They sponsor Red Cross Blood Donor Clinics, oratorical contests in elementary schools, the bicycle rodeo, soapbox derby and a baseball team. And added Hall they hope to sponsor a hockey team and soccer team as well next year. There are 20 members in the Optimists.

## Blaire Smith

Winning the Acton Optimists Youth Appreciation Award came as a complete surprise to 18-year-old Blaire Smith, the tall, blonde student at Acton High

School. "I didn't even know I was up for it," she said. But once you find out what Blaire has been up to since moving here two years ago with her family, it's easy to see why she is a worthy recipient.

Blaire moved from London two years ago and has since become president of the AHS Student Association and of the Fellowship Committee at Trinity United Church.

As president of the students' association she is head of the student body, organizing school events and acting as a spokesperson for the students.

The Fellowship Committee is set up to organize such youth events as movie nights and skating parties within the church's congregation.

As well, Blaire has been a volunteer helper at M.Z. Bennett, working with the primary grades for a couple of hours twice a week and at the Halton Developmental Center for mentally retarded children once every two weeks in Milton last year.

Blaire's concern for others is leading her towards a career in law, although she said she is still undecided about the future.

She said after graduating from grade 13 this spring, she would like to take a year off to work. Then enter either the University of Toronto or University of Western Ontario for law.

"Law has always interested me," she said. "I took a law course a couple of years ago and legal

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The Acton Optimist Club presented its Youth Appreciation Awards last week during the regular meeting. Club President Dave Hall, left, presents the award to Rob Faber, while award chairman Chris Geggie presents the award to Blaire Smith. Faber and Smith are Acton High School students.

# The Acton Free Press

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the old Hide House opens

Acton's newest and one of the biggest commercial ventures hatched in years, the old Hide House, opened to fair sized crowds over the weekend. Featuring leather and suede coats, jackets, pants, leather accessories, western wear, early Canadian style oak and pine furniture and sheepskin rugs. Here some of

the staff, left to right, Steve Papillon, Kelth Hannay, Betty Blair, Brenda Hiller, Janis Fread and Charlene Dawkins model many of the items sold at the giant store. The old Hide House is employing about 30 people full and part-time.

Photo by GORD MURRAY

## Lady grabbed at knife point

A young Acton woman escaped unhurt after being attacked by a knife-wielding man on Tyler Ave. Saturday night.

The 20-year-old resident, whose name has been withheld by police, was walking on the street at around 7.30 p.m. when a man jumped out of a parked car, walked up to her and shoved the knife in her face.

The man, who was in his late 20s, led her to the car and ordered her to get in. The entire time he kept the knife close to her face.

At the car, he let go of the woman momentarily and she ran off. Her assailant fled the scene.

Staff Sergeant Ron Southgate, Halton Regional Police, said they don't know what the man's motive was in grabbing the woman. He gave no indication if he was going to kidnap her or sexually assault the woman.

Police have suspects in the case and the investigation continues.

## Suspicious man lurking at schools

Police think someone suspicious is lurking around two Acton elementary schools bothering children, but they don't believe he is a child molester as many parents fear.

Halton Regional Police Detective Sergeant Ron Southgate says he has five men investigating reports of a suspicious man hanging around St. Joseph's and Robert Little schools last week. He said there have been no similar reports from other Acton schools.

Rumors as to what this suspicious man has done to children are running rampant. There have been reports the man, who has followed some children home to the Kingham area, coming at the children with a knife.

Southgate said while there are some similarities there is also conflicting evidence to indicate the man who was lurking around the schools isn't the same man who attacked a woman with a knife on Tyler Ave. Saturday night. Southgate said police are puzzled why, if it is the same man, he is first after little boys, and then women.

Police have talked to a number of children who say they were followed by the suspicious man and are convinced part of their story is the result of the children, all age eight to 10, talking among themselves. He says the stories are "too pat", almost like the children have read the descriptions somewhere. He said there doesn't appear to be any

connection between the incidents Thursday and Friday in Acton and reports of a possible child molester in the Kiltbride area. Southgate continued the police are sceptical about some things they have been told because one child said the man came at him with a knife, but told no one of the incident for some time.

"We're not sure some of this isn't fabrication," Southgate said, adding police wonder why no older children have been bothered, just eight to 10 year olds.

Police have received calls from worried parents and parents are advised to go to and from school and elsewhere with their children if they want them to be absolutely safe. Ever since St. Joseph's principal Sean Briggs sent a note home to parents about this matter and rumors began spreading rapidly around town many parents have been walking their children to and from school or driving them to the door.

He said he doesn't think there is a potential child molester on the prowl in Acton but "there is somebody out there, a suspicious person lurking around those schools." While there haven't been reports of this recently in Acton, Southgate said police seem to be investigating incidents of suspicious adults hanging around schools bothering children fairly frequently.

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## Police worry businessman Acton may need vigilantes

Following hard on the heels of Bert and Mary Bigelow's announced intention to sell their 747 Restaurant because of increasing vandalism and lack of police protection, another local businessman has voiced considerable displeasure with Halton Regional Police.

In a letter to Police Chief James Harding and the Halton Police Commission, which was filed for publication with The Free Press (See our readers write on page 4), L and L Ford president Lorne Doberthein has outlined his deep concern.

Doberthein suggests a vigilante group may be needed in Acton and urges more officers live in town and become part of the community. He also would like to see a full-time police station in Acton and thinks the town should consider leaving regional government and bringing back the OPP.

## Heller's sells Wallace plant

Acton Terminal Warehouse is expanding its operations with the purchase of the Frank Heller and Co. plant on Wallace Avenue.

Acton Terminal Warehouse spokesman Steve Goy said the 25,700 square foot plant is an addition to the existing operation and will be used for warehousing and storage. This expansion could create a few new jobs in the future.

Heller's has no need for the Wallace plant now that the firm has moved its Acton operations to the Diston factory.

G. Alec Johnson Real Estate handled the sale.

Friday night thieves hit L and L, jacking up a truck and removing all four tires and rims and then leaving it on blocks they brought with them to the scene of the crime. In the letter Doberthein outlines some of the other crimes committed on his premises and complains of the apparent lack of concern and

attention on the part of the regional police.

Doberthein also expressed regret that a local resident, Constable Bob Andrews, was transferred out of Acton.

He compared the regional police unfavorably with the old Acton OPP.

## BIA backs ABC

Acton's Business Improvement Area (BIA) is going to back the new Acton Beautification Committee (ABC).

ABC chairman Bill Coats spoke at last Wednesday's BIA board of management meeting and received a warm reception.

The BIA has decided to help sponsor the ABC's first project, a most welcoming door at Christmas contest.

"Every step that is taken that will beautify Acton is beneficial," BIA president Larry Greaves said in praising the formation of ABC.

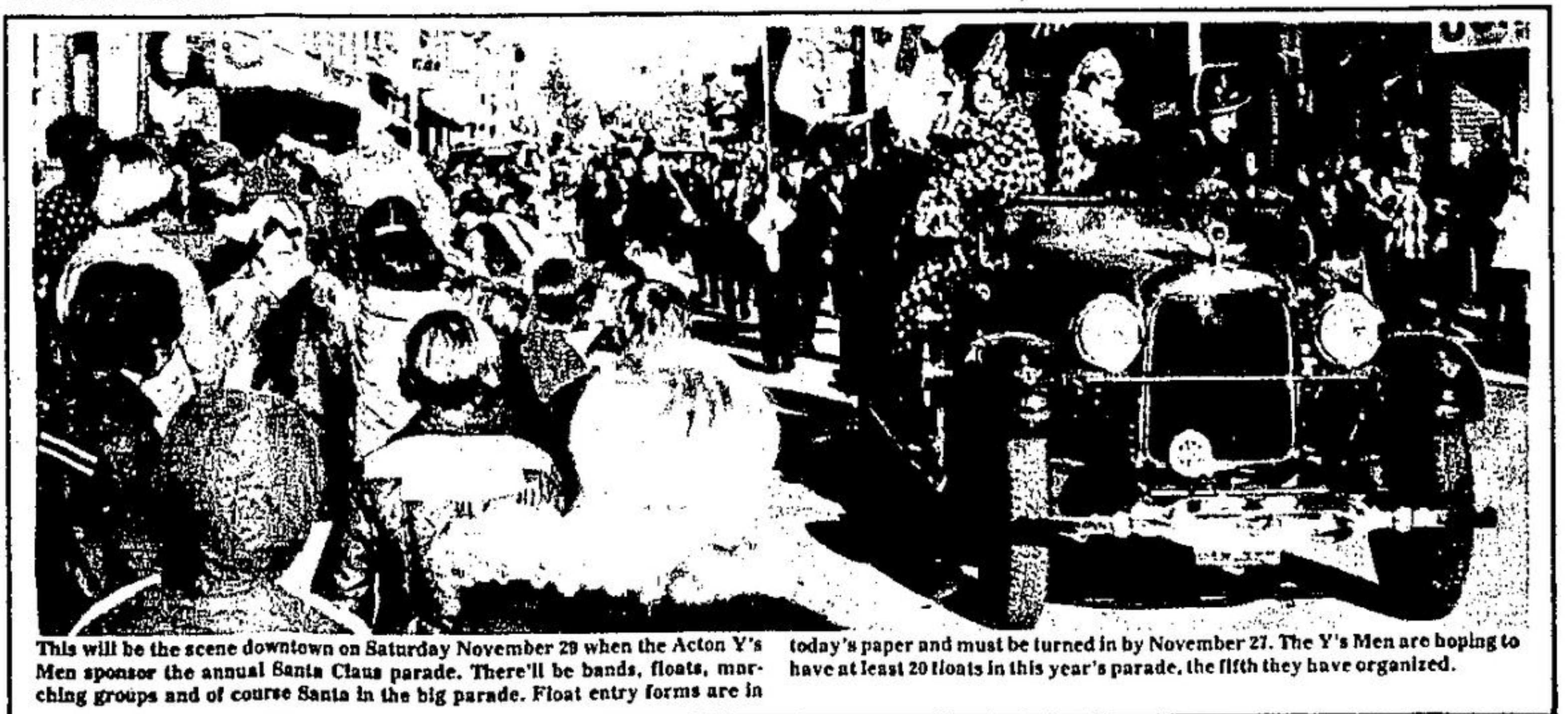
Details aren't nailed down for the most welcoming door at Christmas contest yet, but the BIA has decided to supply first prize, an Actario ticket. The BIA members may donate other prizes as well as advertising the contest and publishing the entry form.

## inside

Acton Legion is expanding. See page 5.

M.Z. Bennett has a parents' association and discipline was the topic of discussion for the first meeting. See page 2.

Defeated regional councillor Ed Wood says goodbye. Turn to page 5.



This will be the scene downtown on Saturday November 29 when the Acton Y's Men sponsor the annual Santa Claus parade. There'll be bands, floats, marching groups and of course Santa in the big parade. Float entry forms are in

today's paper and must be turned in by November 27. The Y's Men are hoping to have at least 20 floats in this year's parade, the fifth they have organized.