

The Acton Free Press

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Don McDonald, Publisher

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Lump P.D. days together

A decision last week by Halton Board of Education has brought a chorus of groans from parents.

Trustees couldn't have picked a worse week to decide to give elementary school teachers an extra professional development day during the 1981-82 school year.

In the two school weeks prior to the decision children had three of 10 days off.

We heard negative comments from a number of parents about the timing of the most recent professional development day.

First the children were off for Good Friday. That was reasonable.

Then they were off the next Monday, Easter Monday. It isn't a statutory holiday. It seems to be day off only for bankers, government employees, school teachers and students. This day off is a bit of a mystery and an annoyance to all taxpayers.

But what irked parents most was an already short week was shortened again with a professional development day on the Friday. Children were only in classes three days that week.

Professional development days for both elementary and secondary school teachers has been a contentious issue for a number of years now. Trustees hear the complaints from parents, that's why they wrestle with the issue every time it comes up.

There are many good reasons for professional development days. Reporting to parents, reviewing curriculum, learning new teaching skills etc.

The value of professional development is widely recognized in business and industry.

However, we find it easy to

sympathize with the feelings of parents.

With two bread winners in the majority of families making arrangements for child care on these days is an inconvenience, not that school is or should be simply a babysitting service for working parents.

Professional development in business and industry, like teaching, results in days off from normal duties, not days off. We've covered professional development day activities on occasion and found the teachers are working.

At the same time teaching is unique from other businesses and industry because of the long summer vacation periods.

Many parents feel, considering they have July and August off annually, teachers could and should be doing their professional development then. It's not uncommon for people in other lines of work to use their non-working hours to upgrade themselves for better job performance and career advancement.

Already some professional development days are at the beginning and end of the school year.

While educators point to the days not being as valuable lumped together as they are spread out we'd suggest in terms of public relations with parents and children's education trustees move to have half of the days before the start of classes and the rest after school's out for the summer.

That way professional development days might not be such an annoyance to everyone but teachers.

Need public consensus on administration building

If the public's reaction to plans for an expansion of the Halton Hills administration building a few years after Halton Hills was born still holds, then 1982 will be a year of controversy around Halton Hills council.

Taxpayers shouldn't be left with the impression the project estimated to cost \$1.6 million is a certainty or has been approved.

Council, by including it in the five year capital forecast, has only put the funding plan for a possible administration building in place.

Based on the comments of budget chief Harry Levy, the money wizard of council, we suggest there must be a compelling case for expanding the old Esquering offices, Halton Hills main branch, on Trafalgar Road just outside of Georgetown.

When an expansion, which would put all town departments under one roof for about \$900,000, was proposed in 1976 Levy was the first councillor off the mark in opposition to the idea.

After a pile of taxpayers signed petitions against the plan most of his colleagues jumped on the same ship. Residents said there were a number of higher priorities for municipal spending, tennis courts and other recreation facilities, a new library for Georgetown, roads improvement, etc.

When he presented the capital forecast Levy noted he was once opposed to a central municipal building, but could now see great savings.

The evidence in support of the

case for great savings with a central facility hasn't been made public, and won't be until council grapples with the question next year. But we're told that by selling some staff quarters now owned by the town and not renting other space there will be savings in several areas, including energy consumption, which will make the \$1.6 million initial investment and subsequent debenturing charges for \$1 million will make the plan attractive.

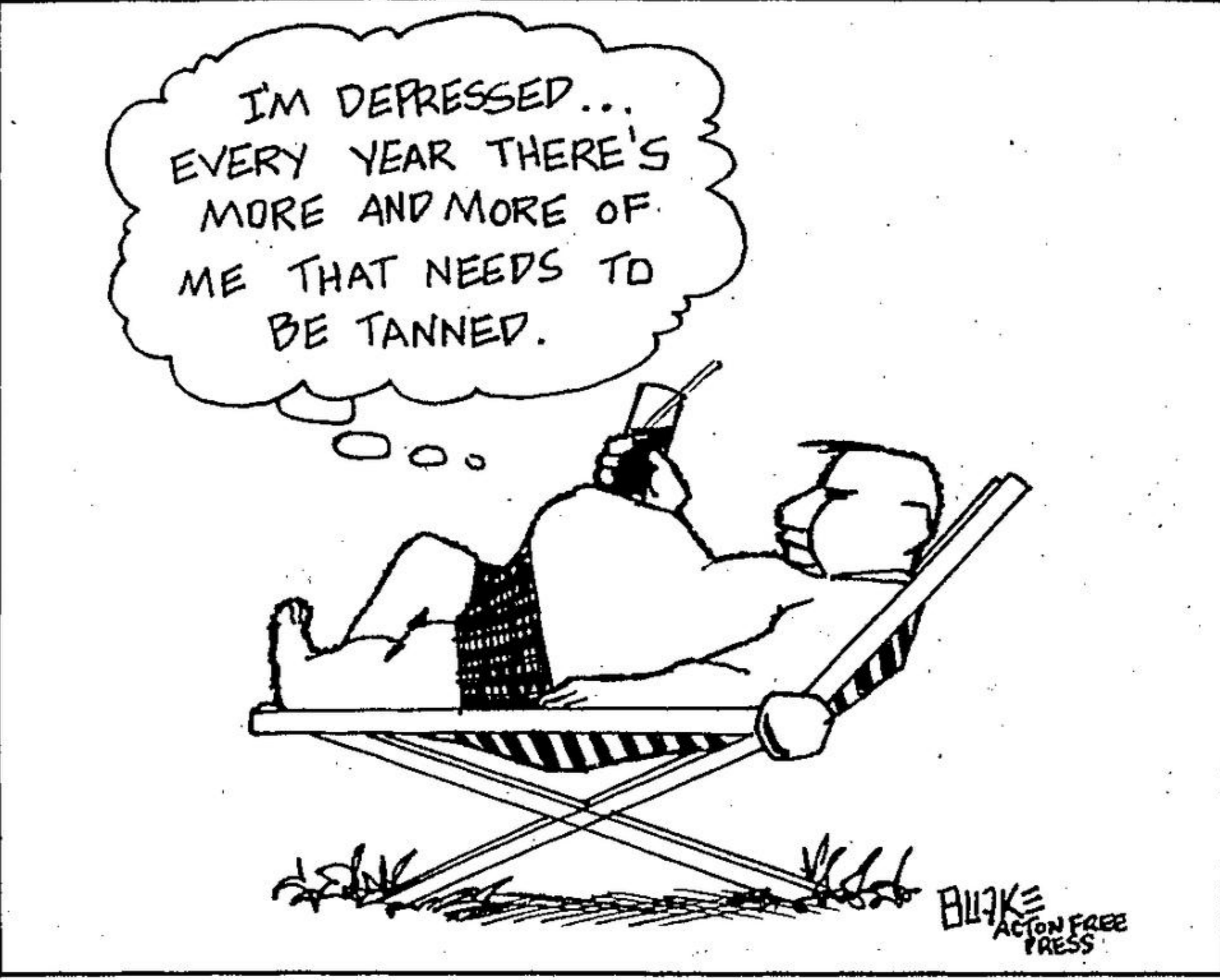
If that's the case then council owes it to the public to sell its idea properly.

The expansion plan, along with all information regarding initial and future savings by having all departments under one roof should be presented as a total package, so everyone can see the big picture, so the benefits and costs can be thoroughly and completely examined. There must also be ample time between the unveiling and a decision made so councillors can hear the voice of the public.

Last time around information about the administration building seemed to come out in dribs and drabs, then after an architect was commissioned the public mounted its campaign to stop the proposal in mid-stream.

It would be much better this time around if all the cards are on the table from the start and council knows the public consensus before any moves are made.

The public won't support a monument to Halton Hills and the council, but we suspect a well considered, cost saving proposal will be well received.



On the Leavell

With Helen

Anniversary greetings go out to Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Hargrave who celebrated 63rd year of marriage last Friday.

Newlyweds by comparison, Barb and Ken Murchison 121 Church St. E. marked 25 years of wedded bliss with a surprise party Saturday evening at the curling club.

I recently caught one of my biggest (literally) detractors taking some advice from this column. Free Press advertising manager Bill Cook has long complained (what else is new?) about this column. Claims he never reads it (so how does he know what to complain about, right?) etc. Last week I had to make a telephone call, and used Bill's phone book to look up the number. Guess what? He had put a paper clip on the Acton pages, just as suggested in this column some weeks ago. My big question is—if he never reads my column, how did he think to put a clip on his book? I've had two reports of people taking a reader's advice and using colored markers on the sides of the pages to readily identify the local pages.

Mothers' Day is rapidly approaching. Don't forget her this Sunday. Don't forget Grandmothers too.

Glad to see Leathertown's Monte Carlo Night was such a great success, even though I don't know how—all the posters and the travelling loud speaker a few nights before the big event Friday said the fun filled evening was taking place at the Acton Memorial Arena. Sorry folks, but there is no such place. The rightful name is the Acton Community Centre. There's a Georgetown Memorial Arena, but none in Acton.

Nevertheless, people seemed to find it anyway.

While on the topic of correcting—I want to thank Alice Doby for pointing out a spelling error in a column a few weeks past. I don't know how it could have happened as I am a reasonably good speller. It may have had something to do with writing my column about one a.m. Tuesday, and having too blurry of eyes to see what I was typing.

No excuses though. I guess I was just "desperate" to get to bed.

It can truly be said they came from far and wide to attend Friday's Monte Carlo Night. One young lady, Lotta, (sorry I didn't get her last name) attended the event all the way from Denmark. She was escorted by Acton's own Keith Smiley.

And all the way from Georgetown was Halton Hills councillor Marilyn Serjeantson. I'm mentioning her in order to give the Georgetown councillor's equal time—last week I kidded how only Acton councillors showed up at a bowl-a-thon to help raise funds for a Georgetown cause. Let the record show—there was a Georgetown councillor in Acton Friday night. But only one out of many. (All Acton representatives were there).

Heard of one couple who dropped over \$50 at the blackjack tables Friday. Another lady was up about \$55. One local businessman started out with \$25 worth of chips, and was broke within ten minutes.

I did alright though. My first time up to the tables I gained \$3, my second time up I was lost \$2. When I quit the third time, not knowing or caring how much I had, I discovered I quit with exactly the amount I started with.

I get pretty excited when I had a pair of kings and split them, and against unbeatable odds, got two 21s. Unfortunately, my luck did not hold up like that for very long.

Another time I miscounted what I had on the table and stopped getting cards—at 11. Luckily the dealer went over, and I still made money on the hand. That's horse-shoes.

Looked like people were confused as to what to wear Friday. There were folks in blue jeans and other casual wear, there were others in 9-5 type clothes, and still others in formal wear. No one was out of place though as all fit in and made the best of the evening.

There are suggestions in the air that

next Monte Carlo night could be changed to later in the year—when it's not so cold both inside and outside the arena. I'm sure everyone would vote in favor of that.

Was out golfing a few weeks back. Now, I'm not what you would call an avid golfer. I have two clubs, which I carry in each hand as I make my way down the fairway. I have a putter and a five iron. I find a bag much to cumbersome, and too many clubs confusing. I have four balls—one with an obscene saying on it—a birthday gift from my brother, and a pack of three regular ones, a birthday gift from my father-in-law.

I shot an 84—not bad eh? Do I have to tell you that was on nine, and my fellow players would only let me count ten before I had to pick up the ball? I actually made it under ten strokes on three holes.

My main problem is I get so exhausted out there on the course. My partners can't understand it, but they don't realize that for every swing they take, I take three of four, and for every one step they take, I take two just to keep up with them. My short legs don't take the long strides their gams are capable of. I just get plum tuckered out. Essentially, I'm playing two or three games to their one.

I much prefer golfing in Florida where my playing partners are usually so advanced in years they walk about as slow as I do.

But in spite of my game, or maybe because of it, I didn't lose one ball to the Acton Meadows water holes—which is more than I can say for others I was golfing with.

Want a sure thing to bet on? Pick me for the booby prize when it comes to golf. I guess basketball is my Sport!!

La Leche League of Acton is beginning its next series of monthly meetings on Monday May 11 at 8.00 p.m. at the home of Marilyn Cox, R.R. No. 3 Milton.

Mothers and mothers-to-be interested in information about breastfeeding are welcome to attend—as are their babies.

The League offers mother-to-mother help in a series of four monthly meetings. The informal meeting discussions include the latest medical research, as well as personal experience. Other services include a lending library of books on childbirth, child care, nutrition and breastfeeding. For further information, please call Marilyn Cox 878-4803 or Karen Gregory 878-3884.



Red Shield campaign canvassers will knock on town doors this evening. The yearly campaign raises money for the Salvation Army's work. Campaign chairman Dr. David Van Der Bent and Salvation Army Lt. Lorne Pritchett call on Judy Russell. She is holding Elizabeth. Last year, the first Red Shield campaign in town, some \$7,200 was raised.



St. Joseph's Church held its annual garage and rummage sale at the church Friday. Thirteen-month old Harvey Patterson picked out a colorful musical clown for his mom, Susan, to buy. They live on Bower Ave.

Back issues

10 years ago

Wednesday, May 5, 1971

The parks and recreation committee may procure some swans, ducks and geese for Fairy Lake. It has already been decided a wildlife sanctuary.

A group under Sean Aherne, with teacher Earl Brears, cleaned up the school creek Saturday.

M.Z. Bennett school took top honors in the Music Festival.

A banquet ended the curling season. A popular presentation was made to the Young brothers, Austin and Harvey, who have spent uncounted hours helping at the rink. May Dumahar presented a cheque for \$1,200 from the ladies' section.

Developing the downtown or turning to plazas? This was discussed at a meeting called by Acton Development commission.

20 years ago

Thursday, May 4, 1961

Verse speaking competitions and a fashion show attracted many parents to the high school. Winners of verse speaking were Eva Hansen, Ria Hulsman, Mary Baker, Gertrud Kuhn, Bill Dawe and David Griffiths. About 60 students modelled clothes made in home economics classes, under Mrs. A. Orr. Commentators were Mary Klaudun, Eva Hansen, Susan Radford, Donna Pendleton, Ruth Guest, Karin Heller, Janice Gardner, Beth Parsons. Pianists were Sandra Blyth, Cheryl Price and Donna Landsborough.

As a measure of thanks to citizens who helped the scout group committee retire the mortgage on the scout hall, local scouts headed by Scoutmaster Bruce Williamson and assistant Neil Miller staged a community fish fry Friday in the hall. The scouts had caught the smelt at Bronte. The mop-up crew was headed by Mrs. George Hargrave and scout Bob Hinton was in charge of the dishes.

Mrs. E.C. Reed is leaving the staff of Acton high school to teach at East York Collegiate.

50 years ago

Thursday, May 7, 1931

Acton school carried off high honors at the Halton Music Festival in Milton, winning the most prizes of any school. Frances Chisholm, Vernon Agnew and William Hall won solo contests. Mrs. M.R. Moore is their musical director.

The Holy Name Society of St. Joseph's Church held a pleasant little informal evening when the Hockey Club boys were the guests of honor.

The Macarthurites won the eucure championship crown from the Dominion Inn contenders. Tommy Gibbons was the highest man.

The Wednesday half holiday is now in general force in the stores of Acton.

Arbor Day was loyally observed with spring cleaning operations at the rural schools.

75 years ago

Thursday, May 3, 1906

Several dogs in town, highly prized by their owners, have been poisoned this week. This is no doubt a result of their furbishing about the refuse heaps which have accumulated in many back yards during housecleaning time.

The horse that Mr. Thos. Gowdy bought at the Winter Fair for \$200 came to an untimely end. It was sent to the lime kilns at Limehouse. Being unused to the work, it went a step too far back for dumping the stone into the kiln. The cart went down and the horse followed, being cremated within a few minutes.

Street sprinkler Williams says he is prepared to sprinkle the streets as soon as a new hydrant is put in.

It is expected the membership in the Lawn Bowling Club will be so great there will not be a rink available for the ladies.

The Sanitary Inspector will be on his rounds next week.

The pioneers of this section are rapidly passing away. James Gibbons, who was born in Ireland in 1827, died full of years. Interment took place in Dublin cemetery.

100 years ago

Thursday, May 5, 1881

It is evident that nearly every property owner in town is in favor of a new town hall at moderate cost. About 50 ratepayers were present at the public meeting in the Council Chamber.

M.M. Speight had gone with a deputation to see Georgetown hall and thought such a hall would suit Acton very well. Major Allan thought the hall should be erected on the front street, with stores on the first floor, main hall on the second and society halls above, with council chambers, lock-up etc. in the basement. Mr. Thomas Moore thought a hall could be built for from \$4,000 to \$5,000 and the revenue would more than pay the interest. Mr. R. Warren thought the town was getting along very well without a new town hall. Mr. D.D. Christie thought the sum mentioned was too high and an expensive hall would be a burden to Acton. Mr. John Warren did not believe in the town getting into debt.