

The Acton Free Press

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Good reason to complain about teacher PD days

Parents are always grumbling about teacher professional development days, but in the past couple of weeks complaints about the time children are missing from school seem to be filled with more anger than usual.

There's likely two reasons for this stronger than usual reaction.

Pupils were just off for an entire week recently for winter break and now they just enjoyed a five day break for a professional development day, Good Friday, Saturday, Easter and Easter Monday. No wonder parents are scratching their heads and wondering when their kids are going to get an education. Several mothers and fathers have told us before and after both breaks from school the children seemed to be having more field trips and outings away from class as well.

Another reason parents are more annoyed is these eight school days when there were no classes have coincided with the unveiling of Halton Board of Education's record budget and staggering average Acton tax hike of \$116 for education. We've made our feelings well known on the subject of the budget so we won't go into details again. Suffice to say parents have gotten the message from trustees that 75 per cent of the budget goes to pay teacher and staff wages and councillors have succeeded in making it clear to everyone who will listen that the education increase isn't their fault, but the board's.

So, parents are sitting back and looking at what value they are getting for all that money, and seem more displeased with the teachers taking a day off from teaching their children than usual.

Professional development days have never been accepted by parents, nor by many teachers for that matter, very well.

They look at the average wage of \$27,000 a year for teachers for a work year of 200 days compared to the average of 225 to 245 for the rest of the work force and figure teachers could find seven to nine days a year for professional development at the beginning or end of their July and August vacations, especially considering the fact they have a week's vacation at Christmas and in March.

We fully agree with opponents of professional development days. Teachers are paid well. They do have fewer work days than the rest of the population.

We have no quarrel with the need for professional development days, just with having them in the period between September and June which results, when combined with days schools are closed for statutory holidays, in just one month, February, when classes are held Monday to Friday every week.

The argument for professional development days being the same as days away from regular work for conventions and seminars in business, industry and government is often heard. That is quite true, except few people in business, industry and government who attend seminars and conventions also have 10 weeks vacation annually.

In fairness to the teachers, professional development days aren't just days off work as many claim. We've covered professional development days, and teachers are at seminars and workshops. But just as it is for someone else in the public or private sector who attends a convention, course or seminar, they are a nice break from the routine, and hardly can be considered work.

Our readers write

Thanks Heart Fund stories

Dear Sir: May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the Board of Directors, to express our very sincere thanks for your support and assistance during our 1982 Heart Fund Campaign. As you know, Vic Bristow is our Acton Campaign Chairman. He makes a tremendous effort on our behalf and has expressed gratitude to your paper for the excellent coverage you give the Heart Fund and our annual campaign. Thanks again for your help.

Yours very truly, Charlotte Freeman Area Co-Ordinator



On the Leavell

With Helen

Acton resident Heather Whiting, of Robert Real Estate, recently was presented with the Outstanding Performance Award, in recognition and appreciation of sales made in 1981. Heather was in what is called the million dollar club. She was presented with a plaque at a special luncheon last Thursday at Harrops in Milton.

A Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation course will be held April 28 and May 5 in the Y. The course will be taught by a qualified Canadian Heart Foundation instructor, and will include: a slide presentation; and practical training in CPR using a mannequin. Each student will receive a certificate.

Participants will understand healthy lifestyle and risk factors involved in heart disease; learn to recognize signs of heart attack and stroke; know how to try to prevent a heart attack victim from going into cardiac arrest; learn the importance of airway breathing and circulation in an unconscious victim; acquire the skills of one man CPR; and know how to save the life of a choking victim.

For more information, call the Y at 853-1070 or drop in.

Congratulations go to David McGilloway who won the coaches' award for the Most Outstanding Player in the playoffs, at a banquet Friday night. David, a former Acton Sabre, is now a member of the Burlington Cougars.

An observation from former Free Press editor Hartley Coles recently came my way. Hartley says this is the latest he has ever seen ice on Fairy Lake. Can anyone else recall the lake being frozen on April 21? Let me know.

Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Hassard, from London, Ontario spent last Tuesday afternoon and evening with Pat and Mary McKenzie of Jeffrey Ave. Many Acton residents will remember Hassard's Drug Store (where Heady's Hair Styles now stands). According to Pat, Harvey was one of Miss Minnie Bennett's outstanding students and taught public school in Acton area and then served in the RCAF before obtaining his B.A. He then moved to Ottawa to teach high school. Harvey then became head of the Guidance Department in Ottawa before moving back to University of Western Ontario in London to teach Guidance to high school teachers. He received his Doctor's degree from Michigan State.

Mrs. Hassard (Pat Baker) taught high school in Acton just after WW II. Pat (McKenzie) says Harvey has written many articles in Guidance and represented the university at a conference in Greece last year.

Last Friday the university honored him with a retirement party. He retires on June 30.

Mrs. Hassard boarded with the McKenzies while she taught in Acton, and Mary McKenzie worked in Hassard's Drug Store. Harvey was one of the first teachers Pat met when he came to Acton in 1939.

His purpose for being in the area last Tuesday was because he had to speak at a high school in Guelph that morning.

Milton is celebrating its 125th anniversary this year and Dave Brush would like to invite all former residents "home" for the July holiday weekend. Who's Dave Brush? He's the chairman of the 125th Anniversary Master Committee.

For further information on anniversary events, contact Clare Henderson, (416-826-8103).

The Acton Business People are welcoming in the Spring next Wednesday evening at Wooden Heart Inn.

A wine and cheese party is planned for 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Coral Greaves and Pat Wood are the people to call for further information.

One of Acton's Eva Sansom's drawings has been put on the front of the Children's Aid Society's (CAS) Annual Report, to go across Ontario in May.

The design used was from a Christmas card she made up three years ago. Many of her Christmas card designs have been on the cover of the CAS's Christmas issues or journals.

In all, the CAS has used four of Eva's designs. Not a bad track record.



One of Eva Sansom's Christmas sketches.

While Canada's Constitution was being brought home in a special ceremony on

Parliament Hill in Ottawa with Queen Elizabeth, at least one Acton family was also celebrating.

In my wanderings Saturday I noticed a large Canadian flag gracing the upstairs window of a house on Kipling Rd. near Doby Rd. The flag was on the outside of the house.

I don't know of any other in town who marked the day in any special way. If you did, let me know.

The Decoration Day Committee would like a representative from all groups in town at their meeting next Wednesday, April 28 at 7 p.m. in the board room of the Acton Legion. Decoration Day is set for June 6 and organizers would like to see a good number of groups participating.

The Central Band of the Canadian Armed Forces, which will play two concerts at Acton's community centre on June 5, played at the airport Thursday for the arrival in Ottawa of Queen Elizabeth. The band is being brought here by the Wellington District of the Free Masons, Walker Lodge, here in Acton.

MEANDERINGS by Mabel Barkman Jeppers Creeper

An old song we use to sing began with "Jeppers, creepers, where's you get those peepers?"

While in the song, the reference was to eyes, at this time of year I'm longing to hear the peepers in the ponds. It's a noise we look forward to every Spring.

In fact, when it becomes a full chorus, we turn off the radio at night and fall peacefully to sleep. The little fellows must sleep during the day because they are not heard until dusk.

The old wives' tale says that frogs must be frozen in the ponds three times before we get Spring, but I am happy to hail the arrival of their peeping any time now. The only discouraging thing is that the mosquito inevitably follows the croaking of the frogs!

Clergy Comment

by Rev. Chuck Beaton
Christian people are basking in the aftermath of Easter, in spite of the fact that our weather remains unseasonably cold and miserable.

That's one of the confusing things about Easter. We often identify it with the changing seasons, the coming of spring and the bursting forth of new life—more than we focus on the power of the resurrection event itself. There are happy Easter cards with daffodils, chocolate bunnies and colored eggs. But, there is a difference between Easter and the 'rite of spring.'

What sort of card would you send young parents whose 7 year old child had just died of leukemia? Or, what about the 19-year-old wife whose husband is in jail for child molesting? How about a card for the family about to lose their home because the mortgage rates are going up? Then, there are the starving people in Cambodia, Somalia and a multitude of other places. A card with chocolate bunnies would be nice for them!

This is neither flip, nor cynical, when we remind the world that, nearly 2,000 years ago, on a certain Sunday morning, God came into the midst of human misery with a power unknown in the world before. On

Easter, God said, "Enough of this," and raised to life the young Jesus, who had been killed by all the respectable forces of the day. That is 'good news' and is the very heart of the Christian message.

The resurrection happened in the midst of brutal suffering and it still speaks with meaning, particularly to people who are in one of life's crisis. For example, Easter power won't rid us of cancer, but it can do two things. One is that it triggers bodily forces that produce a remission, sometimes. Secondly, it can make possible what specialists call 'a good death.' The patient may die of the disease, but not be conquered by it.

Easter power won't heal our crazy economic system that robs people of their homes; but, it will sustain the fighters who believe that the church must dirty its hands in politics, when justice is at stake. The 'rite of spring' never calls us to walk into the face of the wind. It often lets us fool ourselves to remain blind to our duty.

The celebration of Easter calls those of us who are comfortable to step down into the fury of the world's misery, in the faith that our risen Lord is among us to make life better for all.

Back issues

10 years ago

April 19, 1972

Saturday is a big day for local Scouts and Cubs. Forty thousand trees have been pledged by the public and on Saturday 600 Cubs and Scouts will be headed for several areas of the Halton County and Credit Valley Conservation Authorities to plant them.

Mrs. D. Steel and her dogs, Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, are to be special guests on the Elaine Cole show, CKCO-TV Kitchener on Friday, June 9. Steel's kennels are located on 17 Sideroad W., south of Acton.

Acton Lions Club is again sponsoring the Canadian National Institute for the Blind canvass in Acton and they are looking for volunteers.

Acton Centennial Commission starts a serious campaign to raise money for the building project. Putting the fun into the fund this week, the commission introduced a "Buy a Brick" program.

Average homeowners in Acton will pay \$65 more this year in taxes.

The junior math contest, written some time ago, placed A.H. 11th out of 13 schools. From Acton, Ian Coats placed first, Rob Vinski second, and Glenn Lee was third.

20 years ago

April 19, 1962

Fred Dawkins, a student of Acton High School was chosen for the "Adventure in Citizenship" to take place around the middle of May in Ottawa.

Miss Madeleine Gibbons received her engraved plaque at the annual Chamber of Commerce dinner Thursday. Miss Gibbons was voted Acton's "Citizen of the Year". Chamber president Bert Hinton made the presentation.

Mrs. Joe Whitlam had one of her paintings chosen for entry in the area show in Brampton, in May, when judges made their selection during the Five Counties Art Exhibit in the Robert Little School on Saturday.

Mr. Garner of Ryerson Press was in town Tuesday and took an order of new books for the library. Deciding the order were Mrs. Jack Chapman, Miss Madge Chapman and Charles Kirkness.

50 years ago

April 14, 1932

At the meeting of the Acton Council on Monday night Councillors Cowie, Jones, Nicol and McArthur were present and Reeve George Barber presided.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Near and Master Robert of Toronto, visited his mother and other Acton friends over the weekend.

"Over the Hill" will be the special feature at the Gregory Theatre tomorrow (Friday) night.

Mr. G.A. Dills and David spent the weekend visiting his sister in Toronto.

Mrs. A.E. Ritchie, Mrs. Mackie, Mrs. Clifford, Mrs. Holloway, Mrs. Waller and Mrs. Bishop motored to Hamilton on Tuesday to attend the Annual Meeting at the Cathedral of the Women's Auxillary.

75 years ago

April 18, 1907

Mr. Edward Kingsbury had quite a successful ploughing bee at Crewsons Corners on Wednesday. Quite a number were entertained in the evening.

Messrs. Beardmore and Co. have the largest stock of hemlock bark now stored in their tannery ever stacked in Acton. Every shed is filled and outside stacks are now being built.

The few plank walks left in town are in dangerous condition due to loose boards.

Miss Amy Doty of London has commenced practices for the annual Methodist Sunday School concert. She is planning an international flag drill and symbol march by 20 young ladies, pantomime, and choruses by as many as 100 scholars.

Mr. N.P. McLam will return to town. He has completed the purchase of the blacksmithing business and property of Mr. J.R. Anderson. He has splendid prospects in the oldest stand of the blacksmithing business in Acton.

100 years ago

April 20, 1882

Our usually quiet little town was thrown into a state of excitement by the circulation of a report that one of our citizens made an attempt to commit suicide. However he had not taken a sufficient quantity of laudanum to do him any harm. The scare had the good effect of reconciling the husband and wife and they have decided to die natural deaths. In consideration for their feelings, we suppress their names.

County of Halton druggists' licenses have been given to J.E. McGarvin and M. Forster M.D. of Acton.

The annual entire horse show, in conjunction with the Eramosa Agricultural Society, was held in Rockwood Wednesday. A large number of leading farmers were present and the horses shown were good.

There is a movement afoot to lower the rate of postage to two cents. Please refrain from throwing branches, bones etc. from gardens into the streets.



First grass fire of season

Firefighters worked hard at putting out a grass fire on the Sixth Line Nasaagweya on Monday around noon. It was the first of the season, says Fire Chief Mick Holmes.