

The Acton Free Press

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Business and Editorial Office

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Thanks volunteers

Each year in early spring there's a week set aside when we honor volunteers.

But really, volunteer week should have been the past week. Friday, Saturday and especially Sunday to be specific.

It's volunteers, we believe, who really make the tremendous quality of life in this community possible.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday are Acton's finest hours of the year.

We're speaking of course of the fall fair and the Terry Fox Run.

No words can really adequately describe the depth of respect and admiration we feel for the dozens of community-minded people who work tirelessly to make the fair our best attraction and the Fox Run such a huge fundraising success for an extremely worthy cause.

What a bitter disappointment to the people who worked so hard to make both events such tre-

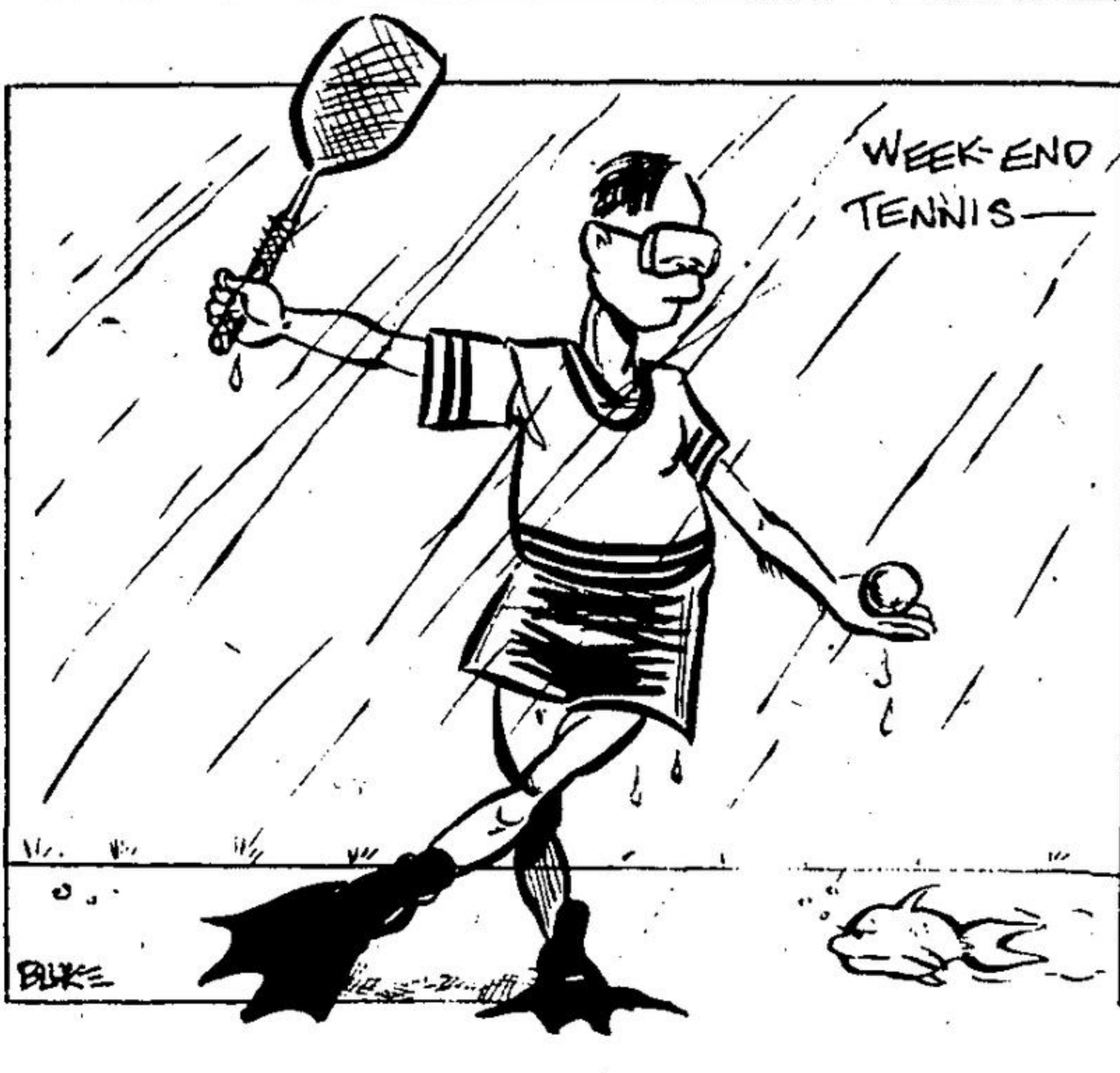
mendous successes it was when the weekend turned out so miserable, maybe the worst since last June.

Yet, they persevered, overcoming the weather stacked against them, and made both projects huge successes.

For the prime movers in the Fox Run—Jon Hurst, Nan Hurst, Jan Pennick, Ron Heller, George McPhail and Paul Murr—putting on this project was like taking on a part-time job, on top of their normal demanding occupations, for about six weeks.

Many more people are involved with the fair, but then it's a much larger undertaking. Considering the magnitude of the project, the ladies and gentlemen who make the fair not only possible but such a magnificent entertainment bargain, are also a small, overworked organization.

To all these outstanding citizens, a heartfelt thank-you.—G.M.



Back issues

10 years ago

September 18, 1973

Fair weather has assured the success of another Fall Fair in Acton over the weekend. Officials guess an estimated 12,000 people entered the grounds during the fair.

An independent study conducted by Bruce Howlett for the Solandt Commission claims the controversial 500 kV Hydro line should be built along the Parkway Belt across Halton's midsection. The controversy continues.

Two girls from Lakeview subdivision did their bit for the annual Acton Firefighters' Muscular Dystrophy fund-raising campaign. Donna McDougall and Kathleen Nolan collected pretty stones, painted them and sold them, collecting \$2 which they donated to the fund.

Anne Luty is chosen Miss Acton Fall Fair for 1973.

Irene Swackhamer has retired after 18 years as secretary-treasurer of Acton Fair Board.

20 years ago

September 17, 1963

Directors of the Acton Fall Fair prepare for the most impressive fair in 50 years. Several of the directors appeared on television to promote the upcoming event.

Mr. and Mrs. Colin McColl and their family were preparing to return to Round Lake in Northern Ontario where Mr. McColl is the manager of a Hudson's Bay store.

Tidy thieves searched the house of John Lovell and made off with \$350. The thieves left the house so clean the robbery wasn't noticed for several hours.

50 years ago

September 21, 1933

In spite of disagreeable weather on both days a good crowd attended the Acton Fall Fair. The fair was officially opened by Mr. J.A. Carroll, Superintendent of Fairs.

Under the auspices of the Busy Group of Ebenezer W.M.S. a most unique and interesting Treasure Tea was held at the home of Mrs. S.N. Mews. The ladies were requested to bring some treasured family relics. Some of the relics were a stocking worn by Queen Victoria, a pair of Indian totem poles and a paper knife made by a German prisoner of war.

A local family, the Soulsbys, almost drowned when their car left the road and plunged into an artificial pond at the Guelph Reformatory.

75 years ago

October 1, 1908

Farmers appreciate the convenience provided by the reopening of the chopping mill. The business has been swamped with orders since it reopened.

Complaints are received about poor drivers using the Methodist Church shed every day. So far a window and an iron railing have been broken because of poor driving.

Some young men who disturbed a Jewish ceremony are warned that such disturbances are against the law.

100 years ago

September 20, 1883

Tuesday was a very pleasant day for the civic holiday. The majority of our citizens spent the day in Toronto at the Industrial Exhibition. All the shops in town were closed, that is, as far as the front door is concerned.

Mr. A.W. Green has commenced the manufacture of hosiery at his knitting factory.

Mr. James Matthews, postmaster, is exhibiting his team of roadsters, and Mr. H.B. Taylor, butcher, his heavy hurdle horse, at Toronto Exhibition.

The band boys were again unfortunate in having a wet night for their concert on Thursday evening. However there was a good attendance. There were duets and solos by Misses Ediza Cameron and Maggie Nicklin and Mr. Percy Secord, and Misses Hasket and Swan played the piano. The Italian String Band of Toronto played. The cornet band rendered several tunes for promenading.

A new special prize for the fair is for a pair of lady's boots, value \$5, for the best lady driver.

Hardship and toil are necessary for the development of power and strength of character.

Municipal complex issue

Knechtel, Whiting vote yes, Bonnette no, on land purchase

Two of Acton's three councillors voted in favor of buying the Stevens' Estate on Maple Ave. in Georgetown as the site for a future municipal complex.

Only Rick Bonnette voted against the proposal last Tuesday night. Both Councillors Ross Knechtel and Dave Whiting voted in favor of the land purchase. Whiting is Acton's representative on council's building committee.

Whiting admitted he'd had problems with the way the issue had been handled in the past and the "process" it followed to reach council last week. Some of the secrecy involved was necessary and some wasn't, he said.

He emphasized he wasn't committed to building a municipal complex, adding that wasn't what council was considering that

night anyway. He felt the Stevens' property offered the Town benefits even if a complex is never built. Buying the Stevens' land was a better investment of reserve funds than leaving the money in the bank.

Whiting urged council move ahead and buy the land then get the road built from Maple Ave. to Georgetown Hospital, before looking further at the building issue. He added he'd have to wait and see facts and figures before deciding about a building.

Bonnette acknowledged he'd sound parochial, but he'd heard a lot of parochial comments from others that evening too. He said Acton knows all about abandonment, as so many services have left the town.

Halton Hills Hydro moved a staffer and computer terminal head to Georgetown and the community almost lost its bill paying

office; the police station, cultural centre and other facilities are also in Georgetown.

While services are leaving town, people are finding out Acton citizens are paying 25 per cent more in taxes than Georgetown owners of similar property.

Acton was receiving no encouragement from the municipality, it was little wonder the population of Acton dropped by 245 people last year. He complained because not one of the sites for the complex considered by the committee was in Acton. Also, there seemed to be no consideration of his idea to move the works yard from Trafalgar Rd. to Acton, leaving the Trafalgar Rd. property available for the complex. Such a move would prove that Halton Hills doesn't just benefit Georgetown.

Georgetown councillor Finn Poustrup

admonished Bonnette to change his mind, saying if councillors didn't have a real alternative to the Stevens' land purchase then they weren't right in voting against the proposal.

Later Bonnette said he didn't need "any help from a rookie Georgetown councillor deciding how to vote."

Knechtel said there was no perfect site which would satisfy everyone, adding the issue couldn't be researched further. He told his colleagues it was time to make a decision finally and the price for the land was both feasible and within the Town's "capacity."

There was plenty of evidence the Stevens' site would be accessible to residents from all over the Town. The site offered the "most potential" and Knechtel said he expects the whole project to be "successful."

Georgetown votes 5-1 in favor of Stevens' land purchase

All but one of Georgetown's six councillors supported buying the Stevens' Estate for a future municipal complex.

Councillors Finn Poustrup, Marilyn Serjeantson, Harry Levy, Mike Armstrong and Phil Carney voted in favor of the land acquisition while Councillor John McDonald was opposed. Carney's vote for the property purchase was a big surprise, he had been a vocal opponent of the site and a complex in the past.

McDonald said he was voting no with regrets because there were still unresolved questions. He was concerned there was no commitment yet from Halton Hills Hydro to be involved and how a building would be paid for hadn't been solved yet. He didn't think the Stevens' property was the best site and he felt it was the wrong time for council to be planning to build an expensive complex because of the poor economy.

Poustrup said he used to be concerned about this issue because the news of an option on the Stevens' site was made public

at the last meeting of the old council right after the last election. In the past the public wasn't being informed about what was going on with regard to this issue, but that has changed. He was also concerned alternate sites hadn't been studied, but he was now satisfied that the need for a building had been established and all possible sites properly assessed.

Carney said he agreed with views expressed by other councillors, he felt the building committee had done a good job and the project would be a "boom" to the community, hospital, etc.

Levy recalled he was a leader against the building of a complex by the Town's first council because he was concerned about financing. However, today many considerations have changed, including the Town's financing position. He said he accepts there's a need for a complex.

In the past he was opposed to continuing negotiations on the Stevens' property, but that was because he didn't have all the facts

then. Now that Mayor Peter Pomeroy had brought him up to date on all the details, including the reasons for keeping certain information from councillors and the public, he was satisfied.

All of the studied sites had merit, Levy said, but the Stevens' property "ties and knits" everything together. It would produce revenue and be of benefit to the hospital, Halton Hills Hydro, provide more parkland, etc.

Now was the time to buy the land, Levy said but it would be some time before a complex is built and the Town decides how to pay for it.

Serjeantson said she was opposed in the past because there hadn't been public participation, but she now felt a lot better about the whole issue.

The Alcott site might be good for Georgetown, but not the whole Town, she said, adding the Stevens' land is centrally located and its selection will lead to needed development in that area. The Town needs growth to fill

our schools, provide customers for our businesses and help carry the tax burden. The Town will need office space when Georgetown grows to 45,000 people.

Another plus, Serjeantson said, was that building a complex justifies the Town charging developers lot levies.

Armstrong said hearing all the details of the proposal made him an even stronger supporter. He said he wished the Town was receiving more public input, he said the lack of public comment indicates the site and project is supported by the citizens. Everyone now realizes more municipal space is needed.

He felt the downtown Georgetown site proposals would take care of Town needs for only 10 to 15 years and wouldn't be a focal point for Halton Hills. Armstrong also favored the Alcott site being kept for recreation development.

Not only would the Stevens' property serve long-term municipal needs, but it would produce other benefits as well, Armstrong declared.

Miller opposes buying site, Sheldon votes yes

Esqueusing's two councillors split on the municipal complex land purchase issue at Halton Hills council last Tuesday.

Councillor Pam Sheldon, a member of the Town's building committee, voted for the purchase while Russ Miller opposed.

The late Tom Hill had been a vocal opponent of the land purchase and complex until his recent death. His seat hasn't been filled yet, so Esqueusing had only two votes on the issue.

Miller recalled he had sat on three different councils which all thought the Trafalgar Rd. property was the right one for the municipal centre. He joined Acton's Rick Bonnette in calling for the works department to be moved to Acton so the Trafalgar Rd. property could accommodate a new complex. He said such a move would leave the works department as efficient as it is now, maybe even more so.

He also objected to the reports being made public and then councillors being expected to vote and make a final decision. Mayor Peter Pomeroy noted councillors had been warned a vote would probably be taken Tuesday night.

A multi-storey building could be built on Trafalgar Rd., Miller said, adding that's the site favored by Esqueusing and Acton residents.

There's never a good time to make this kind of decision, she said, but the Town had the money to buy the land and the need for a central administration building had been proven in the space needs study, so it was time to go ahead with the project.

In opting for the Stevens' site she said she was picking the property which was best for all citizens, not just those from Georgetown, Acton or Esqueusing. She called picking the Stevens' property a "real positive step" which would be good for the future of the entire town. The space needs study was

factual and fairly represented the Town's situation and needs. The Stevens' land was nearly at the geographical centre of Halton Hills, she said, and the Town's transportation study would likely produce a more direct approach to the new complex from west Esqueusing and Acton.

Another plus for the Stevens' land was that it is beautiful, it would when fully developed be a place for citizens to visit and would be a focus for social functions as well as a source of civic pride.

Acton deserves more than bill paying office

Acton is entitled to a stronger municipal presence in the community than simply a bill paying office.

That suggestion came to Halton Hills council last Tuesday night from Georgetown BIA official Dave Page. The subject under discussion was the location of a future municipal complex and the Georgetown BIA favored downtown Georgetown.

Repeatedly Page said they sympathized with Acton's needs and he thought the municipal presence in downtown Acton should be strengthened.

He said he had twice contacted Acton BIA officials, but they felt since Acton would never be in the running for the site of the complex they didn't care where it went.

Page again informed councillors that in his opinion Acton is "entitled" to more than it's receiving now.

Pomeroy asked what facilities Acton should have from the Town, but Page of-

fered no suggestions. He agreed with Pomeroy the Town shouldn't have a clerk's office in both urban areas, etc. Page however said he felt Acton should be asking

for more than just a bill paying service. He added better office facilities in downtown Acton would be an "incentive" for Actonians to deal with the Town.

Meanderings

by Mabel Barkman
Eleven years ago when we were in Florida, I brought back some leaves of an air plant growing in an old laneway. I still have plants growing from the original one and every fall I supply the bazaar with some leaves. So, no doubt, there are air plants growing all around Acton and vicinity.
To get a new plant one simply hangs a leaf in a window until little plants start to grow around the edges of the leaf. Then you plant the whole thing in a pot with the old leaf submerged and the tiny plants upright. In a

few months, these are vigorous plants growing.

I have often been asked if it flowers and to my knowledge I had never seen flowers but this year from an old plant that I had put outside for the summer, I find very, very tiny orange orchid like flowers. They are not very attractive but I shall keep an eye on them and see how they turn out.

It is always a thrill to see something one has never seen before even if it is a bit disappointing.