

Acton needs an active Chamber of Commerce

Revitalized Chamber has ambitious future plans

"Progressive communities don't just happen. If you think of successful and dynamic communities like Elora or Kleinberg in the area of tourism development, or communities which are successful in attracting new industry, you often find its the result of the combined efforts of the business community's leaders, spearheaded by an active Chamber of Commerce," interim president of the recently revitalized Acton Chamber Steve Dawkins says.

That's the sort of message the Chamber is sending out to over 100 businesses through letters this week as well as the general public, as they plan for 1984.

Since Dawkins, Ted Tyler and Larry Greaves joined the Chamber earlier this year to help the remaining board members revitalize the community organization which wasn't really doing much anymore, there's been a lot of discussions among themselves, as well as with interested people in the community, about future direction.

Dawkins notes a Chamber of Commerce is

an association of citizens working together to make their community a better place in which to live and work. However, for a Chamber to be successful, something Acton hasn't had for a couple of years now, the body must have the "commitment and support" of its membership and the organization needs people who will give some time, energy and expertise to develop programs.

"In Acton an effective and progressive Chamber can be the key to realizing the widely appreciated, but seemingly elusive, potential of the community," Dawkins declared.

While he and others currently involved with the Chamber realize everything can't be accomplished in a year, Dawkins says "1984 can be a major first step in the right direction."

The Chamber's going to have a board of directors which meets once a month to review a variety of things, including progress being made by committees. These

meetings will also be a "forum in which political issues and public affairs are discussed and the Chamber's position is formulated."

Also, all members of the board of directors will sit on one of the three major committees and committees will operate under the direction of the board.

One committee, called membership and functions, will be responsible for arranging and putting on activities and events like the Chamber's annual meeting, Citizen of the Year banquet and "perhaps one additional social event for Chamber members." This committee will also develop and implement a membership drive for this year and approach the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce about the idea of the two organizations working together to sponsor monthly luncheons-seminars on a variety of topics of interest to business people. The Chamber's first vice-president will chair this committee.

The second committee has the title tourism and marketing. This group will prepare a detailed report and evaluation on the

short and long term potential for further development of the Leathertown concept in Acton. This committee will also be responsible for producing the 1984 Chamber of Commerce directory.

Another area of responsibility for the tourism and marketing committee will be to prepare a report dealing with the timing, scale and format for a Bicentennial celebration in Acton. Dawkins emphasized that the Chamber's looking at a Bicentennial celebration in full co-operation with any and all community groups which may wish to be involved or are currently devising plans.

The tourism and marketing committee will be chaired by Chamber's second vice-president.

The final committee bears the title Industrial Development and will work closely with Town, Region, and provincial politicians and officials. It will be chaired by one of the directors of the Chamber.

This committee will prepare a comprehensive survey dealing with Acton's attributes as well as the constraints to in-

dustrial development. From this survey should come Chamber recommendations for solving constraints "where feasible", as well as a program (such as literature) to capitalize on Acton's attributes.

While the groundwork for industrial development can take place this year, this study will have to take a long term view because this is a complicated subject.

With these plans in the offing for 1984, the Chamber is calling on business people, interested members of the public, those involved with the Chamber in the past or present, or people wishing to become involved, to attend a meeting next Tuesday, January 10, at 5.30 p.m. at Jack Tanner's Table.


With such ambitious plans for 1984 the Chamber will need lots of support from the community and lots of people willing to get involved.

"We're now at the point where there's been a lot of discussion completed to try and revitalize the Chamber. Now the Chamber will only be as effective as the members contribute," Dawkins concluded.

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Family planning clinics for north, but not in Acton

The region has asked the province to fund family planning clinics in Georgetown and Milton, but Acton has been excluded.

In a recent submission to council, Dr. Peter Cole, Medical Officer of Health, said that because of inadequate coverage in Halton, 25 per cent of adolescents in the region are without clinically provided birth control and V.D. information.

Without debate councillors approved asking the Ministry of Health for funding for the two additional clinics.

Dr. Cole's submission did not include a clinic for Acton because health nurses in the town doubted confidentiality could be maintained.

"It is a small town and having a clinic out in the open there would be kind of difficult," he said in an interview.

He also said funding restraints limited the number of clinics that could be opened.

"Ideally we would like to have one in every municipality," he conceded.

Acton's regional councillor Dave Whiting said he "wasn't looking for a clinic to be established in Acton, so I'm not upset."

He allowed there may be a time in the future when a family planning clinic is required in Acton, but he hopes before that happens the region has cleared up its public relations problems in connection with this

issue. Family planning clinics "haven't been a great P.R. success," he observed.

It's logical that Milton and Georgetown should have clinics, Whiting said, because the clinics are run in conjunction with hospitals and both those centres have their own hospitals, but Acton physicians use Guelph hospitals.

As for the confidentiality concern, Whiting said he couldn't see how it would be a problem in Acton. He pointed out citizens go to the Acton Social Services and Information for confidential services like welfare and probation now and he's never heard of any problems.

Esqueuing's new regional councillor Jake Kiuken admitted during his brief time at the region he hasn't delved into the subject of family planning clinics too much. However, he feels "when they overlooked Acton for a clinic they didn't do Acton justice."

Community health nurses have been approached about teaching sexuality classes in secondary schools and providing pregnancy tests, but Dr. Cole said this is done only on a sporadic basis.

He added that while teenagers can obtain counselling from their family doctors, they are often reluctant to approach them for fear of losing their anonymity.

Statistics comparing fertility and abortion rates in the region and the province back up his contention that family planning programs benefit the teenage population, Dr. Cole maintained.

Ministry of Health statistics indicate that in 1982 there were 21.9 live births per 1,000 teenagers aged 15-19, while in Halton there were 11.1.

There were 20.6 abortions per 1,000 in the province while there were 19 in Halton.

While there is little difference here, he pointed out that this was a 20 per cent decrease in teenage abortions in the region from 1979 when there were 24 per 1,000. The Ontario rate has dropped from 22 per 1,000.

According to his proposal a physician and a health nurse would staff a birth control and V.D. clinic in Milton for three and a half hours each evening. An information and counselling service staffed by a health nurse would operate for three and a half hours a week in the afternoon in both Milton and Georgetown.


The staff would teach birth control methods, give information about venereal disease, do pregnancy tests, counselling and give referrals to family physicians, or other willing doctors.



Peeling in the cold



inside
1983 was an exciting and interesting year in Acton and area. There's a month by month review of the past year's top stories as lots of photos from 1983 on pages 6, 7 and 8.
Simone Mercuri and Mike McCristall are waiting for their appeals of convictions in the Dominion Hotel fire murder case. More on page 3.
The head of Mazda was in town recently. Turn to page 2.
Betty Fisher is the cream of the crop at school board. Turn to page B1.
1984... the year your next belt is not the only one you'll have to tighten.




As you can see by these three separate photos of groups of people at the New Year's Eve bell ringing festivities at the town hall, a surprisingly large number of people, estimated at well over 200, crowded onto Willow St. North to wish their friends and neighbors a Happy New Year. George Elliott and Jake Kiuken were in charge of releasing the 200 latex filled balloons which were symbolic of the fact 1984 is the 200th anniversary of the settlement of Ontario. After Ted Tyler pulled the rope ringing the town hall bell for the first time in about 20 years he asked Alf Dudy and George Hepburn to each give a few tags. Dudy represented the Acton Firefighters who have taken care of the bell since it was taken down years ago while Hepburn put in a new gonger last week. Then it was the citizens turns to ring the bell as young and old alike jammed into the hall to give a tug. Before the ceremonies the crowd admired the refurbishing of the first floor of the town hall and enjoyed hot chocolate. Tyler recalled Acton's bell cost more than Georgetown's, to the cheers of the crowd. He also observed that just because Georgetown is 10 years older than Acton doesn't make that community any better, again to a chorus of cheers from the crowd. Both Acton and Georgetown celebrate important birthdays, 110th and 120th respectively, in 1984. Many donned party hats or special costumes for the gathering.