

Our salute

As a tribute to Small Business Week in Canada, The Herald's editorial staff have taken a close look at a number of small area firms.

Wear a poppy

The Royal Canadian Legion's poppy fund has a three-fold purpose: it provides employment for disabled veterans and their widows, money for veterans' welfare, and a simple but meaningful way to remember approximately 114,000 Canadians who died in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean conflict.

Where does the money raised through their distribution go? It could provide bursaries for children of ex-service personnel, or help operate a Legion Service Bureau that assists veterans in making pension claims.

It could also be used to operate day-care centres for seniors, or it might help needy ex-servicemen in other Commonwealth or allied countries. There are as many uses as there are veterans.

Most importantly, wearing a scarlet poppy is a way to remember the thousands of young Canadians who died years ago.

It says we haven't forgotten.

The recession from which the nation is only now slowly recovering, has left Canadians with plenty of reminders of the important roles small businesses play in the health of our economy.

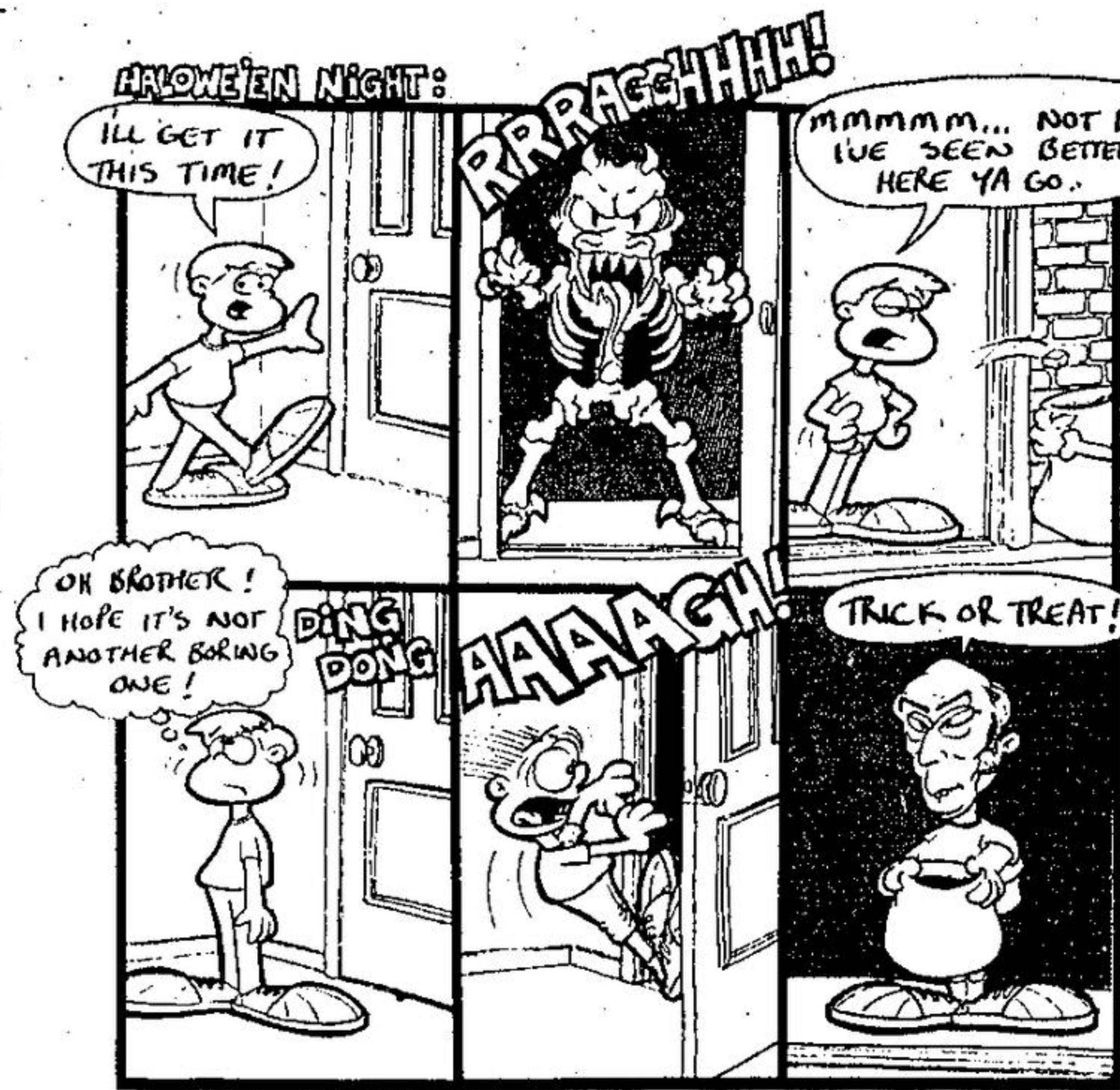
Statistics tell us that most of the nation's workforce is in small businesses; small businesses not only pay out billions of dollars in wages and taxes, they contribute to community groups, sports teams and fund-raising efforts.

Small businesses, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association says, have a future in an extremely "high-tech" economy, because their smaller sizes and low overheads means they can move into developing areas of business faster than their larger, less athletic, corporate cousins.

As the articles in this issue suggest, it isn't easy running a small business these days, the economic outlook is only marginally brighter.

Major investment and hiring trends among larger manufacturers may capture most of the public's attention.

But the country's economy continues to roll on the ambitions of small businesses and what they put into thousands of communities across Canada.



Regulars at Ballinafad store treated more like family



Staff Comment

By CHRIS AAGAARD

Regulars at the Ballinafad General Store aren't really customers, and they aren't quite guests either. No, they're more like family.

It's been that way since the early 1900s and as long as Bonnie Walker is running things, it will stay that way, too.

In the hurly-burly world of business, the Ballinafad General Store, and others like it, is a bit of an anachronism.

Too many of Ontario's general stores which anchored down single corners of four-corner villages have disappeared into history. If they've been replaced at all, it's usually by zip-in, zip-out milk and bread variety stores.

If a chain-owned milk store opened in Ballinafad, area residents would likely collapse in shock, viewing it as an impersonal, Big City intrusion. No doubt, there was a communal sigh of relief when Mrs. Walker and her husband, David—residents of Ballinafad for about seven years—bought the store from the Shorthills. (Like the atmosphere of the store, the "Shorthills" sign outside remains unchanged).

With immense understatement, Mrs. Walker says "we carry a little bit of everything." True to its name, the Ballinafad General Store carries a lot of everything, from quick in and out

items like cold meats, milk and bread to hardware items—paint brushes, rollers, ax handles, wood stove dampers, nails by the pound, gloves, hats, caps, boots, gun oil, huge funnels, toys, gifts and ceramics (many made by local people), pocket knives, things for your cow, things for your horse, things for the dog and cat, razor blades—and stamps.

Yes, indeed; in addition to minding the general store and running the adjoining tack shop, Mrs. Walker is Ballinafad's postmistress.

A tiny corner to the rear of the store belongs to Canada Post Corp.

"The store is the centre of activity for the entire village," Mrs. Walker said when I dropped by Sunday. "If somebody has lost a dog or a horse, they phone here. If somebody's missing, they phone here."

From this nostalgic picture, the only things missing are a woodstove, cracker barrel and several well-used chairs. They've been replaced by sandwiches to order and the welcome gurgle of a full coffee pot.

The Ballinafad General Store is Mrs. Walker's first business venture. While the hours are long, often stretching to 14 hours a day when one includes bookkeeping, she says she enjoys meeting people and the responsibility the job demands.

Sure, many people do most of their major shopping at larger centres in Georgetown, Guelph and Erin, drawing on the general store for incidentals. But there are still a few residents, either less mobile or who can't stand shopping plazas, who still consider the store their main source of supplies.

Many a long and dreary search for some hard-to-find item or another has successfully ended at the General Store; but, visitors here are immediately aware of something else, even before they breathe in the rubbery, leathery smells of hardware and tack, and the soothing aroma of hot coffee. It's the essence of Canadian small business—a firm playing not only an important commercial role in the community, but a much-appreciated social function as well.

Letter to

the editor

Santa's coming to town

To the editor of The Herald:

We would like to announce that once again the Santa Claus Parade sponsored by the Acton Y's Men will be held Nov. 26 at 1:30 p.m. from the MacKenzie-Smith Middle School.

It will proceed west on Mill Street to Park Street, north on Park Street to Knox Avenue and east on Knox Avenue to Main Street where the parade will terminate.

We are calling upon all businesses, Service Clubs, Churches, School and Children's groups to participate in this year's Parade. Float entry forms can be obtained from the Acton Social Services Centre on Mill Street West or the Recreation Office in Georgetown.

Yours truly,
D.W. Jones, Chairman,
Acton Santa Claus Parade



Editor's notebook

By DAVE ROWNEY

In recognition of small business week, Herald staff writers Ani Pedersen and Chris Aagaard prepared a series of articles profiling businesses in Halton Hills.

For my part, I sauntered over to Kentners Dairy Bar last week with a tape recorder, to interview Chamber of Commerce president Dave Kentner. He and his wife Gerry will be celebrating their tenth anniversary next April, running an independent catering business.

Here are some excerpts from our talk:

On our situation in Halton Hills - do we differ from other areas?

Dave Kentner: "I think that small businesses are the cornerstone of any community. The Georgetown small business community and the Halton Hills small business community are really a typical cross-section of the business communities of any area or region."

"The effort of the Leathertown committee and the Dawkins boys, Ron Heller to set up the Olde Hide House, the Leathertown Market and so on - it's very unique. We have had our share (of unique businesses) - the discovery of insulin was related right to Dr. Best from the Georgetown area. Glen Williams was the birthplace of the transmission of hydro-electric power, from the site of generating power to the place of using it, the old paper mill dam and dynamo."

About trends in Halton Hills over the past 10 years for small businesses: Dave Kentner: "I think that during the flush years of our economy there was a spurge of people looking for secondary incomes, possibly their mate or children were looking for a business opportunity."

"They turned and invested their money into opening small businesses to service the community. Of course the community was growing at the same time... these people leaped in to fill the gaps there and to bring these new ideas."

"As the economy lightened up, some of these people lost interest because they weren't making money and their businesses closed. Some of them began to rely on that revenue, so they became even more expert at running their business."

On small businesses today:

Dave Kentner: "I think today's small businessman compared to the small businessman of yesterday is a more highly educated, more aware business person."

"The room for error is much smaller (in the '80s); your overheads are far higher percentage wise than they were in the past. You must produce much higher revenues. You have to be able to take advantage of credit, interest and so on in order to be able to survive."

"Large businesses who are the suppliers to small businesses are more and more becoming akin to dealing with only large businesses and they're actually starting to make decisions to terminate the small businessman."

"Minimum orders, minimum delivery weights, specific delivery days and on and on and on - putting all the onus on the small businessman to juggle all this."

On people supporting local businesses in town:

Dave Kentner: "I believe there is a high degree of community awareness... I would be negligent if I didn't appeal for an ever-broadening sense of awareness. The small businessman cannot support the community activities, the charities and community organizations that all solicit their support."

"If I might throw in a small plug, - very shortly director Lynn Barnard of the Chamber of Commerce will be announcing a Georgetown C. of C. 120th anniversary project in celebration of that anniversary - in which we hope to address those very problems."

On rewards of being a small businessman:

Dave Kentner: "The true reward of a small businessman or businessperson is probably more in the social, ego, personal lifestyle of the businessman. I get a personal thrill out of putting together a successful package for someone or for organizing an event and watching it go off smoothly on behalf of my client."

Problems of chain ownership affecting small business:

Dave Kentner: "A chain would be a direct threat to a small businessman if the small businessman chose to tackle the chain head on with an identical marketing strategy, because he does not have the resources, buying power and finance and the expertise to out-achieve the chain."

"Chains are rather inflexible, they have a set pattern, strategy, formula that works for them - and they're foolish to alter from it (e.g.) a small businessman who is willing to be flexible in product and services, and in hours and in techniques and so on."



THE WAY WE WERE

Students from Ballinafad, Norval, Stewarttown and Ashgrove are represented in this 1982 class picture. Stewarttown Senior Public School is celebrating its 25th anniversary Nov. 3 with a homecoming open house. Pictures are still being solicited by the anniversary committee for a display. Students seen here are: (front row, left to right) Linda Shea, Gloria Sherring, Jeannette Finnamore, Doreen

Handlady, Marjory Burt, Lynda Baxter, Shirley Zibo, Eka Wallinga, Lorraine McConachie, Carol Weurch; (second row) Irene Keir, Brian Youmans, Jack Crawford, George Henderson, Richey Corbett, Don Graham, Jim Carter, Louis Freeman, Carol McIntyre; (third row) Dianna Snow, Jody Williams, Bill Cook, Danny McLean, Jim Kerr, Morris Deforest, Neil Johnson, teacher Mr. Gibbons, Lynda Tjart.

Letter to the editor

Think about our Bicentennial

To the editor of The Herald:

The Esqueping Historical Society held a particularly interesting meeting in October when they invited the Tweedsmuir History curators from the Women's Institute Branches in the Georgetown area, who brought their books for viewing. They are the ones who merit mention and deserve much credit for their dedication in recording the valuable community history contained in their most interesting volumes.

Their material, consisting of the story of their neighbourhood, its farms, churches, schools, organizations etc., dates back to the 1820's and 1830's and

their curators past and present have been compiling it for the past thirty years. Lucky they began when they did or much of it would have been "lost" by now. The books contain many snapshots, and often clippings are added too. Those who submitted books who should be mentioned are: Dublin W.I. - Anne Dodds; Silverwood W.I. - Mary Marchington; Bannockburn W.I. - Rene Morrison; Norval W.I. - Dorothy McLean; Ashgrove W.I. - Betty Brownridge. Books from the reference sections of the Halton Hills Libraries from the disbanded Branches of Acton, Esqueping and Georgetown were also on view.

My job as District curator is to assist these ladies in organizing their material for microfilming and nine of these fourteen books have been microfilmed. As well I am in charge of our District Tweedsmuir History where we record biographies and pictures of our presidents and secretaries, our District activities and Branch summaries. As a member of the Georgetown Agricultural Society I am also involved in helping collect and record their one hundred and thirty-seven year history. We have a book of sixty pages now that we are finding is a valuable resource for newer members. We know there are still stories

and pictures of people who were exhibitors in years past, who raced on "the famous track", who showed horses and livestock, and which we would like to include in our history. Maybe some of you folks out there can help us find these missing pieces. I mention this latter activity so that other groups might be encouraged to begin a history of their organization - maybe it would be a good Bicentennial project for 1984. History is something we are all unconsciously "writing" every day. Are you one of the few who is recording it? Yours sincerely,
(Mrs. John)
Imney Bird



THIRTY YEARS AGO—Completely redesigned and refurbished, the Corner Cupboard Restaurant will re-open on Friday after being closed since Monday while extensive alterations were made. Mr. and Mrs. Stan Wade, who purchased the business earlier this year have given the restaurant a new color scheme in gray and chartreuse, provided a new waiting area for Gray Coach passengers as well as changing the style of the counter and creating two rest rooms.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO—Approximately \$500 in cash was netted by safecrackers in a break-in at the IGA Foodliner over the weekend. The break-in occurred sometime between 6 p.m. Saturday and 10:15 a.m. Sunday morning and was reported to local police at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Chief Constable Roy Haley and Cpl. Jim Billsborrow were immediately notified by Const. Evan Rollins who received the call over the cruiser radio. Entry to the supermarket was gained through a hole knocked in the roof of the building by a railroad sledge hammer. The hole was made within 10 feet of the safe located at the rear of the store on the east side.

There was an estimated \$670 in the safe but close to \$200 of that amount was destroyed by the blast. Thieves are believed to have reached the roof by climbing a hydro pole located four feet from the wall at the south east corner of the building.

TEN YEARS AGO—Georgetown may be heading for deep trouble. Garbage trouble that is. Bill Johnson of GUARD (Group United Against Rural Dumping) and a member of Garbage Coalition, which meets in Georgetown, this weekend, sees trouble ahead when the town opens its new sanitary landfill site. He has expressed fears about the volume of garbage to be handled as well as the handling costs.

ONE YEAR AGO—Town planning board chairman Mike Armstrong has challenged complaints made last week by Georgetown Area Ratepayers Association president Brian Bush about the process leading up to council's approval two weeks ago of the Halton Hills official plan.

In a Herald interview, Mr. Bush expressed his group's disappointment in the plan, commenting that "there seems to be a total lack of rationality and no logical process behind it." But Coun. Armstrong told The Herald that he doubts Mr. Bush's views are shared by all members of GARA's executive committee. "I have nothing against GARA," Mr. Armstrong said. "I'm strongly supportive of any group wanting to involve itself in community issues."

But Brian's comments (last week) were strictly his and nobody else's." Council and its committee, formed to steer the town's urban boundary review, made every effort to keep the ratepayers' group informed, Coun. Armstrong said, denying Mr. Bush's accusation that GARA's queries about the Georgetown urban review and the official plan were never addressed.



This summer I was fortunate to have the loan of an "Ability Phone" terminal to witness for myself its versatility. Using this device, severely disabled individuals can make and receive phone calls, control lights, appliances, door and window locks and manage finances.

Safety and security devices can function manually or automatically triggered by preprogrammed messages, smoke, heat, or burglars. Aid is summoned by three preset phone calls dialed automatically with appropriate messages delivered to police, fire departments, or friends for each emergency.

The phone does not give up until it does get an answer. On completion, the Ability Phone reassures the owner that help is on the way.

If reminders are necessary to take medication or perform other self care tasks, it can be programmed to inform a person of up to ten different reminders during the day. Likewise five reminder dates will relay messages from doctors' appointments to car payments due.

Using flashing lights, printers, visual display screen, and adjustable synthetic voice, prerecorded message or sound, and/or Baudot code it is able to communicate with almost everyone as well as most machines from standard telephones, TDD's and TTY's to computers.

As a calculator, using basic mathematics it has large easy to use keys with a larger than average display. The reaction time to each key can be adjusted from immediate to time delayed in case you strike the wrong one or change your mind. A voice and/or the screen will inform you which key was pushed if you wish.

Calling for help or selecting prelisted phone numbers can be accomplished by selecting one key. In fact, if you wish the entire unit can be operated by one key, a single switch, by hand, foot, sip and puff, wobble, rocker, body heat, etc. As you can see, control of this unit is exceedingly simple requiring little dexterity. Programming can be done by the owner or set up by the dealer.

The Ability Phone is the size of the Toronto phone book and has many more functions than mentioned here. It does have flaws however, but to find out you're going to have to wait for another column.