

Swan songs for Chris

These goodbyes are never easy

Goodbyes are never easy. In fact, I hate them. Thursday is going to be one of those days I hate. Our editorial team is losing the man with the moustache. Reporter Chris Aagaard is going on to greener pastures at the Cambridge Reporter.

Forgive me if I get mushy at times, but I'm a real mushball, and it's times like this that you catch me with balls of Kleenex stuffed up my shirtsleeves and lots of trips to the bathroom for secret tears.



Staff Comment
By ANI PEDERMAN

Dear Chrissy (he hates to be called that) has been my friend and co-worker for two and a half years. It may not sound like a very long time, but with the long hours and type of team work we do, you really get to know your co-worker well.

Chris is a generous, kind-hearted fellow. He's the kind of guy you can always run to for help, whether it be a stalling car, or he calls later and the town administrator you want to talk to isn't answering your call.

He's the kind of guy who'll leave his laundry buggy on the sidewalk to help push you out of a snowdrift, and he won't curse you too loudly for the mud stains your dirty car left on his coat and gloves.

When I first started at The Herald, Chris was the one to run to for directions. City girls have never heard

of Lines and Sideroads, and someone who gets lost in department stores is certainly not going to know which way is north, south, east or west.

Pulling out his felt-tipped black pen, Chris would quickly sketch me a creative map with highlights to watch for along the route. He's quite good with the pen and once drew a million dollar cow to go with an article I wrote about a local farmer's purchase. Cuddly beast (hah hah, get the pun?).

A hard worker, Chris is always ready to take on another assignment. I always wonder how his wife Anna feels about that. I knew how she felt about long-distance calls at 2 a.m. from former Georgetown residents who missed the town. But Chris rarely got angry.

This is starting to read like a eulogy. I must remember Chris is not dead. He's sitting across from me now, poring over another one of those long council reports.

Okay, I admit it. I'm going to miss his teasing and spontaneous comedy sketches, but I'm sure Gerry and Dave will pick up the slack.

Even though Chris won't be here every morning, we're still going to talk about him at The Herald, kindly of course, and we'll still keep in touch with him. After all, he'll still be a friend.

That's the worst thing about goodbyes, isn't it? You always feel and act as if you're never going to see each other again.

Although selfishly I wish Chris weren't going to be working in another office, I'm also very happy for him. The Cambridge Reporter is one lucky paper.



Staff Comment
CHRIS AAGAARD

The last column

Swan song time. In the pages of this edition, you'll find the last items I'll likely write for the Halton Hills Herald.

Monday morning will find me behind a desk at the Cambridge Daily Reporter, covering general assignments.

I've often wondered what I would write in a farewell column. It's certainly tempting to launch a few Cruise missiles at some of the more miserable news contacts I've run into over the last four years.

Fortunately the real wheels on which this town rolls—the people who run the YMCA, the schools, the people who work in the public works department, engineering and parks and recreation, the businessmen who will launch the BIG Celebration, who hold Pioneer Days, the talented citizens who act and sing, who overcome handicaps—(physical and mental) to achieve some amazing feats, the people who fight fires and rush the injured to hospital, who coach, the people with vision who see libraries as more than just a place for books and reading, the people who help others worship, people who find others jobs, people who protest and people who keep town budgets in line—they make up for all the "big fish, small pond" types that can put a real crimp in my day.

No farewell would be complete without some mention of the McGibbon Hotel.

I was led to its bar the very first lunch hour I had at The Herald, following a time-honored tradition which the paper has with new recruits.

When we talk about going for an after work drink, there's no question of location. If the McGibbon's tables could talk (and after several beers, I believe they do), what tales they would tell of cranky, grumbling Herald employees who have stumbled in after rough Tuesdays.

I hope that my new job has as many fine people—people that have sense of humor and a great deal of respect for each other—as The Herald enjoys.

There are some sharp edges in this job and it's nice to know that your fellow workers support you and listen when you want to sit down and get something off your chest.

We've had some real doozer clashes at times, but the sense that we're a "business family" has remained intact.

Some of us have been criticized for not staying in town, not becoming a genuine part of the community as if we have to pass some five or 20 year period of initiation.

We're not a big, impersonal newspaper. I think our spirit shows in our coverage of events and the way we deal with people.

I know I owe people at The Herald and in the community a lot of thanks for the help they've given me. I think whoever comes in to fill the vacant reporter's desk (Ani's taking over my town and regional council beats) will find Halton Hills worth writing about at some time, too.

And, that when he or she leaves, it's with just as much regret, but just as much excitement for the future, as I feel now.



Editor's notebook
By DAVE ROWNEY

Don't get the wrong idea

Dear Chris, Sniff. I don't want you to get the wrong idea, but I don't think I've felt so sad since the time I broke up with my high school sweetheart. I broke out in a rash back then.

By accepting a promotion to work for a big time daily, The Herald just won't be the same. You've made your mark on the community after nearly four years here as senior reporter. We know the Cambridge Daily Reporter can readily use the experienced ways of a veteran journalist, but can we survive your loss?

The memories just flow on and on and ironically, I and others won't be remembering your 'coop' stories, your unselfish dedication to your profession or the extra hours you spent on the job.

It's the personality of Chris Aagaard that won't be easily forgotten here.

My first day at The Herald I remember vividly being reassured by you after a threatening, soul-shattering blast from my editor. That little pat on the back gave me strength to carry on.

It's refreshing to know someone who pursues excellence and demands perfection, but at the same time doesn't gloat over their successes or triumphs. You were The Herald's man behind the curtain; the one who at some point always supported the editor, the sports editor or the junior reporter. One publisher called you "the workhorse of the paper". Who could disagree?

Your sense of humor, impersonations of local personalities and your uncanny way of lightening our loads with an unexpected remark in a newspaper crisis was always appreciated.

Sitting across the desk from you hasn't been easy over the past three years.

We've hurled insults and bad jokes, (the redneck conservative, versus the bleeding heart liberal) but my comments about your "Mod Squad Peter Cochrane leather vest" always seemed to cool your verbal jets. Still afraid to wear that vest back to work?

There was misery and comforting misery as we compared car repair bills over the winters. Thank you for all those boosts from my Stewarttown hovel.

You were paid back this winter when I 'rescued' you on Highway 7 near the Silvercreek Shell a scant two hours before paste-up deadline. If I'd only brought a camera to that one - I needed a good 'car stuck in the ditch' picture that week too.

Your stag will go down in history. It was the first one I've been to where the bridegroom never showed up...no one told me I was the one to pick you up!

Back at the office there was our great fight against monopolies and trusts. Office management did finally buckle after we fought a price increase with our own "scab" coffee machine. Freedom fighters indeed.

And we're journalists that care. It's shown by the endless hours spent talking about newspaper philosophy, ethics, ideas and problems. Nick and George at the Gibby will find it hard to cope managing our press club without the likes of you there.

But anyhow, thanks for your special part in contributing to The Herald's place as a recorder of our town's history. We're all that much richer for you being here.

GROWTH Owners pursue enclosed plaza for Georgetown Marketplace

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff

Imagine shopping in an enclosed mall while a winter storm rages outside...at the Georgetown Marketplace.

Expansion of Halton Hills' oldest off-street shopping centre is a possibility which the Marketplace's owners and property managers (Four Seasons Realty group) are actively discussing.

"I don't want to give anyone any false hopes," cautioned Four Seasons' Cliff Levy in an interview last week. "It's something we are pursuing but we still have to sit down and look at the possibilities and the costs."

The Marketplace currently has two large retail anchors: a Loblaw's foodstore at the western end and a Zellers to the east.

Built in the mid-1950s, the Marketplace is not enclosed and shoppers move from store to store on an open promenade.

With signs of recovery in the economy, expansion at the centre is being considered, Mr. Levy explained.

One of the criteria on which expansion plans hinge, Mr. Levy said, is

securing another major retailer for the Marketplace.

The expansion would likely take place towards the rear of the shopping centre with the what are now the backs of the existing stores opening into an enclosed mall.

A new retailer may take as much as 50,000 to 60,000 square feet of space and the expansion would also include a number of smaller stores.

"When it's cold outside people often don't thoroughly shop the open-air centre," Mr. Levy said. "They come strictly for what they need and then leave."

GOAL

"Our goal is to create an attractive environment in which to shop."

While Four Seasons and the centre's owners already know that the Marketplace draws people from Georgetown as well as smaller, outlying communities, Mr. Levy said a more detailed assessment of the possible market will be needed before expansion plans can proceed.

"There's a tremendous capital expense in building malls," he

commented. "It comes down to business: unless the numbers are good we can't proceed."

Failing an expansion, Mr. Levy said, a "face-lift" for the Marketplace is another possibility.

"Expansion is a major priority," he said. "If it doesn't materialize we'd still like to do something with the shopping centre."

Police input sought for new subdivisions

By ANI PEDERMAN
Herald Staff

When it comes to development and town building plans, councilors aren't keeping Halton regional police in the dark.

Inspector Matt MacPherson said police are asked for input whenever the town has plans for a subdivision.

"The planning and research section at police headquarters (Oakville) looks at what the town is planning," he said.

Like many other forces, the crime prevention officers have input into the plans for community expansion.

"I think a lot of forces, like ours, are trying to move to a position where crime prevention officers have input,

Insp. MacPherson said.

He said the public is becoming more aware that they have a part to play in preventing crime in the community.

"Planning nowadays is so vastly advanced to what it was 40 years ago, and for all the communities in Halton, growth is being planned years and years ahead, and they're doing a good job of it," Insp. MacPherson said.

The Inspector for the Georgetown, Acton and Milton divisions, Mr. MacPherson doesn't anticipate there will be many problems if the Halton Hills population grows in single dwellings, rather than in townhouses and single apartments which concentrate a lot of people in a small area.



PROUD AND PROFICIENT

Can't find a babysitter? The Georgetown YMCA has a program which trains young people to properly care for kids while their parents are away. One class graduated Saturday at the Mountainview Road Baptist Church. The course is about eight weeks long, and special guest speakers include members of the town's fire department and the police. The graduates are: Debra Welling, Debbie Lawrence, Susan Welch, Alexandra Trevisanus, Joclene Pratt, Michelle Smith, Christae Ford, Claire Preece, Hubert Scholz, Lianne Graham, David Gilkes, John Reel, Neil Pirie, Karen Marshall, Sherri McIntyre, Michelle Ronillard, Andrea Sommer, Jennifer Koning, Sharis Tibbitts, Tracy May, Kathy Dawson and Erin Pirie. They were instructed by Marion Kathwaroon. For information about the babysitting program, call the Y at 877-4163. (Herald photo)

Scrambled words spell maple syrup at Ashgrove W.I.

By Mrs. JOHN BELLBODDY
Herald Correspondent

The agricultural and Canadian Industries W.I. was held March 20 at Hillcrest Church with Mrs. Hector Bird as hostess.

President Mrs. John Bird opened with an amusing poem on memory organization. Mrs. Peggy Knapp gave a full account of

the County Spring Board meeting held in Milton. The district annual will be May 17 in St. David's Presbyterian Church in Campbellville.

Mrs. Pat Stark introduced the speaker Mr. John Buller, an agricultural specialist in North Simcoe County. He showed a film about the maple syrup process. Mrs. Milton Bird had

a contest on scrambled words relating to maple syrup which was won by Mrs. Bob Alexander and Mrs. Bob Cunningham. Mrs. James McPhail told of different people around these parts who are producing maple syrup.

A nominating committee to elect next year's officers are Mrs. C. Hunter and Mrs. N. Haist. Courtesies given by Mrs. J. Hunter.

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4	Decorations	11	Stately
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