

Man's magic stick saving companies millions of dollars

A Georgetown man's invention is saving millions of dollars and is protecting environments all over the world.

That invention of the late Tom Arnesen is called the Ion Stick. The tool reduces and prevents the build-up of scale in water tanks and pipes. Scale is the hard coating which forms on the sides of containers as common as your kettle.

The Arnesen invention deals with much larger bodies of water, such as cooling systems and hot water systems for apartment buildings and offices. It does the same job dangerous chemicals have done and still do, Mr. Arnesen said.

Chris Arnesen and his father worked together to promote the harmless method of removing scale. From their persistence has come a product so well established it is comparable to the Kleenex of the paper tissue world or the Ski Doo of the snowmobile world.

The Ion stick has set the standard to such an extent that other inventions which claim to do the same work are referred to by the leader's name-Ion Stick, Mr. Arnesen said.

The Ion Stick looks like an industrial magic wand. The main body part is a teflon coated shaft about an inch in width. At both ends of the shaft are brass fixtures which make the total length 21 1/2 inches. A cord from one end of the wand leads to the power source.

Ten Ion Sticks can run on the power it takes to run a 100 watt light bulb. An electrostatic field produced by the stick with an aluminum core is what works on the scale.

To buy an Ion Stick you need \$3,500, but much of that money is soon recovered. Chemicals for a 1,000 gallon storage tank can cost \$1,500 per year, Mr. Arnesen said. The build up of scale in a boiler makes heating elements less effective and more costly, he said. Money is saved in many ways.

Chris Arnesen studied business at Michigan State and his father had training in his native Norway in mechanical engineering. The father-son team began working on the problem of scale in 1974. After limited success promoting an American invention they abandoned the project in 1980. The American invention which used an electrostatic field had its limitations.

A year after abandoning the American project, while driving in

his car, Chris Arnesen came up with the idea of the Ion Stick. What inspired him was all the apartment buildings with water storage tanks and scale problems. "It struck me to put a probe into the system," he said.

His father was somewhat reluctant to get back into the descaling business, but nevertheless, Tom Arnesen created the first Ion Stick. The first test unit was completed in June, 1982.

Since that beginning the Ion Stick has gained a reputation for quality, Mr. Arnesen said. It has been on the market for five years.

While the Ion Stick was building a reputation, chemical companies began to feel pressure from their new competitor. "Chemical companies tried to buy us out. My father and I put an awful lot of our lives into it and didn't want to see it shelved," Mr. Arnesen said.

Had Mr. Arnesen sold it to a chemical company, he would have got twice as much money for it, he said. The Ion Stick was eventually sold to a Toronto group headed by David Lorenzetti.

The company which was sold to the Toronto group is called York Energy Conservation. It just moved from Armstrong Avenue in Georgetown to Richmond Hill. Mr. Arnesen was kept on by the new owners.

Being part of the creation and successful marketing of the Ion Stick is the accomplishment of a lifetime, Mr. Arnesen said. The fact that the invention will reduce pollution is a bonus. Water contaminated by chemicals eventually has to be disposed of. The Ion Stick is now working where such chemicals were once used.

There are uses for the Ion Stick which have not been discovered yet, Mr. Arnesen said. Discovering those uses and pulling the stick to work on a larger scale are the next tasks.

The only sad point the Arnesen Ion Stick story is that Tom Arnesen died before witnessing the Ion Stick's great success. "Dad would have loved it," his son said.



MAGIC STICK-Georgetown's Chris Arnesen is holding an invention which has made his life and the lives of many much easier. It is called an Ion Stick and works at removing scale from water storage tanks. The stick is produced by the Georgetown company York Energy Conservation which is now in Richmond Hill. (Herald photo)

Outdoor Power store lives up to its name

With every passing season Georgetown's Outdoor Power Equipment is living up to its name more and more.

Since the 61 Guelph St. business opened last August they have steadily increased their supply and range of recreational and work related equipment. Canoes, paddle boats, fishing boats, outboard motors, grass and branch trimmers, and safety clothing are some of the latest products offered at the store.

Outdoor Power Equipment is owned and operated by George Poulos and his two sons, Mark and Keith. They stock parts and service everything they sell. They also service other types of outdoor equipment.

Between the three of them, the Poulos' have over 50 years experience servicing cars, farm equipment and small motors.

Those in the Moore Park area may know Mark Poulos as the owner of Handy's Auto Service at the Texaco Station. Handy's has moved to the 61 Guelph St. location.

If they can avoid it though, the Poulos' would rather not service the equipment they sell, and that is why Outdoor Power Equipment sells quality brand names, Mark said. Husqvarna, Nissan, Bolens are some of the names they carry. "We feel the Husqvarna is the best high power light weight saw you can buy," Mark says. Outdoor Power Equipment carries saws between 37 and 88 cc. They also carry Husqvarna gas operated grass trimmers and clearing saws.

For smaller jobs, the lower priced and electric Weed Eater is available. Accessories for both brands are sold at Outdoor Power Equipment. Safety pants for chainsaw users are also sold.

The Bolens line in lawnmowers and tractors has been very popular among Outdoor Power Equipment customers, Mark said. Bolens products come with a three year warranty and a range of features.

They have self-propelled mowers and mulchers. The mowers are easy to start because of an electronic ignition. Yanking on cords and hoping the mower will start is not a chore to be dreaded with a Bolens lawnmower. Bolens even makes electric start lawnmowers.

The tractors are diesel run. Some have front end loaders. Snow blowing attachments can be added too. A summer feature is the attachable trimmer which eliminates the chore of going back over ground to trim around trees and other tight spots.

Specials on the Bolens line will be offered during the Home Show, between April 2 and 12. Outdoor Power Equipment will be at the Home Show. They just completed their first appearance at the Sportman Show where some of their boat line was featured.

The complete Nissan outboard motor line can be seen at Outdoor Power Equipment. That line includes mowers that range from 3 1/2 to 70 horse power. Motors come with a two-year warranty.

Nissan has been making mowers in Japan since 1931, Mark said. Nissan even makes a couple of motors for Mercury. The motors are very quiet because of a through-the-propeller-exhaust. Motors also have power tilt and trim, and electric start.

The boat line carried by Outdoor Power Equipment is mainly for the outdoors person. Canoes from Noranda, Quebec will be offered for the first time this year. The fiberglass Pourvoyeur canoes come in sizes from 15 to 19 feet. The square back model for a motor is also sold.

Light pleasure craft is another product of Pourvoyeur. Sea Nymph is the name in car top boats and console fishing boats carried by Outdoor Power Equipment. A range of life jackets and paddles can be found at the 61 Guelph St. store.

DID YOU KNOW?

According to Statistics Canada, our country had 53,464 police officers in 1985, an increase of 92.7 per cent over 1962, but the decline in the ratio of police per 1,000 population was 30.0 per cent. However, this upward trend has slowed considerably in the last eight years. The largest increase (86 per cent) took place between 1962 and 1977.

Get framed the Joan Collins way

If you're mad about Joan Collins and her style of chic, you'll be happy to know a Georgetown optical company has the exclusive rights to sell her frames in Canada.

Jack and Donna Greenwood operate Opal Optical Ltd., of 93 Armstrong Avenue, and will soon be celebrating their 10th year in the optical frame distribution business.

Opal Optical started out small, as a business out of the Greenwood home on Hillside Drive. Today, the company employs six office staff and eight sales people.

Their sales staff travel across Canada, showing the Opal Optical line to optometrists and opticians. The frames come from Italy, France and the U.S.A. When available, they are bought from Canadian manufacturers of which there are few.

You can see the Joan Collins line of eyewear in town, at the Mountainview Road South offices of Dr. Bruce Foley and Dr. Robert Hamilton.

"Our long-term goal is to be worldwide and contributing the best in eyewear to the community," the Greenwood's say.

For more information on Opal Optical, call 877-7715.

You don't need a boat to sleep on water

Ducks aren't the only ones who like sleeping on water. A lot of people do.

That's where Atlantis Sleep Systems comes in. The RR4 Georgetown company manufactures and imports waterbeds and accessories for the wholesale marketplace.

Also known as Country Custom Products, the firm is the largest waterbeds manufacturer and importer in Canada, company president D. H. Tarzwell says. The company has about 160 accounts, with some as far away as Germany. It employs 22 Halton Hills residents.

Over the last two years, the new soft-sided waterbeds have gained popularity, Mr. Tarzwell says. They look like a conventional bed, but in fact they are a waterbed.

For more information on Atlantis Sleep Systems, call 877-2254.

High-power

Federal Communications Minister Flora MacDonald has announced that a \$1 million contract has been awarded to Varian Canada Inc. of Georgetown to develop and manufacture high-power earth-station amplifiers for the European Space Agency's Olympus satellite program. The funding will be provided through the Satellite Communications Applications Program of the Department of Communications (DOC) and the Unsolicited Proposals Program of Supply and Services Canada.



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