

the B.I.G. Celebration

Gordon Alcott Arena
June 3, 4 & 5

With Chamber it's all for one

Whether the business employs hundreds or is a one-man operation the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce serves all. For small businesses the chambers is similar to a public relations department that they can not afford, says general manager Doug Penrice. The chamber promotes

A business that delivers

How can a kid, who is a mere 10-years-old, raise capital to finance his obsession with comic books?

Two years ago, Robert Weston, then 10, decided to deliver newspapers to help supplement his allowance.

"I found my allowance was not adequate," he said.

One of Robert's friends was a carrier and when the Georgetown boy found out what he was making, he thought why not.

The 12-year-old has been delivering approximately 200 papers every week for the Georgetown Herald for about a year now.

He started his career in print journalism delivering the Toronto Star and Toronto Sun, but finds depositing The Herald much easier.

"For one thing they are not as heavy," Robert said.

"I do not have to collect (money for subscriptions). I hated collecting."

In the winter Robert rises at 5 a.m. Wednesday morning, in order to get his papers delivered before school.

Depending on the amount of snow covering the sidewalks it takes Robert an hour-and-a-half, while in the summer the boy can sleep in until 6 a.m. since it takes only a half hour to do his papers.

On occasion he has to do them after school if he has an early event at Stewarttown, where Robert attends classes.

The only difficulty Robert has encountered while working his route are dogs. "There are a few dogs that are really mean," he said. "I've been chased by dogs many times."

With the extra money he makes delivering newspapers, Robert buys his little extras.

"I am into models and sort of into collecting coins," the carrier said. "A big cut of my pay goes to comic books." Robert collects various Marvel and Daredevil comics.

Born in England, Robert lived in Mississauga for two years before moving to Georgetown seven years ago.



Robert Weston

business to the town and acts as a liaison between the consumer and small business.

If a consumer has a complaint they usually approach the Chamber of Commerce. The chamber plays an important role in keeping Georgetown's businesses up to date on issues facing industry.

Someone from the chamber monitors all the council meetings and reports to their members via newsletters and mailings about concerns, which are going to be facing business, Mr. Penrice said.

For example, the chamber keeps its members in touch on matters such as the issues council deals with such as garbage collection, parking bylaws and Sunday shopping.

"We find businessmen in general are so busy running their businesses that they do not have time to get involved," Mr. Penrice said. The chamber will speak on the municipal

level on behalf of businesses.

The Georgetown branch is a member of the Ontario and Canadian Chamber of Commerce, which lobby for businesses on issues at the provincial and federal levels.

In order to keep their 300 members in touch with the goings on in the town, the chamber publishes a newsletter six times a year.

The literature is sent to all the 800 businesses located in Georgetown. "Even though they are not members we still act on their behalf and go to bat for them," Mr. Penrice said.

The 23-member board of directors is made up of volunteers who take time away from their own businesses to keep the chamber running. "They do not get paid for any of the efforts they put forth," the general manager said.

Last year the Georgetown chamber established an office in the Alcott Arena, which is open to the public, and hired a general manager.


As well, organizers set up seminars on different topics to help educate members.

So far, seminars on Free Trade with Barbara McDougall, a representative from Bell Canada and the post office and Georgetown Mayor Russ Miller have been invited to speak to businessmen.

The most important growth industry in Georgetown is tourism, Mr. Penrice said. In the year 2000 it will be the largest industry.

As a chamber, members work with people on the Acton and Halton Hills tourism committee to help foster the growth of tourism.

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