

Outlook on Halton Hills

Christmas sales 'exceptional'

Christmas 1988 was the season of the Oopie Daisy doll craze, but also a season Halton Hills' merchants found "absolutely exceptional" for sales, according to Georgetown Chamber of Commerce President, Murray Lawton.

Mr. Lawton said this year attracted an "aggressive" crowd to the Canadian Tire outlet he operates on Geulph Street. His only regret is not ordering a "truckload" of Oopie Daisy dolls. Three weeks ago when the dolls arrived at the store, they were "gone within 20 minutes of our door being opened," he said.

At Up, Up and Away Balloons on Main Street in Georgetown, sales were up 60 per cent over last year, said owner Trudy Thomas. The store's novelty items attracted many buyers, she said.

In Acton, things also went well for merchants. Mike Manes, president of the Acton Chamber of Commerce said the new plaza at Main Street and Mill Street attracted hoards of shoppers.

"This is one of the busiest years since the new stores opened," he said, indicating the February

opening of the plaza surrounding the IGA store where he is partner.

"Our mall was extremely good. Sales were better than anticipated," he said. "Everything broke loose" in the last two weeks before Christmas.

But Mr. Lawton said that with the good weather arriving one week before Christmas, people could travel to other out-of-town centres, "as easily as they could in July or August."

This curbed the "aggressive trend" begun in early August, he said.

And Mr. Lawton added that the hydro black out of Dec. 15 lost Canadian Tire "a chunk of sales," because store doors couldn't open until 2:30 p.m. that day.

A trend for gift-giving this year seemed to lean towards books. Those who weren't crowding the stores in search of Oopie Daisy dolls were at local book stores, such as Oxbow Books in Georgetown buying humorous gifts for friends and family.

"The humor shelf is almost totally wiped out," said Pat Johnston,

an employee at Oxbow. The book store sold more books than last year, and found among their clientele younger people, teens and children who bought and received books, in addition to the usual crowd of adult book-buyers.

"Every Christmas is busy, but books seemed more popular than ever this year," said Mrs. Johnston.

North Halton Sports on Main Street South found clothing to be a feature attraction. Owner Judy Pomeroy said the last week and especially the last few days before Christmas brought in many customers, who preferred the clothing over sports equipment. "The clothing keeps you in business," she said.

But what made North Halton Sports different was the sale of homemade nuts and chocolate. The items were so popular, that they will be sold again next year, said Ms. Pomeroy.

While shoppers cool their heels following a rigorous Boxing week, merchants will restock their shelves and recover from another Christmas season, one that was a real success in Halton Hills.



The Knox Presbyterian Church was a hot spot to be New Year's Eve as hundreds gathered to drink hot chocolate, apple cider and welcome in the New Year. Organizers distributed hundreds of balloons throughout the crowd and on the stroke of midnight.

Georgetown Citizen of the Year Ted Gorth rang the bell inside the church. A similar ceremony took place in Acton where Citizen of the Year Don Dawkins rang the midnight bell at the old town hall. Both ceremonies have been held since the early 1930s. (Herald photo)

Former area resident killed

A former Georgetown woman is dead following a single-car accident in Milton last week.

Elizabeth Howden, 25, of Bronte Road, Milton, formerly Elizabeth Bird of Georgetown, died Dec. 29 as a result of head injuries received when her 1985 Ford Mustang struck a hydro pole around 8:45 a.m. Dec. 28.

Police say Mrs. Howden was on her way to work when her car, eastbound on Britannia Road near Fourth Line, went out of control, left the roadway and hit the pole. The car was demolished.

Mrs. Howden was taken to Milton District Hospital and was then transferred by airbus to Sunnybrook Hospital where she underwent surgery. She died Dec. 29.

Mrs. Howden was an accounting clerk for a Mississauga firm, and a member of the Junior Farmers and the 4-H club. She married Doug Howden in September, 1988 and moved to Milton, where the couple resided.

Mrs. Howden was the daughter of George and Verna Bird, dairy

farmers on the Eighth Line in Georgetown. She leaves behind her parents, and three brothers, Charles, David and Ronald, a sister Marilyn and her grandfather, Vernon Picket of Georgetown.

The funeral was held Jan. 2 at Hillcrest United Church in Milton.

Police Beat

Stereo missing

Halton Regional Police say a stereo valued at \$200 was taken from a car parked on Frederick Street in Acton last Sunday or Monday. The vehicle was unlocked at the time of the theft.

Impaired charge

A Georgetown woman, stopped for a traffic violation, was charged with impaired driving early Thursday morning. Police stopped the 18-year-old driver at 2 a.m. at Mountainview Road North, near River Drive. She will appear in court Feb. 6.

Wallet taken

An Etobicoke man was charged by police Jan. 2 in connection with a theft from the Olde Hide House in Acton. Police say the man, 46, allegedly took a leather wallet valued at \$24 from the premises without paying. He will appear in court Feb. 6.

Mischief charge

Halton Regional Police charged a Georgetown man, 26, with mischief and breach of recognizance, following a Dec. 24 party that "got out of hand." Police say household objects were broken at the Christmas Eve Dayfoot Drive party. The Georgetown man was held for a bail hearing Jan. 4.

Strikes tree

Police say a man leaning over in his car to light a cigarette smashed into a tree near Fourth Line and Regional Road 32 early Thursday morning. An Acton man, 22, was driving a 1977 Ford that went out of control on the fresh snow, left the roadway, hit a ditch and then struck a small tree. The Ford received moderate damage. Police are not pressing charges and report no injuries in the accident.

Cars collide

A Georgetown man and a Brampton man were sent to hospital with minor injuries following a collision at Guelph Street and Alcott Drive Wednesday night. Police say a 1987 Toyota was southbound on Alcott Drive going through a green light when it was struck by a westbound 1980 Mercury Cougar. The

Cougar was moderately damaged, while the Toyota received severe damage. The drivers, a Brampton man, 24, and a Georgetown man, 30, were treated and released from Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital. Police have charged the Brampton man with failing to stop for a red light.

Man charged

A 50-year-old Glen Williams man was charged with assault following an altercation with his son at 11:15 p.m. Dec. 28. Police say the Main Street resident got into an argument with his son and allegedly pulled his son out of a chair, threw him to the floor and struck his face. The man will appear in court Feb. 6.

Driver charged

A 23-year-old Georgetown man who was stopped for a Highway Traffic Act offence was also charged with impaired driving at 3:50 a.m. Dec. 28. Police stopped the man on Delrex Boulevard near Sherman Court. He will appear in court Jan. 23.

Break a date

Someone broke into a house on the First Line near Sideroad 5 sometime between 5 a.m., Dec. 28 and 3:30 p.m., Dec. 28. The house was ransacked but nothing was removed. The person gained entry by forcing open the rear kitchen door. The door received \$500 damage.

Mink missing

A \$10,000 waist-length mink coat was stolen from a house at 24 Park Ave. in Georgetown sometime between Dec. 27 and Dec. 29. Police say a thief gained entry by forcing open the basement door.

R. E. McCall
Men's Wear



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