

# Community Acton BIA to fight Sunday shopping legislation

By BEN DUMMETT  
The Herald

Acton Business Improvement Area is taking steps to ensure stores like the Old Hide House are able to remain open if the provincial government decides to introduce legislation restricting Sunday openings.

Contacted Thursday, Acton BIA Chairman Dan Dolliver said a letter is currently in the works to be sent to North-Halton MPP Noel Duignan, stating "the vitality of Acton's downtown area would be negatively affected if Sunday shopping was curtailed."

This letter is a follow-up to one Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette sent to Mr. Duignan and the province's Ministry of Tourism earlier this year, stressing that 70 per cent of Acton's downtown businesses, representing approximately 300 employees, depends on Sunday shopping being allowed. These businesses include Flight-Line, Leathertown West Warehouse and Forever Christmas, said the councillor.

Coun. Bonnette said Thursday he believes the majority of Ontarians favor wide-open Sunday shopping, something with which he has no problem. But if the province comes out against Sunday shopping, it should at least include in the legislation an exemption for tourist-oriented businesses in Acton, said the councillor.

Bill Chard, an assistant to Mr. Duignan, said the New Democratic Party government is working on what is referred to as "common pause day" legislation. If passed, stores would be required to close their doors on either Saturdays or Sundays, depending on the store owners' religion, he said. Mr. Chard couldn't say if the government

has yet considered including exemptions in the legislation.

Since last fall, the furor surrounding the Sunday shopping issue has been non-existent. At that time, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled the existing provincial Sunday shopping legislation to be unconstitutional, leaving the doors wide-open for any business to open Sundays.

Before the Supreme Court's ruling, the Old Hide House, Flight-Line, Leathertown West Warehouse and Oakville's Bronte Village were the Halton businesses permitted to open Sundays under the previous Liberal government's legislation because they were recognized as tourist-oriented businesses.

Under that legislation, Halton Region granted these stores a tourist exemption because they met the following criteria: the majority of their sales came from tourists, they did extensive advertising outside their immediate area, and the stores had either historical, environmental, geographic or cultural significance.

Regional Tourism Promotion Coordinator, Pam Banks, said from a tourism perspective, Sunday shopping has positive results for businesses such as the Old Hide House. The Old Hide House's ability to attract shoppers from other areas outside Halton Hills on Sundays, not only benefits that store, it also means more customers for businesses in the surrounding area, explained Mr. Banks.

She wouldn't comment on the position Halton Council should take on the Sunday shopping question.

Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce General Manager Doug Penrice, said the Chamber has never been able to arrive at a

consensus on whether or not tourist-oriented businesses should be permitted to open Sunday. Personally, he believes the market place should decide if stores remain open.

## Rural writing contest

If you have an original story on social, economic, and environmental topics in rural Ontario published between Jan. 1, 1989 and Feb. 28, 1991, you could win \$1,000.

The W.C. Good Memorial Awards for rural writing are up for grabs. Eligible for the contest are books, plays, poetry, articles and editorials due by April 15, 1991.

First prize is \$1,000 while second is \$500 and third prize is \$250.

The prizes are funded by the family of W.C. Good in honor of his vision and leadership in farm and co-operative organizations as well as his original thinking on social and economic issues.

The awards will be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Rural Learning Association in June.

For more information write: Ontario Learning Association, P.O. Box 1588, Guelph, Ontario N1H 6R7 or call (519) 763-4831, (519) 621-8978 or (519) 824-5547.

## Toastmasters competition

Do you want to make a public statement for Canadian unity? Do it now.

Halton Hills Toastmasters is holding its Club Contest on March 25, to choose a competitor for the April 6th area contest. You could win all the way, and enjoy the expense paid trip to speak in Ottawa on July 1st.

This year's theme is "Exploring the Canadian Mosaic." Speeches are to be between 5 and 7 minutes in length. All permanent residents of Canada, age 17 and over, are eligible.

Halton Hills Toastmasters meet every Monday from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Glen Williams Town Hall. For more information call Don at 873-3954 or Paul at 853-3712.

## Chili eating contest for Cancer Society

In an effort to help Georgetown's image of a caring community, Wendy's Restaurants of Georgetown is once again campaigning to raise funds to help the Halton Hills chapter of the Cancer Society.

On Saturday, Wendy's will hold a Chili Eating Contest. Each contestant will have a 2-minute time limit to eat as much chili as possible. Entry fee will be \$5.00 - all proceeds will be donated to the Cancer Society.

Wendy's is hoping to get participation from sport teams, schools, the municipality and various businesses and organizations.

Challenge your people to compete for a worthy cause. It should be a lot of fun, and there will be prizes to be won. Advance notice of participation would be appreciated to help Wendy's ensure there is enough chili on hand.

The contest will run from 11:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m., entrants may pay their fees during this time. Corporate and/or organizational donations may be paid at an arranged date.



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