

# What a Fair!

No KenJen Zoo, possibly more food to meet the public's demand, and a fruit theme – those are some of the plans in the works for the 2011 edition of the Acton Fall Fair. A review of last year's fair, and proposals for this year's, were on the agenda as the Acton Agricultural Society held its annual general meeting at Knox Church on Saturday.

Although the Fair Board held its financial discussions behind closed doors, during the public session members heard that the weekend gate was down by 250 people, and the revenue was also down, despite an increase in the adult admission price to help make up for the new 13 per cent HST. At this point, Secretary/Treasurer Jill Medland said, "we don't want to discuss the numbers" in public, ending any financial-related comments or questions.

At press time, the fair Board had not issued a promised press release, detailing figures for the Fair's three revenue generators – the beer tent, midway and gate.

Members heard that despite a last-minute resignation of the chair of the Baby Show, it went

ahead with 52 entrants (down from 61 the previous year) and the welcome lead of RBC manager Judy Williamson, who changed the format so the babies had more interaction with each other and the judges. Williamson has agreed to run the Baby Show again this year.

George Henderson, who has run the Spot in the Park – the beer tent – for 17 years, reported it was a great success, and that along with the profits, which he did not divulge, the Fair Board needs to "continue to acknowledge the responsibilities we must adhere to" to run the beer garden. Henderson said they held the beer price at \$4.50 for the third year in a row, and added wine coolers sales.

Education Day spokesperson Anjali Viegas reported that over 1,300 school students and adults took part in the annual Education Day activities and enjoyed new interactive toys including children's tractors, mini-farm animals, and arts and crafts. With indoor and outdoor activities run by 40 student volunteers from Acton High School, organizers got good feedback from teachers and

parents. In a report to the Fair Board, Viegas said this year they hope to include a heavy equipment demonstration, new interactive games and be part of the parade.

Parade chairman Jim Warrington reported that having a new Parade Marshall was well accepted, and there were 41 entries in the parade, singling a renewed interest in the parade. He said he hopes to have some antique cars in the parade and possibly a car show and shine inside the fair grounds.

Homecraft chair Judy Burtney reported they had a "lot of fun and it was very inspiring," to have another successful Homecraft weekend with lots of entrants in almost all categories. Burtney said they attended each of the Acton Farmers' Markets during the summer to promote the Fair, and Homecrafts entered both the Acton Santa Claus parade and the Fall Fair parade.

George March, chair of the Beef Cattle Committee reported they had over 40 exhibitors and over 100 head of cattle.

"I'm not sure why we continue to get all of the horses and cattle, but it's what makes an agricul-



**SAFETY SKILLS:** Acton Village Constable Moreen Smith (left) offered safety tips to members of Acton's Women to Women Business Networking Group at its meeting last Tuesday including Starlight Café employee Teresa Uiterwyk. – Submitted photo

tural show, agricultural," he said, adding fairs in surrounding communities seem to have trouble putting on an agricultural show with large animals, but Acton seemed to "have lucked out, again."

Three contestants entered the Miss Acton pageant with Robin Dercatch earning the title of Miss Acton Fall Fair. Committee chair Natalie Tuitman reported that for the second year in a row, Miss Acton is eligible to take part in the Queen of the CNE competition.

Advertising chair Jim Richmond questioned if the \$6,500 they spent

for radio advertising is money well spent. He suggested they do a marketing survey to find out how people learned about the fair. He was told that such a survey was done during the last fair, and it showed that 90 per cent of respondents want more food.

The truck and tractor pulls again proved to be great draws, attracting huge crowds. There were 162 pulls and just one minor mishap when a driver failed to stop when told to and ended up denting his bumper. Committee members also helped raise \$7,600 by taking the stone

boat to 10 events across southern Ontario.

Fair Board directors decided not to bring back a fair favourite – the KenJen Petting Zoo – and instead will "do something different" and expand agricultural awareness with the \$3,000-plus savings.

Members heard that the committee established to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Acton Fall Fair in 2013 has had its first meeting.

The theme for this year's fair is Ontario Fruits – "The Fruits of our Labour." For the Fair Board members, it again will be a labour of love.

## Board of Education debates Christmas break

In January each year, the Halton District School Board establishes a committee to develop the following year's school calendar. This involves determining dates for Professional Activity days (PA Days) and Ministry of Education/Board designated holidays.

The committee has started its work on the 2011-2012 school year

calendar and would like community input regarding the December 2011 holiday break.

In an effort to gather community input in a timely manner, the Board is asking parents/guardians to respond to a survey by Friday, January 21, 2011. The survey is located on the homepage of the Board website at [www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca).

Listed below are the three options, please choose one:

1. Early Dismissal option: The last day of school before the December holiday would be on Friday, December 16,

2011 and students would return to school on Monday, January 2, 2012.

2. Late Dismissal option: The last day of school before the December holiday would be on Friday, December 23,

2011 and students would return to school on Monday, January 9, 2012.

3. Split Week option: The last day of school before the December holiday would be on Wednesday, December

21, 2011 and students would return to school on Thursday, January 5, 2012.

The Board appreciates the opinion of parents and looks forward to their feedback.

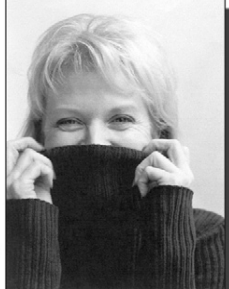


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