

One year later organizers call campaign 'a success'

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

The Shop Local program launched a year ago in town is being called a success by organizers.

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, a member of the Shop Local committee, said, "we are very pleased with the response from the community."

"With the slowdown in the economy every dollar that is spent in Halton Hills benefits the whole community," said Bonnette.

He said the idea behind the program is "to give the local businesses the first shot at our business."

"It's given us momentum at a time when the businesses in our town needed a boost," said the mayor.

The program was launched as an initiative through the office of the mayor and the Town's Economic Development Office.

"Our budget was very limited and to be able to measure what was being spent out of town before the program and current sales would require extensive market research, which we do not have funds for," said Doug Penrice, the Town's Economic Development Officer.

"Instead we used the money for direct promotion in the

community. The distinctive decal with the logo is on display in over 500 businesses in Halton Hills and many of these businesses are using the logo in their ads."

He said they have heard anecdotally the program has made a difference in consumers' attitudes.

"Studies in other areas show a correlation between dollars spent and Shop Local campaigns," said Penrice.

Throughout the year the committee has surprised local shoppers with Shop Local bags containing gift certificates from area businesses.

The most recent recipient of a Shop Local gift bag was Georgetown resident Kay Schofield at Georgetown Market Place.

Josey Bonnette, manager of Acton BIA, said the program is working.

"Ninety five per cent of my merchants (in Acton) have the Shop Local logo in their window," said Bonnette.

Georgetown Market Place manager Herminia Henderson also believes the program is working.

"It's been great," said Henderson. She said, despite the poor economy, traffic in the mall was up over Christmas and throughout last year.

Sue Walker of Halton Hills

Chamber of Commerce said it's hard to measure the success of the program but it's "certainly helped to put the emphasis on spending locally."

She said the message of the program to area residents is the need to support local businesses because "they're the ones whose names are on the backs of your children's hockey jerseys."

Walker said area businesses are always giving back to the community.

She said Chamber members "were very appreciative of the efforts" of the Shop Local campaign.

The Shop Local committee will continue with the program and is looking at ways to enhance the message and introduce new elements to the program.

The Shop Local committee includes Josey Bonnette of Acton BIA, Kay Matthews of Georgetown BIA, Herminia Henderson of Georgetown Market Place, Doug Brock of Williams Mill, Sue Walker of Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, John McGhie and Steve Foreman of *The Independent & Free Press*, and Marie Shadbolt of *The New Acton Tanner*. From the Town of Halton Hills are Mayor Bonnette, Penrice, Jennifer Spence and Damian Szybalski.



Kay Schofield, a 52-year-resident of Georgetown (second from left), was recently awarded a Shop Local bag while she was shopping at Georgetown Market Place. The bag is presented through the Shop Local Campaign, a program embraced by local businesses that encourages area residents to shop in Halton Hills for all their goods and services. On hand for the presentation of the bag full of merchandise and gift certificates from area businesses were, from left, Shop Local committee members Georgetown Market Place manager Herminia Henderson, Josey Bonnette of Acton BIA, and Mayor Rick Bonnette.

Photo by Ted Brown



A stonemasons' labour of love: Glen memorial gets a cross



Glen Williams stonemasons Gerry (far left) and Ryan Inglis recently installed a stone cross on the Glen Williams war memorial located at Confederation and Main Streets (centre). The cross, which weighs around 200 lbs., was handcut by the pair from free-stone at the Inglis farm on 10th Line (far left). The structure for the Glen memorial was also designed, cut and erected by Gerry Inglis in 1971 and has served as the gathering place for Remembrance Day services for locals ever since. The addition of the cross now gives the memorial more stature at the increasingly busy main intersection of Glen Williams.

Photos by Tony Taylor

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