

Mayor turns children's author

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

A children's book started by Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette back when he was a student at Robert Little Public School is being launched next month with his proceeds going to the Georgetown District Hospital Foundation.

The Incredible Adventures of Goon Sharoon is a children's eBook written by Bonnette about a gentle giant's exciting adventures and how he created many of Earth's natural wonders and geographical features.

Everyone is invited to come out to the launch of the eBook Tuesday, Nov. 9 at The Club at North Halton, 363 Maple Ave. W. An open house will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., with a presentation at 7:30 p.m. The evening will include guest speakers, readings from the eBook, refreshments and the unveiling of the main character "Goon Sharoon".

Copies of the eBook can be purchased there, or at www.eBookGuides4Life.com on or after Nov. 9.

Bonnette created the character and wrote the story as a Grade 6 assignment.

"My mother kept the story and she used to tease me about it," said Bonnette.

She gave him back the assignment 20 years ago and in 1997 Bonnette revised it and added some more chapters.

He thought it was pretty good, and reviews from local kids whose parents read it to them were glowing so he tried to get it published, but wasn't successful then.

"My bubble burst very quickly," said the mayor.

So he put the book on the back burner until he attended an opening for local business eBookGuides4Life.com and met ePublishers Christine Maiorano and Lori King who were excited to publish the book.

"It's something I've always wanted to do," said Bonnette, who decided he wanted the book to be a fundraiser for the hospital. He said the threat of the closure of the obstetrics department at the hospital

was the first major hurdle he had to deal with as a newly-elected mayor.

"The hospital defined me politically," said Bonnette.

Local illustrator Tamara Talbot did the illustrations for the book and Nancy Kovacs, another local resident is the book's editor.

"It's a real Halton Hills effort," said Bonnette.



RICK BONNETTE

The first two chapters are the actual story Bonnette handed in back in Grade 6. Along with additional chapters, a rabbit has been added to the book. A rabbit is Bonnette's trademark.

"He plays some really cute roles in it," said the mayor. Halton Hills is mentioned in the book, he added.

Goon Sharoon is the hero in the story and takes "this incredible journey around the world."

The colourful eBook is perfect for school-aged children because it meshes a fun tale with knowledge of places all around the world. The main character is charming, never scary, has an appetite for cherry pies and is a little daft when it comes to using his brains.

Bonnette dedicated the book to his mother Madeleine, who died last year.

"We are thrilled that Mayor Bonnette has chosen to ePublish this terrific children's eBook as a fundraising opportunity for Georgetown Hospital," said Hospital Foundation Chair Laurent Thibault. "We are lucky to have such an exceptional hospital in our own backyard and community support like this is what keeps the hospital strong."

The Georgetown Hospital Foundation is currently raising money to purchase a Critical Care ventilator, blood gas analyzer a glidescope for difficult intubations and other equipment for its surgical program, in-patient care and diagnostic imaging.

"I don't know how many books were going to sell, but for very little cost a lot can go towards our hospital and our kids can have a learning experience as well as some fun," said Bonnette.



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