

GRAPEVINE



Arts at Knox

Local dancers, singers, storytellers and artists will be showcased at a benefit concert for the "Artist Assistance Fund" at Knox Presbyterian Church on January 14. The fund helps Acton area students fulfill their artistic dreams, in any of the arts.

The featured artist will be Darelle London, who is classically trained in voice and piano, and the bill includes the Acton High School Jazz Band, singer Courtney McIsaac, Irish dancers Rylea and Olivia Wilson, and more. Local artists will display their work during the intermission. A freewill offering will be gratefully accepted. For details call Knox at 519-853-2360.

Library lures

Get an eReader, Playbook or laptop for Christmas, but you're timid of the new technology? The free Technology Made Simple program offered at the Acton library branch may be of help. The focus at the Friday, January 13 session is downloading eBooks, including a mini-presentation. Experienced tutors will be available to help you try out some of the new devices. The tech help is offered from 2 to 4 p.m., on a drop-in, no registration basis.

Some spaces are still available in the free, 30-minute drop-in story time sessions offered on Wednesdays at the Acton Hub at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School from January 11 to February 29, at 2 p.m. Call 519-853-0301 or visit www.hhpl.on.ca for details.

Dutiful donors

Forty-two units of blood were collected from the 48 people who attended the Canadian Blood Services clinic at the Acton arena on Monday. Clinic officials said the holiday clinic

was "slow." The next clinic is February 9, at the Acton Legion. Call 1-888-236-6283.

Essential computer training

Need to sharpen your employment skills? Literacy North Halton's Adult learning centre can help with free sessions of essential computer skills for the workplace being offered in Acton. While there is a small registration fee, tuition is free.

The Adult Learning Centre needs volunteer tutors for both daytime and evening adult classes for reading, comprehension, writing, math or basic computer skills. Call 905-873-2200 or visit www.literacynh.org for details.

Building sale means moves

Acton's hearing instrument specialists, ActivEars, is looking for a new location after it lost its leased space at 19 Mill St. East when the owner/landlord Carla Snels sold the building in mid-December. ActivEars, with offices across south-western Ontario, opened in Acton approximately eight years, first in the Acton Medical Centre and then in the former Doll Emporium.

On Tuesday Snels, who bought the building in 1984, gutted it, and ran a doll business and studio there for 25 years, said it had been on the market for a couple of years until the right person came along.

The new owner, Acton chiropractor Dr. Dana Selby, who current operates Active Choice Rehabilitative Clinic at 38 Mill St. East, said she wanted to own a building for her business in the downtown core. Dr. Selby is also certified in Kinesiology and Acupuncture. She said renovations are underway at her new building, aiming for a February 1 opening.



SANTA SKATE: Old St. Nick was pretty nimble on his blades when he greeted guests at the Acton Skating Club's first Santa Skate on December 22. – Submitted photo

A cleaning frenzy

Before Christmas the house was clean. I cleaned cupboards and closets. I cleaned floors and almost anything that stood still for more than thirty seconds. The Christmas tree stood proud in the center of our front window and our home seemed to glow. It felt happy even with all that pre-Christmas mud and rain.

Then something happened. Christmas was over. The nicely wrapped presents under the tree were replaced with what seemed like mounds of clothes, toys, books and more. The glow from our home and the warmth that I felt a mere 24 hours prior when I stayed up until 2 or 3 in the morning wrapping and assembling after the children had gone to sleep was gone. I stood in the living room with the tree lights on, the outside Christmas lights shining in and all I could think of was I wanted to take the tree down and start cleaning.

A week later, I got up, sent the Dude off to work, grabbed my ensemble of cleaning apparatus, had one child entertaining them self and one instructed not to move from the couch and



By
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their toys while I attacked what was our beautiful and perfect Christmas tree.

Out came the Rubbermaid Christmas containers. Soon, the remaining presents that were left under the tree for 'effect' moved to their proper spots; closets, drawers and play areas. Then off of the tree came the parade of ornaments in colour order, followed by the lights again in proper order.

My bare forearms were attacked by needles so brittle I couldn't figure out how any were still left on the tree. Even more of a mystery was how a tree so dry could still have enough sap to aggravate any skin that wasn't poked by needles. Once again, I questioned why I love having a real tree so much when it causes my arms so much distress, putting it up, decorating it and then putting it all away.

The trail of brittle needles led right to the front door and out the steps to a resting spot where, I hope,

a good wind finds enough umph to roll it down the hill and into the forest for nature to recycle.

The need for clean that I felt on Christmas night was nothing to what I felt after the tree left us. Little J was saying bye-bye Christmas tree in a loving way and I was saying helllllooooo Mr. Clean. Four hours later, I had done what I did a month ago in preparation for the arrival of the tree. If it stood still; it got cleaned.

On a normal winter sunny day, I would start to analyze and notice what needed to be cleaned or what I had missed, yet this time as I looked around, I was feeling pretty good with what I had accomplished.

Then just as I was feeling pretty damn proud telling the Dude all about my day he inquired, "What about the closet at the top of the stairs...did you do that one too?" Whoosh – wind got knocked right out of my sail...hate that closet and hate cleaning it. It's that one that you just shove stuff in and hope the door stays shut. Guess tomorrow I am opening the doors.



TRACKS ON TRACKS: The snowy solitude of the rail line through Limehouse was marked by a passing train on Friday. – Frances Niblock photo