

EDITORIAL

with Frances Learment

Well-deserved honours

The Acton recipients of three of four top awards in the annual Chamber of Commerce Business Achievement Awards don't work hard and smart for the accolades – although Andrea Clark of Tanners Pub and Grill is looking forward to a new dress for when she accepts the Entrepreneur of the Year award at a March banquet.

They are award winners because of their innovative programs, smart marketing skills and respect for good customer service. Acton Home Hardware, co-owned by Val and Bill Manes, is the Business of the Year, Nancy LaRose, manager of the Acton Salvation Army Thrift Store is Employee of the Year, Andrea Clark at Tanners is Entrepreneur of the Year, and the Georgetown BIA earned the Green award.

Some might say that such annual awards are no more than small town boosterism, but they publicly recognize excellence and often the people and businesses that put customers first don't get the praise they deserve.

To all those who were nominated and all those who won, congratulations.

PAST PAGES

TEN YEARS AGO

- Acton's Amy Yeatman celebrated one year in business at Star light Café on Mill Street by winning the Entrepreneur of the Year award in the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce annual Business Achievement Awards.

- Armed with property tax forms, probing questions and major concerns, a growing number of Acton residents were expected to attend a grass roots public meeting on the latest property tax assessments, which for some, will mean whopping tax increases.

FIVE YEARS AGO

- Acton's Giant Tiger was named Business of the Year in the annual Chamber of Commerce achievement awards. Located in the former IGA plaza since 2003, the multi-purpose department store is credited with help revitalize the downtown.

- With the unanimous support of Council, Halton Hills will join with other municipalities, businesses, organizations and individuals in Canada and around the world to participate in Earth Hour, turning off lights just for one hour to show action on climate change.



GLORIOUS SUNRISE: The multi-layered sky looking from Elizabeth Drive to Knox Church held great promise of a beautiful day last weekend. – Submitted photo

All art should be seen

There seems to be a small pot brewing in Georgetown over the new art gallery at the renovated Halton Hills Library (Georgetown Branch) and Cultural Centre.

If you missed the big announcement in December, a long-time resident by the name of Frederick Helson donated a very impressive and valuable collection to the gallery. He started collecting Canadian and non-Canadian art in the 60's. His reason for his donation was beautifully unselfish... "Well... I would really like to see people enjoy them as much as I have over the years!" Mr. Helson said. In return for his generous donation the gallery has been renamed the Helson Gallery and justly so.

His collection is expected to draw many new visitors to the area as the works include the acclaimed Canadian icon AY Jackson and many more. It is an amazing gift worth over \$800,000. The Town is very lucky to have been given it and at such a perfect time to be able to be viewed in a newly renovated center at no cost to visitors. It seemed perfect.

Now enters the controversy. For years, local artists have been able to display their works in



By
Angela Tyler

the old gallery. They had photo competitions on display there and several other events every year along with local artists. The local artists are now saying they are being shoved out of the gallery into other areas or onto moveable displays. They are saying town staff informed them during a recent meeting that the gallery was no longer for their use. However, our Mayor has stated "...Council is aware of the concern for local art display space and has directed staff to continue working with the user groups to find a solution that is mutually acceptable. The possibility of access to the Helson Gallery will be more fully explored and your continued involvement is encouraged."

Oh boy... what a mess.

For what it's worth, as they say, here's what I think. The collection is an amazing gift and it could definitely increase visitors to the centre and our community. I can see how a collection of this magnitude and fame could warrant a segregated area for people to view it. However, the really important thing to re-

member is that maybe if one of these artists didn't have a public place to display their works for people to view freely when they were starting out, such as AY Jackson, maybe they wouldn't be such important artists now. Every artist starts out as an unknown and I'm sure would love to be known or have their works known and valued by many. Can't we all just get along and not have local artists segregated? Can't the Helson Gallery be known for famous works and encouraging local artists as well? I hope so.

However, if it doesn't materialize, we can still support local artists in our own way. Did you know that in Acton one of the salons displays at least two local artist's paintings and information on purchasing them? How cool and smart is that? The artist has a captive audience while you are sitting there getting your hair done. Even this past weekend when we were out for dinner, the Dude bought another local artist's painting spontaneously and we love it.

I hope we all have the opportunity to visit the new Helson Gallery and view all works of arts – famous and non-famous – however, either way we can still support local artists.



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