

Acton High School meeting warns senior students of study hours ahead

By JANET BAINE

OAC students and their parents had a little "reality therapy" at the beginning of their final year at Acton High School.

This is the first year that AHS has a special evening meeting, at which Principal Ozzie Caldarelli told them that OAC is more work than Grade 12. He read parts of the Ministry of Education guidelines which stress that OAC courses (Ontario Academic Credits, which have replaced Grade 13 credits) are preparation for university; they are "rigorous" and "involve the student in in-depth study."

While some students and parents became a little frightened and worried by these words, Caldarelli said students who completed Grade 12 courses won't have any difficulty, providing they keep up with their work and put in additional study time, which they may not have needed to complete Grade 12.

"The top and middle group do fine, and will always do fine. It's students at the lower end which we sense would benefit from the meeting," he said.

Part-time jobs can also interfere with school work, Caldarelli said. He told parents and students it's fine for OAC students to work up to 15 or 17 hours each week. But if they are working more than that or spending a lot of time at their jobs during the week, then it begins to interfere with their schoolwork.

Each OAC course involves doing an independent study project, which may be an essay or a science experiment, but it always involves research in the library, Caldarelli said. Teachers of OAC courses had displays set up around the room on these projects, including examples and the schedule for completing work.

"We've never done anything like this before," Caldarelli said. The turn-out was good, with about 60 per cent of the students and 80 to 90 per cent of them with their parents, he estimated.

"It sets up a contract between the school, the home and the student," he said. "When the parent takes an interest, the student's results are better."

Lot's more to study

Caldarelli held the meeting because of a calculus student who had to drop the course last year. "I guess you really did mean it when you said I would have to put in an extra hour a day studying in addition to the class time," she told her teacher.

When he spoke to each teacher at the end of last year, they all said many OAC students had problems completing the extra work involved in OAC classes.

"Some students don't have a realistic view of what we expect of them," Caldarelli said. Teachers attended the meeting with displays about their courses.

Some students have been affected by the dearth of jobs and economic uncertainty in Canada's future, Caldarelli said. The result is that some students who don't really want to be in school stay to put in time.

On September 12, OAC students spent a day at Rockmosa Community Centre in four "success" workshops: time management, in-

dependent study, notetaking and different types of writing. On Oct. 16, students will spend the day at the University of Guelph library, learning how to find information and use those facilities.

Help for freshmans

Caldarelli said the school is already helping Grade 9 students make the adjustment to high school, and he decided to help students in their last year of high school as well.

The day before school started, Grade 9 students and their parents were invited to the school, shown around and sent to classes on the student's timetable. Each teacher greeted them in the classroom, and spoke briefly about the course.

"The first day of high school can be traumatic for some kids," Caldarelli said. It really helps them to know their way around the school and to have met the teachers the day before school starts.

Caldarelli said both programs were a success, and will be continued.



Food bank volunteer Judy Grinberg and daughter Lindsay took their turn accepting food donations from customers at Loblaws for the Love in Christ Food Bank, last Wednesday through Friday, during store hours. A draw of five gift certificates of \$50 each, redeemable at Loblaws were given away to those who filled out ballots after donating to the Food Bank. TED BROWN Halton Hills Weekend

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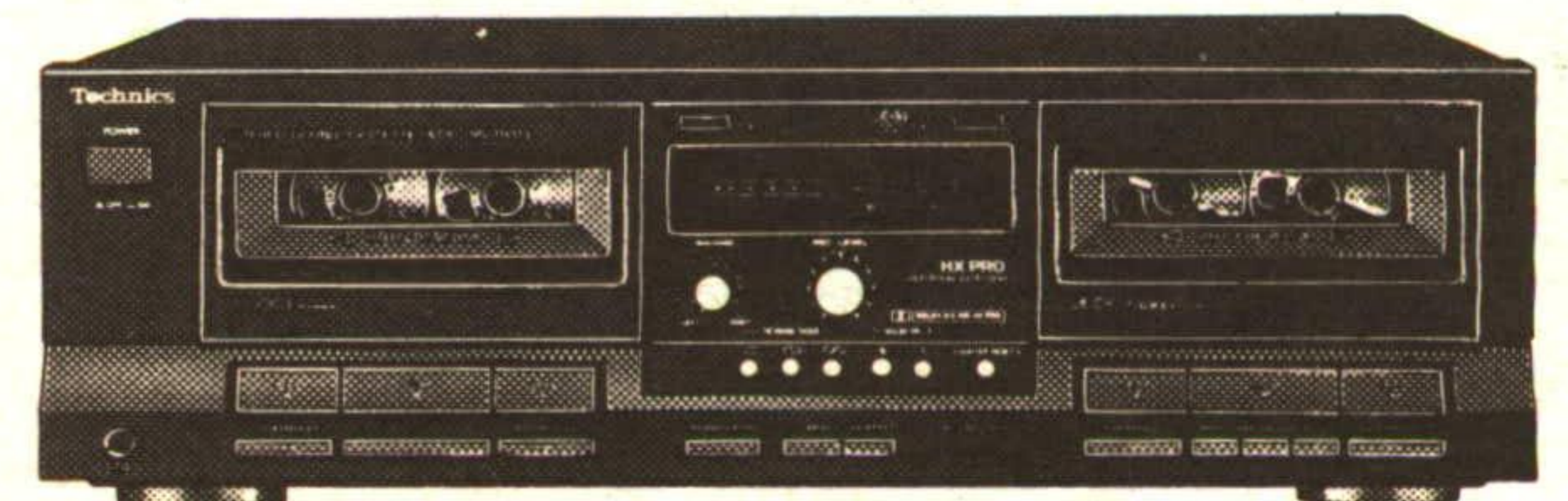
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The Rotarians are holding their famous, and very popular, 36th annual Senior Citizen's Dinner at Holy Cross Church in Georgetown on October 28 at 6:30 p.m.

Those who do not receive an invitation or if you know of someone who is of age please send name and address: c/o Royal Bank, 83 Main St., Georgetown L7G 3E5 or c/o The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, 82 Main St., Georgetown, L7G 3E4 to ensure you receive an invitation and get on the Rotarian mailing list.

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