

# Disbelief, then joy as Jordan Lenz crowned Acton Fall Fair Ambassador

When Jordan Lenz heard her name called as the new Miss Acton, she wondered, who was Jordan Lenz? Then, faced with a cheering crowd and flashing cameras, it sunk in that she was the new Acton Fall Fair Ambassador.

"I'm so honoured to be in this position, but at first I think it was kind of a bit of a shock – I looked down the line (of fellow contestants) and wondered who Jordan was, to be honest, then I realized it was me," Lenz said early Sunday morning as she officiated at the opening of annual Terry Fox Run at Acton High School.

The Fair weekend has been a whirlwind of activities, pictures, interviews and Fair fun since the 50th annual Miss Acton pageant on Friday night that saw Lenz crowned Miss Acton. Rebecca Nelles was named first runner-up, and Amanda Van Helden named second runner-up.

The Miss Acton court was chosen by a panel of four judges following pre-interviews, appearances on stage, and impromptu ques-

tions in front of a large crowd of family, friends and supporters, and approximately 25 former Miss Acton pageant contestants on hand to help mark the 50th anniversary of the pageant, now an Acton Fall Fair staple.

Lenz, a 16-year-old, Grade 12 French Immersion student at Acton District High School who also works at McDonald's, lives in Acton with her family which includes a younger brother and sister. For the past 11 years Lenz has competed in jazz, acrobatics, and tap with the Centre Stage School for the Arts, and also plays soccer, rugby and volleyball and is a member of the school's mentoring LINK Crew for four years, has played with the school band for three years, and just discovered a new passion with photography.

In her prepared speech, Lenz said her agricultural education began at the Acton Fall Fair with Education Day 13 years ago, and has continued over the years as the Fair weekend became the social



event of the year, and a chance to learn where the food we eat comes from. She said the Fair's traditions – the competitions, the parade and exhibits – will continue to grow over the next 100 years and be a "place to gather and to celebrate our accomplishments."

In the impromptu question section, Lenz was asked to name the best part of the Fair. She said, "Personally, being a photographer, I adore watching all the

photography contests and analyzing everyone else's photos, because every photographer has a different style and I love learning from that."

Lenz was also judged most friendly by her fellow competitors who chose her as the recipient of the (former Miss Acton) Margaret Hall Memorial Congeniality Award, presented by Laura Evans, Margaret Hall's niece.

First runner-up Nelles, 20, is a second year student at the University of

Toronto studying political science and English. Nelles recently retired from a 12-year figure skating career as an ice dancer, and now looks to Western horseback riding, snowboarding and old car restoration for fun.

In her prepared speech, Nelles touched on this year's Fair anniversary theme of: "From Rural Roots New Branches – Maple Trees" noting her family put down roots in Acton in 1929, and that she is the new branch – the fifth generation of her family to live on Mill Street West. Her grandfather, Bill Nelles, was Fair Board President in 1970/71, and was named a Life Member in 1986.

Second runner-up Amanda Van Helden, 18, is a graduate of pre-health sciences at Flemming College, who works at White Rock Ostrich Farm and worked at Trendz Hair Salon for the past four years. Van Helden volunteers with Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and enjoys performing a wide range of musical instruments at local venues. She hopes to

merge her interests in hair and music and one day own a salon.

In her prepared speech Van Helden, an Acton native, recalled getting up-close-and-personal with a Llama at the Fall Fair, making lifelong friends and living in a small, tight-knit town that helped, with its sense of unity and loyalty, to mold her character.

The other Miss Acton contestants included Jessica Bartles, Sarah Cunningham, Karoline Fontanna, Ashley Gerrard and Brianna Parker.

As she handed over her sash, robe and tiara, retiring Miss Acton Kailey Donaldson said representing the Acton Agriculture Society during the past year had been an honour. "I met incredible people who provided me with some of the best memories of my life... I made connections and friendships that will help me in the future..." Donaldson said, urging the new Miss Acton to "enjoy the fantastic ride... take lots of pictures, introduce herself to as many people as possible..."



**PAST MISS ACTONS:** The first Miss Acton 1963 Linda Ferguson Wilson (back left) joined past recipients of the Acton Agricultural Society honour at a reception marking the 50th anniversary of the pageant before the opening ceremonies of the 100th edition of the Fair on Friday at the Dufferin Rural Heritage Centre. – George Henderson photo



**FIVE FINALISTS:** From a robust field of nine, the five Miss Acton finalists were, from left: Karoline Fontanna, first runner-up Rebecca Nelles, Miss Acton Jordan Lenz, second runner-up Amanda Van Helden and Jessica Parker. – Frances Learment photo