

GRAPEVINE



No Screamefest

If rural Nassagaweya was your spot for Hallowe'en thrills, you'll have to find a new spot to get scared this year because the annual Screamefest at White Rock Ostrich Farm has been "gently retired" by White Rock owners Deborah and Don Simmonds, and After Dark Productions.

For 12 years, After Dark transformed parts of White Rock into a Hallowe'en haunt that drew approximately 2,000 people each season for spooky, ghoulish and downright scary fun – those with bad hearts were cautioned and under-eight's weren't allowed – on weekends leading to October 31.

Hallowe'en will be much less hectic this year for White Rock owner Deborah Simmonds who said Screamefest did what was intended, raising awareness of their ostrich farm, which produces meat and oil for a growing market and hides for tanning.

Street treats

Acton merchants are stocking up on treats to hand out to the hoards of costumed kids who are invited to expected to the Acton BIA's Trick or Treat on Main and Mill Street event on Saturday, October 29 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Ghoulish fundraiser

A former Acton Angel – a defunct group of local women who participated in the Princess Margaret Walk Against Breast Cancer – is hosting a Hallowe'en dance and charity auction on October 29, at the Acton Legion, to raise money for CASHh (Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills).

Cindy Gardener has high praise for CASHh, which helped her family numerous times as her husband, Trevor, battled tongue cancer. "CASHh is so much more than just rides (to appointments)," Gardener said, adding CASHh recently provided an iPad for her husband as he regains his speech following treatment.

Last year, the dance and silent auction raised \$5,145 for CASHh, and Gardener is confident with help from her friends, including Brenda Eagle, they'll top that this year. Call Cindy at 519-853-2671 for tickets, which are also available at Blue Springs Spa, Acton Auto Tech and Roxy Café.

Vendors wanted

One of the best pre-Christmas craft shows is inviting vendors. The school council at Acton High School will stage the

16th annual juried craft show on Saturday, November 12, featuring a wide range of hand-crafted unique giftware, art and holiday treats.

New vendors must submit a detailed description and photos of their work, which must be hand-made, in a successful bid to avoid being a flea market. For information call the school at 519-853-2920, or visit www.actonhighschool.ca

Want to get a photo with Santa? He'll be at the craft show, along with a new children's craft table.

Youth needs

Anyone with an interest in youth is invited to a public open house in Acton on November 2 to comment on, or question, results of a Youth Needs Study conducted by the Town as it plans for the future. For the past year the Town has gathering comments and now the public can weigh in on the findings. The Acton meeting is at Acton High School from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The Georgetown meeting is the next night at the Civic Centre. Transportation is available. Call 905-873-2601 ext.2276, or contact youth@haltonhills.ca

One by one

As of Monday, October 31, there will be seven-billion people on Earth. Experts predict the world population will be eight-billion by 2025 and 10-billion by 2083, depending on birth control, infant death rates and average life expectancy – now 69 years.

The global population was one-billion in 1804, but it took a century to hit two-billion, then three-billion in 1959, four-billion in 1974, five-billion in 1987, six-billion in 1998.

Teacher Awards

Nominations are being accepted for the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence – awards which are Canada's way to recognize the best teachers, to promote what they have achieved and share their innovation and successful teaching practices. In past years, several Acton educators have been recipients of the awards including Acton High instructors, the late "Doc" Paul Tamblyn (1993) and Norbert Axtmann (1995).

The guidelines and nomination forms have been sent to schools across Canada and are also available at www.pma.gc.ca or by calling 1-613-946-0651. The deadline for nominations is November 30.



THANKFUL DINNER: Guests at Saturday's "How Thankful are You Dinner" hosted by the Mission and Outreach Committee at Acton's Knox Presbyterian Church, raised \$815 for East African Famine Relief. With support of the Knox congregation, the Committee pays the salary of three teachers, tuition for two high school students and supplies food for the Mercy Children's Centre in Kenya. – George Henderson photo

Author/ Teachers/ Mentors

A month or so ago, I was excited to read that author and former Actonian Judy Fong Bates was coming to our new Acton library to read from two of her books.

We have had several bits and pieces in the paper about this author and her book *Midnight at the Dragon Café*. The first time I heard about the book, I wasted no time in purchasing it and soon was drawn to each page as it pulled me into her story that is "loosely" based on her time growing up in Acton.

The book was mesmerising. After reading it one time, I found myself re-reading it several times, each time noticing some bit of extra detail or a family name or a reference to something that I was sure was about our town, not just a creation with some influence from her childhood. I felt as I read it that each word was precisely picked as the story-teller, Annie, wove such a tale that made me feel like I was living her world. The book truly is wonderful.

I went to the library and got tickets for three of us to hear Fong Bates speak, and that night, I was thrilled to be attending. The event actually took place outside in the



By
Angela Tyler

new rock garden area of the library. The area has been nicely integrated with the existing gardens, yet for all the time I have driven by I never thought about the area being utilized for an author reading event.

Under the stars and the lights of the bridge and streets around the library, a crowd gathered to hear the author read passages from her books. Each word was read as precisely as it was written. Fong Bates may have re-affirmed that Irvine, the small town in her book, was not Acton, but I felt as if Annie, the narrator, was Fong Bates and Irvine was Acton.

What I also found interesting was that this woman, so elegant in prose, was also a teacher for over twenty years. How appropriate that the author reading event took place on World Teachers' Day.

Last week, I was reading our paper and the article about the event. As I flipped through the rest of the paper I found myself glan-

cing over the classifieds, and like a lot of people, I read the births, deaths and memorials first.

My eyes were immediately drawn to the lone memorial. It was a remembrance of a lady who had passed away twenty years ago. The lady was one of my English teachers from high school. I felt as sad reading the memorial as I did the day I heard she had passed away. I couldn't believe it had been twenty years.

I had a vision in my memory of her standing at the front of our class with her kind appearance. Everyone has a teacher that leaves an impression more than others and she was mine. I always remember her saying "If you only remember one thing from this class, remember this. It is never 'due to'. It is 'as a result, therefore, however, or yet...'" and she went on to give probably a dozen more examples of words to use instead of 'due to'. Oddly enough that is the one thing I remember being taught in that particular class.

I have this feeling when Fong Bates was teaching she was one of those teachers that left a lasting impression on many students.

Letters



To the Editor,

RE: Angela's Roz Weston Column

I'm very surprised and disappointed in Angela Tyler's mean spirited and petty attitude toward something as fun as Roz Weston getting a street in Acton named after him. The whole thing had such a sense of fun about it, and the humour involved in it being a lane, where to the best of my knowledge, there is little more than

a dumpster, is delightful.

I know Angela loves her town, and loves to see it promoted. There was some great publicity around this whole campaign. On the Fall Fair weekend, the radio station did a live program from Roz Weston Lane, and that brought people to town. Many of these people probably stopped for a coffee and something to eat. I don't doubt that some of them went to the Fall Fair, to check

out the best little fair in Ontario.

Maybe some people stopped at our local businesses and spent money there. Lighten up Angela, and see this for what it is: a great promotion for a great little town. Surely you must be proud of our lovely little part of Halton Hills, and the exposure it has gotten, and still continues to receive.

Sincerely,
H. MacCormack