

# EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

## Message is not getting through

It must be incredible frustrating for police, who in many areas, continue to find that many drivers have been drinking. While Halton police don't have any holiday R.I.D.E (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) program stats yet, the OPP in neighbouring Wellington laid five drinking-related charges in the past five days.

Each driver faces a mandatory 90-day licence suspension, as well as a seven-day impoundment of their vehicle. The drivers also now face court dates, insurance hassles, financial issues and embarrassment (hopefully.)

While Halton police are vigilant about getting impaired drivers off the road year round, the District One (Acton, Georgetown and Milton) R.I.D.E program gets underway today (Thursday) with extra attention to both back roads and major roads.

Last year, Halton police stopped more vehicles (31,905) and administered 279 roadside tests leading to 40 charges of impaired across the Region. In District One (Acton, Georgetown and Milton) 12 people were charged with impaired – up one from the previous year. As well, 12 90-day suspensions were issued.

It seems easy to avoid being one of those statistics – choose a sober designated driver, take public transit, a taxi or a friend – but don't get behind the wheel.



**LET THERE BE LIGHT:** Approximately 300 people enjoyed mild weather last Wednesday night for the second annual Light Up the Hills ceremony, which included a visit from Santa and the lighting of the Tree of Hope at Acton arena/community centre. – Submitted photo

## Riding the rails with Santa

The Dude and I have a little girl that is absolutely fascinated with choo-choo trains. She loves trains. She loves driving over train tracks, hearing the whistles throughout town or wherever our travels take us, and can't wait to see them. She has choo-choo train story books and a collection of toy trains. There are three important things in her little world and trains are one of them.



By **Angela Tyler**

fers two Saturdays, last week and this week, of a unique Christmas experience riding the rails.

As dusk approached, we headed out with my mom and sister in tow. I wasn't really sure what to expect but as long as it was a train ride I knew at least one kid would be happy. I was hoping we'd see some Christmas lights and the train, which is actually an old TTC car.

What we found was pretty cool. After we paid our admission we headed to the "Rockwood" Train Station where we were met by a volunteer playing Christmas carols on a tuba, while an antique wood stove burned heating the building and hot apple cider brewing atop of the stove. Instantly the Christmas spirit filled us. A bonus was the awesome homemade cookies. At 25 cents a cookie, I wished I had bought all of them, they were so good and a real bargain.

This past summer, the Dude's folks took her to the Halton County Radial Railway. It was a great outing for her and she loved it so much, she still talks about it at least once a week. Out of the blue she will recall her trip and proclaim, "Gramma and Pa... choo-choo train!" Following that she will do her 'ductor' impression and holler out "alllll aboard!" I've drove by the museum on the Guelph Line probably a few hundred times but never paid much attention to it until her visit. It is one of those attractions that you know we have in the area, but until you have a need to go, might never experience it.

This past weekend, I decided it would be a good time to go again with both kids. The museum of-

car, the conductors were dressed in period uniforms. The car was beautiful with its wood interior glistening with the lights. One of the conductors explained the museum is run entirely by volunteers, and some are men that never grew up from being boys who loved trains and streetcars. Before we left, one of the 'boys' had my mom wearing his conductor hat to the delight of Little J.

Soon, we were riding into the backwoods of the area. The volunteers handed out carol song books and in no time a streetcar full of strangers of all ages from baby to grandparents were singing the songs.

At the end of the line before we turned around to head back the station, there was an area decorated with Christmas lights and decorations. Then before we knew it, Santa Claus himself boarded the streetcar for the ride back. It was the perfect ending to the outing.

If you're looking for something family oriented to do on Saturday, it's a great outing with lots to see and do. It has to be pretty good or Santa wouldn't be there when it's so busy at the North Pole right now.



## Looking Back

### Ten Years Ago

- Rural Acton Special Olympic athlete Emily Boycott was chosen to attend the Annual Sports Celebrities Festival Day in Toronto.
- Fiscal responsibilities, not pretty flowers, ruled the day as Town Council trimmed one-third of a proposed \$75,000 allocation to a Town beautification fund.
- Forty-nine girl's hockey teams converged on Halton Hills, including the Acton arena, for the Twisters annual tournament.

### Five Years Ago

- With solemn anticipation, the 12th Halton Hills Council was sworn into office, including Acton's Rick Bonnette in the Mayor's chair.
- No word who the purchaser is, but the Acton Medical Centre was sold to a Georgetown businessman whose plans for the aging, inaccessible building were not released.
- Mounting traffic safety concerns from residents in the Churchill Road North area prompted a public meeting where Town staff outlined speed profile tests and traffic counts.

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