

GRAPEVINE

STUDENTS PERFORM AT MUSICFEST

Acton District High School's concert and jazz bands performed at the Golden Horseshoe Music Festival this past Tuesday, February 21.

FREE COMPUTER SKILLS TRAINING

Do you need basic computer skills at work or to find employment? The Adult Learning Centre has spaces available in their Acton Workplace Computer Training Course. Please call 905-873-2200 to register.

UP COMING PA DAY

Elementary and secondary students for both the Halton District School Board and the Catholic District School Board will have a PA Day on Friday, March 10.

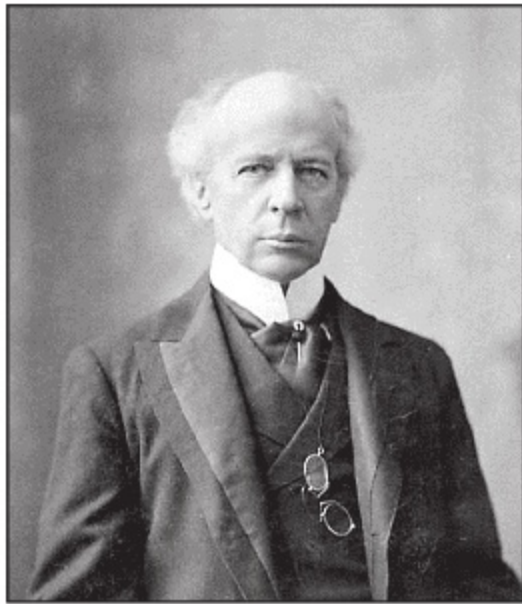
CANADA'S EIGHTH PRIME MINISTER

Liberal leader Sir Wilfrid Laurier was elected to Prime Minister 1896, and is Canada's eighth Prime Minister. In the role, Laurier oversaw tremendous change in Canada as a result of industrialization and immigration.

During his 13 years as Prime Minister, Laurier implemented a solution to the Manitoba Schools Question, which had played a large part in bringing down his predecessor's (Charles Tupper) government. He oversaw the Yukon Territory Act, and Saskatchewan and Alberta into confederation.

As a result of controversy regarding Laurier's support of a trade reciprocity with the United States, Laurier lost support and the Conservatives won the election called by Laurier in 1911.

Laurier continued to lead the opposition during World War I, strongly opposing conscription. Laurier died in 1919 at the age of 77 of stroke.



Sir Wilfrid Laurier

Source: National Archives of Canada, C-001971

The New Tanner welcomes your LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, but, please keep in mind that letters must include the author's name, address and phone number in order for us to contact you if needed. Letters that are sent in anonymously will not be published. They may be edited for content or length. They are published as a first come first serve basis and we do not guarantee publication due to space availability.

LETTERS

The views expressed in these published letters are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The New Tanner Publishing Ltd.



Meeting the needs of youth

To the Editor:

There have been many comments posted in both traditional and new media about the closing of youth centres in the communities of Acton and Georgetown. I can certainly appreciate the concern that has arisen with this announcement.

However, I want to provide some reassurance that the Town, while not in the business of delivering social services, is absolutely in the business of taking care of our community and that means meeting the needs of our young people. The Town always had a plan to work with the Region of Halton and other youth service provid-

ers to determine the best way to continue to deliver services—just in a different way than the community might be used to. It may not always seem like it, but progress is being made. Given the decision of Links2Care to close the youth centres, there will have to be some short-term as well as long-term plans. I would ask for the community's patience as the Town works through the numerous considerations and partner discussions. It's a process but we are all on the same side.

The expanded recreational drop-in programs are early, initial offerings intended to complement, not replace the current system. It's a start

and staff are continuing the process of developing a long-term, sustainable solution so that youth (as well as parents and supports) in our community don't have to endure future times of stress and uncertainty.

I encourage people to share their thoughts via email to youth@haltonhills.ca. All input will be shared with the 'Youth Services Network'—a consortium led jointly by the Region and the Town that also includes representatives from Links2Care and other local youth service providers all working towards a better future for our youth.

Sincerely,
Mayor Rick Bonnette

JUST A THOUGHT

The cost of fundraising

We catch each other doing it: eyes peering eerily from behind curtains as we answer an unsolicited doorbell; hearts sinking with the ring of the telemarketer's call; brave smiles between gritted teeth as friends ask us to support little Suzy's dance group... again! It's everywhere: schools, arenas, hospitals, grocery stores, parks, even the mail: everyone, everywhere seems to be asking for your help. Fundraising has become the dreaded monster of our everyday lives: quietly lurking in shadows, playing on our emotions and cleaning out our wallets. According to Stats Canada, from 2004-2013 over 80 per cent of Canadians donated \$12.8 billion to charities and non-profit groups. From the surface, we look like heroes, but over 41 per cent of all that money actually went only to religious organizations. If, as John D. Rockefeller said, "charity is injurious unless it helps the recipient to become independent of it," then one wonders, why we devoted only 14.7 per cent to areas like law, advocacy, politics, social services, development and housing where we could actually end the cycle of need?

Today's youth, the biggest agents of the robust pyramid scheme, sell everything from



By
Trish Bell

wrapping paper and kitchen gadgets, to books, cookies and chickens in an effort to obtain the items teams want and schools need in the '21st century classroom.' But, we already fund these schools; in Ontario, the annual budget for public schools is over \$25 billion. So, why are our children being sent home with glossy flyers and promises of prizes for selling items we likely neither want nor need in the pursuit of funding quality education? No wonder our children struggle with math skills: things don't add up here. This disparity exists in large scale too, with the OPG bragging about financially supporting things like the Scientists in School program for the last 14 years, while hydro bills see many forced to choose between groceries and heat. Even kids know that looks bad. What's worse, this type of constant fundraising scheme has our kids living in an "ask and get" mentality: 'I want to play rep hockey so everyone I know helps me pay for it.' Gone are the days of the lemonade stand where

kids had to earn the money they needed, and with it the respect and responsibility of youth learning to be citizens. Even Girl Guide cookies, the quintessential fundraiser, has become a business, not a rite of passage, with parents told they have to sell cases instead of little girls learning hands-on about money and hard work, proud of even one box sold. What's worse, more and more of us aren't giving the most precious commodity of all—time. Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boy Scouts, The Legion, and The Cancer Society are just some of the groups that have had to reinvent themselves and their programs in an attempt to get more people to volunteer their time instead of just their money. With endless lawsuits in the news and people working longer hours, people seem to be less connected to each other and are now content to let giving money clear their consciousness. However, money alone can not support all that is needed to make a community whole. Jack London said, "a bone to the dog is not charity. Charity is the bone shared with the dog when you are just as hungry as the dog." We should all remember that fundraising, like many monsters, may leave a nasty path of destruction in its wake.