

GRAPEVINE

BIKE IT TO LEATHERTOWN

Two group rides are set for Bike it to Leathertown Festival on Sunday, August 13 including a tour of Acton's heritage neighbourhood. The family-friendly tour is suitable for any level of cycling ability. However, more experienced riders can opt for the 50km run that will travel through rural Halton Hills and parts of Milton.

Both rides are free and will be staged from the Acton Go Station parking lot. After the ride, participants can leave their bikes at a free valet parking area while enjoying the tastes and sounds of the festival.

For more information and to preregister, visit www.haltonhills.ca/CyclingEvents

ACTON COOLING CENTRES

With temperatures in the high 20's this week, but feeling more like 30 degrees, the Town provides cooling stations for residents to find relief from the heat. During heat alerts, both the Acton Arena and Community Centre at 415 Queen Street and the Halton Hills Public Library, Acton Branch at 17 River Street are open to the public to cool off inside during regular business hours.

For more information, visit www.haltonhills.ca/CoolingCentres/index.php

ROAD CLOSURES FOR PROPOSED PLAZA

Though it's been quiet since the buildings were demolished in March, things are picking up again at the proposed plaza site around the Esso station on Highway 7 in Rockwood. Vesterra Group president Robert Eilers said the partial closure on the north side of Highway 7 between Inkerman and Fall Street this week was done to allow for a geo-technical in-

vestigation to make way for highway expansion into the new development. Soil samples will be removed in order to finalize detailed engineering of highway improvements. Weather permitting, the work is expected to take three days, with both signalization and crew directing traffic along the one open lane, and only during the daytime. The proposed future plaza will feature a 30,000 sq.ft. grocery store, a two-story professional building, restaurant or a bank, the occupants of which are all yet-to-be-determined.

ACTON VETERINARY CLINIC UPDATE

Dr. Hess of the Acton Veterinary Clinic, who purchased the old medical centre at the corner of Mill Street and Frederick Street North, explained that while the purchase of the property will close later this month, the clinic will not be moving to the new location until spring next year.

RABIES VACCINE BAIT DROP

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is issuing vaccine bait by air and by hand to address the fox and raccoon strain of rabies. The vaccine contained in the bait packets is labelled and is not harmful to people or pets however it is recommended that anyone coming in contact with them should see a doctor or veterinarian. The aerial drop was conducted this week, primarily in areas south and west of Halton Hills.

"This is a provincial program to support the overall goal of eradicating rabies," said Mayor Bonnette. "While it's unlikely that people will come across a vaccine packet, I do ask that these be left in place for the wildlife to consume."

For more information, visit rabies@ontario.ca or call 1-888-574-6656 to learn more.



HISTORY DAY: For the past few months, Margaret Aitken has been working on completing the Tweedsmuir Histories about Greenock School, community and the Women's Institute. These books will be sent to the Wellington County Museum Archives when complete. Former students, neighbours and members of the Greenock Women's Institute recently visited the home of Wayne and Margaret Aitken, to view the books and reminisce. Many of the original families were represented during the gathering. A time capsule will be filled in memory of the occasion. Pictured above is the Greenock Reunion in 1935. - Submitted photo

JUST A THOUGHT

Workin' for the man

While out this summer, you've likely noticed little towns, much like our own, struggling to find businesses to fill their once bustling downtowns. Empty storefronts and abandoned business spaces are one physical reminder of the over 82,000 small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) that ended in 2013 alone. Once the hub of activity, these main street addresses seem now reminiscent of a CSI crime scene: businesses—and dreams—that have died. And while some of these little businesses have succumbed to natural causes—an industry winding down, a demographic shift, owners ready to retire—far too many have been sabotaged into demise.

Now, I know what you are thinking: sabotage, really? But allow me to shine some light on the plights of the small business owner. First, while contrary to mainstream thinking, the vast majority of business owners do not have tons of money. In fact, more than half seek outside financing and most will not receive it due to insufficient collateral or credit history, leaving 80 per cent of truly committed souls to finance their endeavours by sinking all of their own money into the project. And since, regardless of how much they may have paid into the EI program over the years, small business owners become ineligible for unemployment insurance, and don't have benefits or pension plans, so to say it is a gamble seems a bit of an understatement. So, where does all that capital go? Well, there is rent or lease payments, plus lights, heat, security, equipment, products, materials, vehicles, employees, professional services, municipal taxes, government taxes, WSIB fees,



By
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and HST. My personal favourite is the entire HST scheme—for it can really be called nothing less. In essence, business owners spend countless hours essentially doing the government's work for them. For some, they actually have to hire someone just to do the reporting involved. However, the kicker to this ploy is that businesses are required to pay on what they bill, not what is collected. So, if you are a business that invoices three to four months before you see payment, you are still on the hook to pay the HST amount when you bill, before you actually receive payment. Should your customer neglect to pay, it is you, not the government that must swallow the lost HST fees. And the government wonders why the number of SMEs opening versus closing was less by over 4,800 in 2015?

As if the current system wasn't hurting small business enough, the Ontario plan to quickly up minimum wage by \$3.60 will not only hurt small businesses but it will hurt the very employees it is meant to help. For example, the deductions (CPP, EI, provincial and federal tax) that an employee pays for two weeks of fulltime pay at the current minimum wage is around \$127; come January, that figure will climb to \$183 and in 2019 it will sit around \$202. At first glance, that seems a slim, perhaps understandable, increase, but what you don't see is that the employee is actually paying more taxes. If the rate amounts were to stay the same as today—

which given the track record they are likely to rise—the minimum wage employee will jump from 14 per cent of their cheque going to taxes to about 17 per cent; in essence, instead of working 11 hours for the government, you'd work 13.5. And while each of your cheques might grow by \$200 bucks, the fact is you just worked more to fulfill a government tax raise. In addition, the increased payroll costs to the SME employer—you remember, those nice folks who put all their own money into their dream and contribute 30 per cent to the nation's GDP—might make it necessary to cut hours or slash positions, not to mention the difficult situations regarding pay structure if some in the company already earn \$15. Such people will not be pleased to be at the same, now minimum-wage rate as their counterparts. And before you think this won't affect you, think again. With small businesses representing about 98 per cent of all employer businesses, seven tenths of the entire Canadian workforce, excluding the public sector, it is quite likely that we will all see the trickle down effect where we shop, eat, work and live. Add the customer's incessant need for ever-cheaper prices and the global onslaught of online retailers, and it isn't surprising our downtown core is filled with empty storefronts. I do not envy our new BIA manager and her quest to fill these empty spaces. It seems an impossible job, considering the situation. However, with our support, those that choose to put themselves out there, to take a chance on their dreams and help build our nation might be able to make it. And doesn't such risk deserve a little help from friends?

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. Letters 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.