

Editorial

A sign of the times

When word came out earlier this week about the possible demise of the olde Hide House and its associate stores, through olde Hide House president Steve Dawkins, a collective tremor of anxiety rippled through not only Acton, but also Georgetown and the other hamlets which form the world (and at times the security blanket) we refer to as Halton Hills.

Steve Dawkins, president of the olde Hide House in Acton, is not the easiest guy in the world to get along with. He's opinionated, surly at times, and very-protective of his enterprises. He's also one of the most loyal - and supportive - businessmen the community of Halton Hills has ever had the pleasure to get to know and work with.

This reporter has talked with Mr. Dawkins on occasion, and it should be noted, he has also disagreed with my particular rendition - as it were - of certain events in our community which have appeared in my editorial forum.

We have also allowed Mr. Dawkins right of reply - as it should be - in our 'The People's Corner' space.

Be that as it may, it should also be pointed out that Mr. Dawkins is also one of the most fore-sighted and far-sighted and willing to take challenges entrepreneur this area has seen for quite some time - in the opinion of this writer.

So what if he's thin-skinned, so what also, if at times he suspiciously views media forays into his various businesses as unwarranted glop-trop. The fact remains, he rejuvenated Acton with his leather businesses and he also returned pride to a town that was hurting and quite possibly, felt hard done by.

As for our provincial and federal representatives who purportedly represent and support the best interests of our area, and who might have helped; let it be written, recorded and remembered, they were conspicuous by their absence when, for a change, they really were needed.

Halton North NDP MPP Noel Duignan apparently was too busy giving out provincial money to Milton, while Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner was more concerned about his personal political aspirations than what was actually coming down in his own constituency.

Both Turner and Duignan deserve condemnation for their lack of support in helping not only the olde Hide House and its associated stores survive, but also for turning a deaf ear - for whatever reason - on an issue which could decide Acton's future.

One hell of a pair of nerds they were, when we really needed them in Halton Hills.

This ink-stained wretch first put pen to paper in Halton Hills as a sports writer for The Herald way back in 1974.

Even then, I was able to sense and experience the special sense of community pride and togetherness that definitely made it worth the drive to Acton.

The Acton Rams lacrosse team, the Acton Sabres hockey team, minor hockey, minor lacrosse and a host of other community activities sponsored by local businesses and organized and kept going by people determined to make their community not just a place to live, but a place to love.

I've walked through the duck and geese crap at Prospect Park (and ignored same) while getting information on a story; I've thoroughly enjoyed taking pictures at the Acton Fall Fair in a downpour; I've sampled milk and cookies at the various watering holes and to top it off, I've even survived a level crossing accident in Acton (in 1975) when I was going to cover a story. Thanks in part to the help of several Acton residents, I'm still around to stir up the duck and geese crap.

I have special feelings for Acton, and I insist here that the Town of Halton Hills do all in its power to put the olde Hide House, and the jobs for Acton residents, up front on its council agenda.

Its obvious, no one else is going to help out.

Colin Gibson

The People's Corner

It's time for real change in Ottawa

To the Editor:

So our new Prime Minister promises to practice the "Politics of Inclusion" while not abandoning the memory of her former master, Brian Mulroney (the most reviled PM since the Second World War) and his warped agenda.

Let's see, who shall she include? Well, there's Mike Wilson, whose hand at the finance helm put an extra \$10,000 in debt on the head of every woman, man and child in Canada. Don't forget to include Perrin Beatty, who started our military big buck spending ideas with \$5 billion in nuclear-power bath tubs. (\$5 billion in copters, seems like a nice round number). And lets not ignore Marcel Masse, Gilles Loiselle, Ross Reid....the list goes on.

In fact, the politics of inclusion will mean little more than including those who supported Campbell's run at the crown.

Of the three leadership hopefuls who talked actual substance of policy at the Ottawa leadership convention, they garnered a mere

12% of the delegates support between them. Once again the Conservative Party has proven that "It's who you know, not what you know" that matters to them. Garth Turner, to his credit, has spent the last two months feverishly talking common sense reforms to our political system and a return to government fiscal responsibility. Yet none, not one of his ideas, hit home with any impact.

Lets roll back the clock to 1984: The Conservatives bemoaned the \$160 million inherited debt from the Liberal party; Mulroney told Liberal Leader John Turner that patronage and pork barrel politics was wrong.

Now it's 1993: The debt is over \$470 billion (\$69,600 for every family of four in Canada);

Mulroney is feverishly appointing anybody he can think of to the Senate.

Are we to believe the Conservatives, who have been blowing hard about deficit reduction since gaining power in 1984 are suddenly born again and will now fix the country, just give them one more chance? Service of this Tory/Grit debt is choking off jobs and driving taxes sky high. And for all his talk, Garth Turner has had no input and will continue to have no input, because the old line parties work to their own benefit and don't work for Canadians.

It's time for real change in Ottawa, not just the decor at 24 Sussex Dr.

Don Dagenais,
Acton

Spirit of the community

To the Editor:

The olde Hide House in Acton, which opened in 1980, has been expanding slowly and steadily since its inception. The building in which the store and restaurant are housed has been beautifully restored to reflect the town's leather heritage, but it's the business itself that is the heart and soul of the community, not just through the people it employs but through the support it generously extends to community and volunteer groups, the encouragement to fellow merchants and the huge influx of visitors it generates.

The devastating impact the closing of the olde Hide House, West Wear-House, Flight-Line and Jack Tanner's Table will have, affects the very existence of our community and will have far-reaching repercussions throughout the region.

We are disappointed that the financial institution involved may not have considered the whole picture. This business represents the spirit of our community; we support it passionately.

Janis Fread,
on behalf of the
Halton Hills Tourism
Committee

P.O.W.E.R. to the people

To the Editor:

Once again, P.O.W.E.R.'s Annual Giant Garage Sale was a huge success. Almost \$7,000 was raised to fight the R.S.I. dump proposal. Other benefits were the recycling of trailer loads of used goods and the amusement of thousands of bargain hunters.

It was a town-wide effort and we would like to say thank you to all those who participated, even if we forget to mention you here. We appreciated the assistance of the following people: the generous public who donated items for sale, Cecil, Bill and Al at the Georgetown Memorial Arena, Marion, Mary, Norm, Peter and the staff at Georgetown Terminal Warehouse, Ward Brownridge, Wastewise, Ferro Steel, Childscope, Woolco, Georgetown Rental, Paul Yates and Georgetown Branch 120 of the Royal Canadian Legion, Limehouse Women's Institute, Georgetown District High School, Knechtels, Acton I.G.A., Mr. Mugs, B.F.I., Outdoor Power Equipment, The Town of Halton Hills, Frank Morette, Kentners, Homestead Antiques, Briggs Upholstery, McDonald's Esso, Tim Horton Donuts and Leathertown Food Supply.

We would also like to thank your newspaper for your publicity support. Lastly, we would like to thank our garage sale coordinators, Susan Cox and Mary Grossman and all the family and friends of P.O.W.E.R. who worked so hard to make the day so successful. Maybe when we have defeated R.S.I. we will keep doing this because it is so much fun!

Lois Fraser
Publicity Coordinator
P.O.W.E.R.
Georgetown

Death of free enterprise

To the Editor:

It is with a sense of shock that the news about the Olde Hide House is bad, that they are closed pending financial restructuring.

The truth of the matter is that they, along with all other business, have an intolerable amount of tax and government regulations working to put them and most other small firms out of business.

Herewith a copy of part of my letter written last year concerning the same thing.

A phone call tells me that our ever-vigilant governments have struck again. A new farmers market was to open on number 7 highway this coming weekend, I believe.

Can you think of a worse crime

to commit? Just think, a new service for the people in Acton/Georgetown, provided by people who only think that free enterprise is alive and well in Canada.

The death of this small enterprise, at the hands of our government really signals the demise of the free enterprise system. Just think, one can no longer even open up any kind of enterprise without the great white fathers having to be consulted, or rear ends kissed.

Different letter, different firms, same result.

John Shadbolt
Leader Ontario Libertarian
Party Acton

Driver-education cuts

The Community Safety Councils of Ontario (CSCO) have expressed concern over proposed government funding cuts to high school driver education programs.

At CSCO's Annual General Meeting, June 6, newly-elected president Christine Burke said that school boards may now be tempted to cut the program completely, rather than passing costs on to students. Although excellent commercial driving schools are available throughout the province, she noted, many students will take the easy way out and not bother to get professional training.

Ontario's high school driver

education program has been in place since the mid '50's. Without the up-to-date knowledge and techniques offered by professionals, Burke said, young people will repeat the bad habits of the family members and friends who teach them to drive.

The 16-24-year age group is the highest risk group in traffic collisions, as acknowledged by the Ontario Government and its Graduated Driver Licensing proposal. Training and education are among the key elements in equipping our youth to avoid becoming a statistic in the carnage on the roads, Burke said.

Halton Hills THIS WEEK

Halton Hills This Week, Weekend Edition, is published every Saturday at 232 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 4B1, and is printed in Oakville at Q.E. Web Printing. Halton Hills This Week claims copyright on all original editorial and advertising material created by its employees and reproduced by this newspaper. Such material may only be reproduced on written consent of the publisher. In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time.

PUBLISHER: Ken Bellamy
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Kathleen Topolsek
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Marie Shadbolt
OFFICE MANAGER: Jean Shewell

HALTON HILLS THIS WEEK IS INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED.

PHONE: 873-2254

FAX: 873-3918