

HIV-positive ex-Acton student fights Navy over dismissal

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

Former Acton student Simon Thwaites says he was left humiliated, frustrated and bankrupt after being dismissed from the Canadian Forces after testing HIV-positive.

Thwaites, 29, is embroiled in a Human Rights Commission case that marks the first time in Canada that an employer (in this case the Department of National Defense), has argued that it had the right to fire an HIV-infected employee on grounds the person couldn't do a job.

Thwaites, now a Halifax seaman, lived in Acton in the late 1970s and attended Acton District High School.

He told superiors in 1987 that he was infected with the human immuno-deficiency virus which can lead to AIDS. He was finally dismissed in 1989 because sailors are required to be able to travel but Thwaites had to stay in Halifax to receive the drug AZT, then only available in a few locations.

Thwaites' lawyer says her client was left with few jobs skills he could use in civilian life and is seeking compensation.

Thwaites is refusing to speak to all media during the hearing (expected to wrap up in August); his lawyer says he will talk about his case once a ruling is made.

Acton student pioneers videodisc technology

Six months ago Acton High grad Kerri Thomson didn't know what a laser videodisc was.

Today the 18-year-old is the first student to use the new videodisc technology in the classroom.

Kerri pioneered the use of videodiscs with a history seminar investigating discrimination in the United States in the 1950s and '60s.

"I was looking for a Dr. Martin Luther King's speech and the library had just received a new ABC News videodisc with the speech and other civil rights movement coverage on it. My teacher, Wayne Bridle, showed me how to use a computer to lift clips from the disc and I put together a half hour program," Kerri explains.

"I had never heard of videodiscs and never done any script writing or editing but I found it is a very effective way to support my ideas that discrimination continues to be a major problem."



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NEWS SHORTS

Murder suspect behind bars

An Eight Line Halton Hills man, charged in the shotgun slaying of his common-law wife, will be back in Milton Court July 6.

Thirty-five-year-old Keith Bettridge made a brief court appearance in Milton Court yesterday (Monday) and was remanded in custody on a charge of first degree murder. Bettridge was arrested by Halton and Ontario Provincial Police on Saturday at a family cottage in Fenelon Falls.

The body of 30-year-old Kimberly Thompson was found Friday afternoon in the Eight Line farm house she shared with her common-law husband and a friend. An autopsy showed she died of a gunshot wound to the left eye.

Rockwood rug rip-off

Overnight Thursday, thieves made off with almost \$8000 worth of new carpet and underpad from the Landrex Homes construction site on Alma Street in Rockwood. The carpet, still in its plastic roll, was being stored in one of the townhouse garages until it could be laid. Guelph OPP say it would have taken a "bunch of guys" or a big hoist to move the carpet which weighed almost 1,400 pounds. Police have no witnesses or suspects.

Acton windows smashed

Overnight Friday, someone broke the window of a van belonging to the Salvation Army. The vehicle was parked in the Army's Mill Street East lot when the vandalism occurred. Damage is \$100.

Overnight last Monday, an unknown object was thrown through the front window of Sandi's Styling Salon on Mill Street East, Acton. Damage is \$800. Police have no witnesses or suspects in either case.

Hello, hello.....

An Acton man was left speechless with the theft of his cellular phone overnight last Tuesday. A Cintel phone was unscrewed from the dash of his company car that was parked in the driveway of his Kingham Road home.

Single car fatal in Esquesing

A Grand Valley man is charged with impaired and careless driving causing death following a single car accident Saturday night on Sixth Line at Highway 7 in Esquesing Township. The driver lost control and rolled over. A passenger, 36-year-old Patricia Stevens, was thrown from the car and killed. Wayne MacKintosh was treated in hospital and released to police.

Condiment caper has cops in pickle

Overnight Saturday, someone broke into and vandalized the French Fryer chip truck parked at the Beaver Gas bar in Acton. The suspect stole vinegar and mustard containers and a dozen cans of pop. Mustard was spread all over the truck and in a nearby car wash.

Horticultural harassment

Overnight Sunday, vandals did \$300 damage to shrubs and flowers planted in beds on the north and west side of the Old Hide House building on Eastern Avenue. Police have no witnesses or suspects.

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QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I'm proud to be a Canadian because of the freedom to do and say whatever I want. If I wanted to go back to school or if I had any further plans like that, I could do it."

— Jane Jackson, page 7

DID YOU KNOW?

Talk is cheap compared to what it once was. In 1915 a telephone call from New York to San Francisco cost \$20.70 for the first three minutes.

Annual Fireworks Display

— Presented by the ACTON FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION —

Acton's Annual Fireworks Celebration will be held on Wednesday, July 1 at Prospect Park. The organizers, the Acton Firefighters, will be walking through the park soliciting donations with open helmets.

The fireworks display is possible only through the generous donations of service clubs, industries and the individual contributions of Actons' citizens. Your generosity ensures an evening of fun and enjoyment.



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