

ASSIC ALERT Young mothers' group in action



ASSIC

Young mothers in Acton will now be able to take part in a summer social group that meets on a weekly basis. Mothers ages 14 to 21 will be able to get together every Tuesday afternoon from 1 - 3 pm at the Acton FoodShare's community room. These meetings allow Acton mom's to come out and socialize, participate in fun-filled activities, meet others and simply have a good time.

Everyone can benefit from participating. While moms are socializing, youngsters are cared for and can play with others. This social group has been developed in response to the lack of summer activities in town for young moms and their babies.

Events for July are as follows: Tuesday, July 14, T-shirt painting:

Moms will be painting T-shirts for their babies and themselves under the direction of a skilled arts and crafts leader. Participants are asked to bring their own T-shirts.

Tuesday, July 21, Videotaping:

Group members will have their child or baby's development captured on film for future viewing when we videotape their children playing alone and with others.

Tuesday, July 28, Community Kitchen:

Participants will meet to prepare meals together for their families; everyone gets to take home their portions. This activity allows participants to save money, get out of the house and meet new friends, share favourite recipes and learn some cooking tips.

The group will also meet in August. Eg. On August 4 we will be making clay crafts. Come out and join us and be a part of the summer round of activities here in Acton.

There is no fee for attending and transportation can be arranged. Babysitting is provided during activities. For more information contact Lin at Acton Social Services and Information Centre, 19 Willow Street N., 853-3310.

Goosy, goosy Gander, whither did you wander?

Until Gandy came to Fairy Lake more than 10 years ago, my acquaintance with geese was limited to three childhood encounters on a Rockwood farm. Each time, I came off second best in a ferocious chase down a long lane, with the old gander honking vengeance within inches of my craven heels.

Thus, I decided early that farm geese, like cows, were to be avoided because they were hostile and unpredictable. "never turn your back on a gander," a farmer from Yorkshire advised me with a twinkle in his eye. I followed his advice until Gandy came to Fairy Lake with Peeper and Trudeau to increase the population in what began hopefully, as a modest wild fowl sanctuary.

A lady from Stratford arrived with her three geese, from whom she parted mistily, because another gander had been beating hell out of Gandy and Trudeau. Peeper, a gentle inoffensive bird was Gandy's mate, whom he defended faithfully all the years he lived in Acton. Trudeau, lacking the latter's personality, created no waves during his brief stay. The winter after his arrival, poor Trudeau was swept over the dam during a vicious snow storm. We went searching in the creek below, but found not a feather. Reluctantly, we had to assume that a predator caught him or he wound up as a free Sunday dinner.

Gandy and his mate settled in along with another newcomer, a fat friendly duck, Dumb Dora, who for some reason took a fancy to me; following at my heels whenever I visited the sanctuary, camera in hand. At first I viewed her proximity with suspicion. Had she evil designs on my bare shanks? After a week of being shadowed by a talkative duck, I realized Dumb Dora wanted to be friends. I responded and she became my special pet and, something of a nuisance because she turned out to be a ham, forever thrusting her backside in front of the camera lens.

It was a short-lived relationship. Within a month, Dumb Dora disappeared, leaving only a few pathetic feathers. Dog, fox, or human predator made short work of our funny, fat white duck.

PETUNIA PATCH

With Esther Taylor



Until this sad episode, I had more or less ignored the three white geese, being careful however not to present an unwary back on daily trips with stale bread. The first crack in this indifference appeared on the morning Gandy came running, unmistakably honking a warning welcome. Peeper followed suit, and then, poor Trudeau. I could hardly believe it. They were glad to see me! After this, Gandy never failed to give the signal whether ashore or out on the lake. I began to revise my opinion of farm geese.

As our friendship firmed, I realized that Gandy was a unique bird, brave, faithful and curiously noble for a mere fowl. He defended Peeper against smart-alecky kids and a few brutish adults who thought the Fairy Lake creatures were fair game. How I rejoiced to see my favorite gander in a racing attack against a loutish youth who stamped on Peeper's first clutch of eggs that she dropped in a makeshift nest above the dam. "That bleep-pleeping old gander has no business on this lake," roared the lout when I followed Gandy, threatening to push the mindless monster in the drink. My championship of these geese and other water fowl made me very unpopular in some quarters.

The majority of park-goers and lake-watchers enjoyed the antics of Gandy and his pals. As the duck population increased, public interest grew, and it was pleasing to hear out-of-town visitors expressing delight at the changing scenes on Fairy Lake. "It's worth bringing a picnic here just to see all these water birds. And that gander is really something!"

Gandy was really something, also Peeper; indomitable survivors of harsh winters that brought headaches to their fans. Spring followed spring and Peeper faithfully laid her eggs — in vain. Although she sat hopefully and long past the hatching date, for

some reason they were not fertile. At last a Lake Avenue member of Gandy's fan club decided to help nature along. He bought five goose eggs and deposited them in Peeper's nest. Success at last. The white goose hatched three eggs, and Gandy went wild with pride and excitement. One gosling drowned, but the other two survived, to be named Doug and Dorrie.

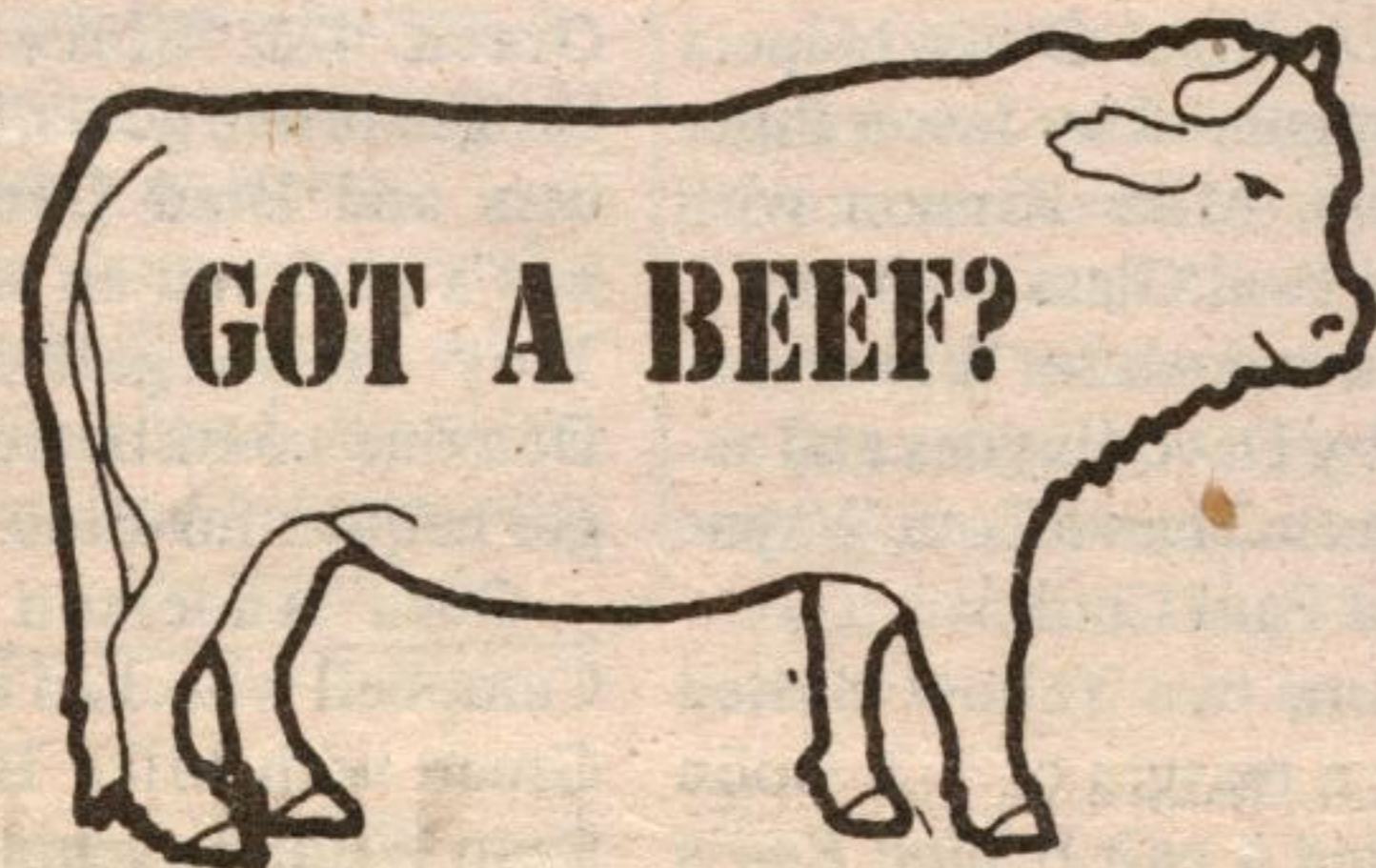
I believe that summer was the happiest of Gandy's life. As Doug and Dorrie grew bigger and cheekier, their parents showed almost human pride. Soon a summons to Gandy brought a chorus of replies as the whole family hastened to dip their beaks into bags of bread. How often I chortled aloud when they surrounded me gabbling like mad, not always using polite lingo. I relished that summer as much as the white geese.

Another winter passed, and spring came again bringing near-tragedy. A few bureaucrats got their knickers in a knot, and the decree went out that all creatures except true Mallards and Canada geese would be removed from Fairy Lake. "The people of Acton," pontificated one out-of-town bureaucrat, "want to see thorough-breds, not hybrids."

The people of Acton couldn't have cared less, but the so-called experts prevailed. Beautiful hybrid ducks, several personality-plus white ducks, and borderline cases were trapped and disposed of. A few of us tried to save Gandy and family, but we had to settle for a compromise. A farm home was found for the four white geese.

I was there when they were thrust into sacks, their heads projecting. I will always remember with a pang the look of betrayal in Gandy's eyes. He sensed as I did that life for him would not be the same.

I will never forget Gandy and Peeper, and their pair of offspring. Fairy Lake has not been quite as enchanted without them.



Write a letter to the editor — all letters must be signed.

HEY!

Do you think the streets of Acton are safe?



"I've lived here all my life and have no qualms about my safety when I'm out. Normally I'm not out late at night but if I had to be I wouldn't worry that anything was going to happen to me."

PAT CURTIS
Tyler Avenue, Acton

"Acton is a safe, small town. I don't have any problem walking on the street and I don't worry about my family's safety in town either. We aren't a big city with big city crime."

JIM LINDSAY
Nelson Court, Acton

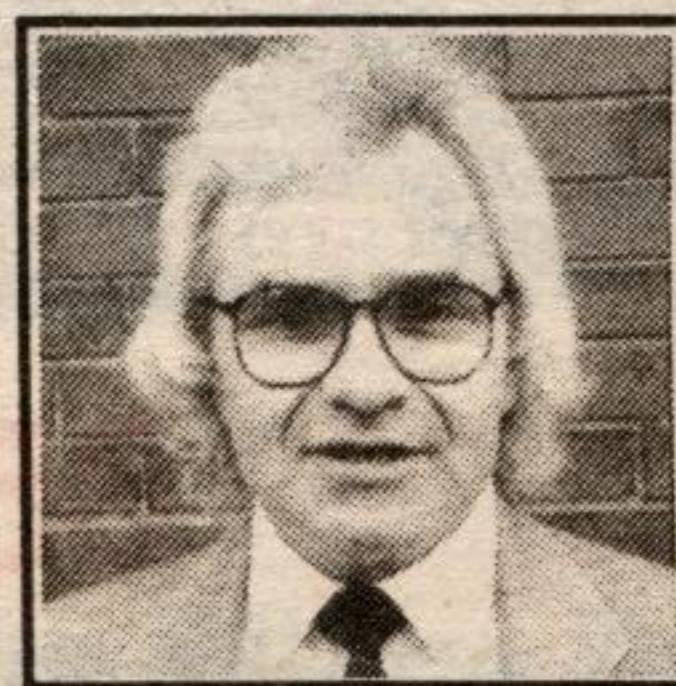


"I think it's a great community to raise children in and it's very safe. I let my children go out and play by themselves and I don't worry about their safety. It's a very friendly and very safe place to live."

KATHY PUCZ
Guelph Street, Acton

"I've lived in Acton since 1954 and there have been times in the past when things have gotten a little out of hand but I don't feel threatened. I think it's more of a transient problem but the streets are safe."

RON HENRY
Mill Street, Acton



Acton Legion Branch 197 News

BY MIKE MATTOCKS

Marie Zion's name was pulled for the weekly Loonie Draw on June 27, 1992. Unfortunately, she was not signed in so the carry over is \$206.

The June 7 Meat Draw winners were: **Early Birds:** R. Harmer & E. Edison **Regular Prizes:** J. Window (2), J. McDavid (2) A. Willmott, B. Collins, Mrs. Lindsay, M. Brill, J. Janson, P. Dunford, B. Doyle & G. McChuma. **Large Prize:** T. Nelson **Euchre Winners:** J. Aitken, J. Holman, L. Bonfield, L. Lindsay & P. Baker. It is a well know fact that many



wedding parties take advantage of the beautiful setting at the Legion for their pictures. Credit goes to Bill (Weep) Taylor and crew for the care and pride they put into the grounds at our Branch. Thanks guys.

Coming Events:

Metro Legion Village visit is July 19, 1992. Come out and enjoy the company of our visiting seniors. The signs are now up for one of the sports high-lights of the summer. The 26th Annual Masters Golf Tournament at Acton Meadows, on August 29th. If last year's turnout is any indication, you had better get your tickets early. Golf Prizes and Dinner \$35.00 each. August 15th is the cut-off date for tickets. First 80 to pay will play. Don't miss this one!

See you at the Branch.