

# GRAPE VINE

## The night the lights went out in Rockwood — again!

A lot of Rockwood residents were late for work last Wednesday morning when, once again, the power failed and left one-third of the village in the dark with blinking alarm clocks. There are grumbings by some village residents that power failures are becoming a way of life as hydro bills continue to escalate. Rockwood Hydro manager Sheila Schuster defends their outage stats and says most of the power failures can be blamed on Mother Nature and installation of a new sub-station. Schuster says she's not getting more than the "usual mutterings" from customers wondering when the power would be back on.

## Neighbourhood Watch

Local police admit it might take a rash of break-ins to revive Acton's Neighbourhood Watch program, but they hope that isn't the case. Police are looking for people willing to help make their neighbourhoods safer by starting Neighbourhood Watch programs. Interested? Call village constable Bill Riddle at 853-2050.

## Wonderful music

Mark Sunday, Aug. 30 on your calendar if you love good music in the outdoors. That afternoon the Acton Legion and Acton Citizens' Band will present a summer con-

cert by the lake. Bring your sun screen and lawn chairs and be prepared to be serenaded as the swans swim by. Don't pack dinner — hot dogs and soft drinks will be available.

## Did you know?

In the spring of 1913 Acton citizens decided that it was high time the town had a permanent Fall Fair. From 1846 until that point the Esquesing Fall Fair switched back and forth between Acton and Georgetown every two years. Newspaper ads from 1913 bill the event as "Acton Fall Fair — Open to the World." In 1914 the first government grant of \$300 was received and 200 exhibitors filled the newly opened hall and a total of \$21 was taken at the gate. In 1942 the fair opened for the first time on Friday and Saturday; the 50th anniversary was celebrated in 1963 with the first Miss Acton contest. In 1974 the fair was extended to three days. This year's edition is slated for Sept. 18, 19 and 20. The 100th anniversary of the fair will be celebrated in 2013.

## Sounds of music

The hills will be alive with the sound of music this fall. In Acton, a unique new music instruction company is opening and will offer piano, theory and keyboard classes for all ages. For details call 853-4104.

Acton children will again be able to take music in early childhood classes from Debbie Tilson, who teaches music appreciation at the Acton Parent and Tot Centre. Readers will recognise Debbie as the Tanner's capable correspondent from Rockwood. For details call 856-9858.



Acton's summer library programs wrapped up last Tuesday with a sold-out performance by Merrick Jarrett and his dancing Lumberjack Dolls. Jarrett held the young crowd spellbound with his songs, riddles and games. (Frances Niblock photo)

## The year I lost my green thumb

Dear Margaret:

You asked about my tomatoes in all friendly innocence, I'm sure. It was a bad mistake to ask about my tomatoes. Yuk!

To call my tomato patch a disaster area is a slight exaggeration, as I will not seek government aid. What I am tempted to do is to run amuck, rip out every plant, and deposit fruit and leafery in a compost heap — if I had a compost heap. One of your former colleagues at the library did just that, having grown by mistake a crop of Italian tomatoes, the kind you use in making paste.

I made that error last summer and resolved never to repeat the blunder. So this spring I carefully chose my plants, half a dozen each of Bonnie Best and Beefsteak. I gave them tender loving care and left the rest of the chore up to old Ma Nature. How the old hag must be cackling!

For a solid month, because of the cold, those plants just sat there living — but barely. Then at last they began to stretch and blossom. As the fruit reluctantly appeared,

I counted my green tomatoes every evening, with the cats lurking at my heels. By July, all signs were hopeful that I would have a good crop. My optimism was impaired somewhat when an out-of-town gardener reported picking his first ripe tomatoes as early as July 17.

Oh well, give them time, I told myself, comparing notes with two other gardeners on our street. Although both their plots are in full sun, they shared my puzzlement and impatience. Their tomatoes remained green, with barely a tinge of yellow.

August came and departed. On Labour Day, one of my neighbours collected his first three ripe tomatoes. What did I pick on Labour Day? Zilch: A couple were blushing in spots. On examination, I found slug holes and bark-like imperfections. I brought two inside to a sunny window sill. The 'expletive-deleted' things have not ripened yet!

I took another look at my to-

## PETUNIA PATCH

With Esther Taylor



mato patch tonight, and reached the fuming conclusion that the greenest of the fruit may be red by October if slugs and blight don't work their will. Meanwhile, my sister has been picking beautiful ripe tomatoes for several weeks. She has delivered several care packages, which I appreciate, but it's not the same as munching your own home-grown tomatoes.

So, Margaret, I will not be indulging in an orgy of canning as I did three years ago, when I filled every jar on hand with chili sauce and cucumber pickle. My cucumbers shared the same fate as the tomatoes, but for different reasons. The cats sat on the earliest plants, dug out others, leaving just three which are bearing as many, miserable little cucumbers. Agriculturally, this has *not* been a successful summer.

I almost forgot to mention that my hollyhocks were winter-killed and while I bought two packets of Heavenly Blue Morning Glories, I postponed planting the seeds until it was too late. Is it old age or lousy luck?

Never mind — we enjoyed a glorious Labour Day, one of the most perfect days of the entire summer.

As summers go, this has *not* been a prize-winner. And as I predicted, the swimming season left much to be desired. Only four times, I inched into the drink without flinching and collecting goose bumps. Blame the cool nights, I guess.

Local mums were probably counting the days until school started, because the younger natives were getting restless. One afternoon near the end of August, a hardy band of diminutive anglers emptied the School Creek of

crayfish, which they spread over the Library bridge. One of the librarians spotted the unusual activity, investigated and commanded the fisherboys to return their harvest to the shrunken waters of the creek. Commented a doting mother: "Poor kids. They're getting bored."

That same week a clutch of urchins surprised a luckless muskrat and beat him to death. They left his body on the sidewalk above the creek, causing a passerby to ponder on the mindless cruelty of kids.

You asked about our ducks, geese and swans. Doing fine, thank you, and delighting visitors to the park. All the Canada Geese can fly now, after numerous practice sessions over the pond. The whole clan had a picnic by the Legion — I swear it was a picnic — judging by the splashing and gleeful water activity. Almost as if the youngsters were showing off for their parents.

And those ducks, perpetually hungry, and so fast and sneaky they beat the slower swans to hand-outs unless one resorts to strategy that does not always work. I was swearing at them the other morning, unaware that strangers had come up behind me.

Grimacing widely, a man noted to his equally amused companion: "Well, now we know what kind of ducks these are. Blasted ducks."

However, despite their conniving ways, I'm rather partial to our Fairy Lake ducks. In a troubled world, they lighten the heart.

My cats and pooches send their regards along with mine to you and your faithful canine Brandy. We thought of you last evening when we plucked the last two mullberries from the tree.

# HEY!

*Should the proposed Acton arena, or any other Town project be scrapped if Halton Hills has to fight plans for for a dump in the Acton quarry?*



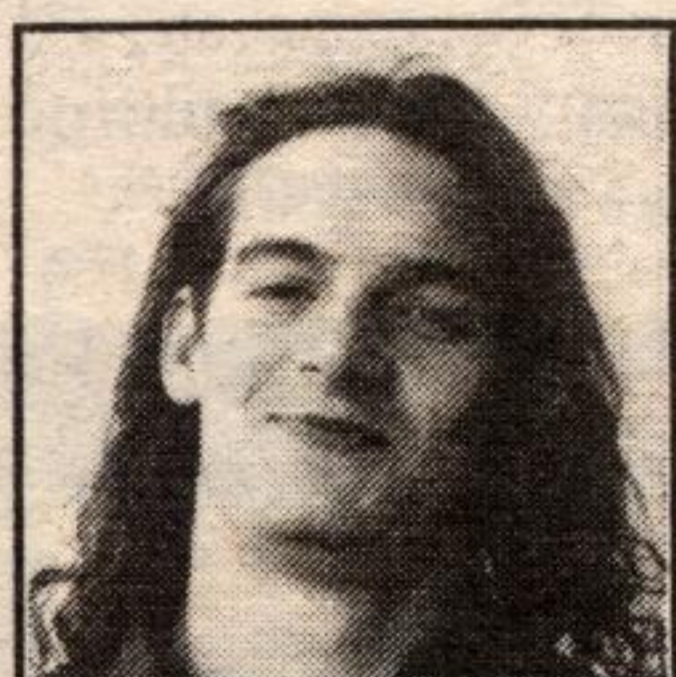
"What good will it be to have a new arena if the dump goes ahead? I've played in the arena for 11 or 12 years and it hasn't hurt me any but I think having the quarry turned into a landfill for Ontario would hurt.

Jeff Koprowski, Division Street

"I don't think that we should have to pay to fight the dump. But if it is up to us, then yes

I would be willing to put up with less services and postpone the arena plan to stop the dump, once and for all."

Trevlynn Mason, Mill Street



"I think the dump must be stopped at any cost and I think most people who live here feel the same way. If it means that we don't get what is needed as soon, then that's the way it may have to be."

Shawn Dryden, Mowbray Place

"It's not worth anything to have the dump. It would destroy the environment and lower property values. I think we could sacrifice some roadwork, the arena or just about anything else to pay to fight the dump."

Becky Armstrong, R.R. 1

