

# GRAPE VINE

The deadline is 12 noon Monday, Nov. 30. Registration forms will be randomly selected and lucky swimmers will be notified.

The popular synchroized swimming program will be offered again.

### Matrimonial masters

Boy those Rognvaldson kids really have the marriage thing down pat. Six of eight children have been married at least 50 years with nary a harsh word between them. The latest 50th anniversary celebration was two weeks ago in Edmonton when Doug and Anne Rognvaldson marked 50 years of wedded bliss. Two other family members, whose spouses have died, were also married more than 40 years.

Asked to explain the great marriage track record, Dorothy Rognvaldson, who celebrated her 50th in August, said, "We've been wise enough to pick the right partner and make close, happy homes."

### Let there be light

Rockwood is preparing to throw the switch for this year's Festival of Lights at the end of the month. After skipping last year, local merchants decided to celebrate this holiday in style with a Country Christmas.

The party starts Friday, Nov. 27 and will feature a food and toy drive, bake sales, a dance and of course, Santa. Town Hall will be transformed into the North Pole and will serve as Festival Headquarters for carolling, a stuffed zoo and animal contest and an appearance by the Eramosa Community Players.

Local residents and businesses will compete in a Christmas decoration contest with prize money for winning homes and stores.

### Acton East business sold?

The sale of a well-known Acton East business is still in limbo because of problems negotiating the lease. Word on the street indicates the deal could close this week. Everybody involved is playing this one very close to the vest and insisting that no names be used.

### Subway shop suspense

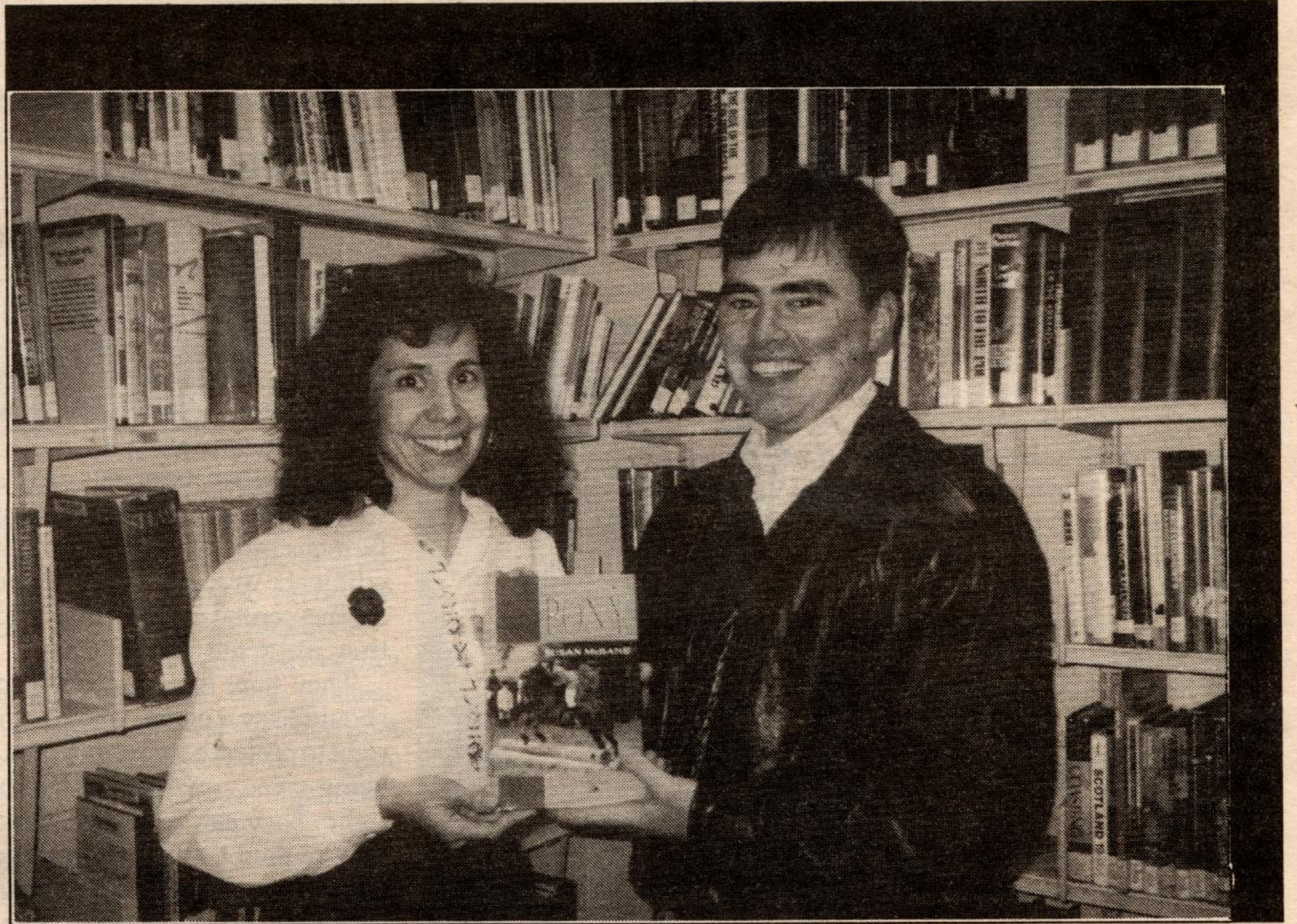
"When?" That's the big question asked about Acton's newest eatery, Subway Sandwiches and Salads. The transformation of the old Arctic Charlie's in the IGA plaza to Subway should be complete within weeks. Owner Gus Galimanus is not sure if he will open the first or second week in December.

When asked what Acton can expect Galimanus said, "Good, fresh food. We specialize in subs and every four hours we bake fresh buns. We will also have fresh salads. We're are part of a 7,000-store chain that knows good food."

Galimanus and his family moved to Acton from Parry Sound. "We looked by the lake and around Halton and then we found Acton. It's a nice small village. Some place nice to raise your kids."

### Sink or swim

If you want to take swimming lessons at the Acton pool this winter you have 12 days to mail, fax or hand deliver your application to the Town Parks and Rec Department.



KNOW YOUR PONY: Tanner publisher Paul Nolan makes a donation of Susan McBane's pony care book to Acton Library deputy manager Marie Vickery last Wednesday. (Frances Niblock photo)

## Dreaming of a stable, a baby and a star over Bethlehem

Dear Margaret: The sun is shining today. A fact worthy of a separate paragraph and a row of exclamation marks.

After a record-breaking November of non-stop rain, in this hunk of Ontario, we were beginning to wonder if we would ever see the sun again. After a fine October, the last half of autumn was dismal, depressing and just bearable. I exceeded my quote of profanity in November. In fact, I suspect my three pooches learned some new expletives, which they do not need, being cuss-wise eloquent even for Anglo-Saxon mongrels.

To exacerbate my dour mood, guess what I heard mid-way through the sogginess? Christmas carols in a supermarket! I was tempted to head for the hills after getting confirmation that I was NOT hearing things. I love Christmas carols in the right season, but not a month before the 25th of December. No wonder our seasons are so mixed-up.

Speaking of screw-ups, the Canada geese are doing it again, or not doing it again, however one views the problem. So far, they haven't migrated, and this is the first week of December. Yesterday and today, old Fairy Lake is black with Canadas, swearing at one another and at the hungry Mallards. They can still dig into the grass under light snow, but what happens if we have a heavy snow fall?

Furthermore, the pond is frozen solid except for an area of open water below Lakeview subdivision. There are 14 swans sheltering, along with this summer's crop of ducks. Hungry? The swans come out of the drink to eat, tugging at pockets and gloves and the baggy rear of snow pants.

It's a weird sensation to be surrounded by big, white birds, some almost shoulder high. One has to watch the progress of heavy snow boots, because the qwackers are under foot like a moving carpet. They are so sneaky that they leap

into the air to snatch bread out of the swans' bills.

Some of the bolder and hungrier geese venture into the scrimmage, grateful for the hand-outs. This morning my ulcer gave an extra twinge when I spotted a lame goose, minus one foot. A trap or snapping turtle perhaps did the damage. She can fly, but otherwise moves with difficulty. I made a point of tossing her a slice of bread, which she had to share with more agile birds. I hope One-Foot survives the winter, but it's doubtful as winter is a cruel time even for healthy creatures. I wish some experts would explain the strange behavior of the Canada geese which was manifested more than five years ago. Are their winter feeding grounds disappearing in the States? I can't figure it out. It's a worrisome situation, which is being reported in other parts of the province.

At least our gulls have vanished after haunting the pond all summer and through October. The gulls, about 50 of them, had a ball when Town earth-moving machines bulldozed land below Lakeview villa for a soccer field. For a week the strident flock took over the upturned earth delving for delicacies. I would be surprised if one crawler remains.

You asked about the library squirrels, who I'm happy to report are as saucy as ever. One little black fellow has grown bold enough to snatch his peanut while I'm still standing under the tree. I could tame them, I'm sure, but it wouldn't be wise as other humans might take advantage of their trust.

Is this a sign that I have slipped a couple of cogs? The other night,

I woke up giggling to myself as for some reason or other I remembered your childhood yarn about springing traps when you and your sisters were in England. If I recall correctly, you earned a trouncing when your parents were informed of your sabotage. People don't change all that much. I can picture you repeating the good deed, although much older and wiser.

It's odd how selective the memory is. As the jolly season approaches I pine for the bells of Christmas, sleigh bells jingling in the frosty night. That silver music was a very real and beautiful sound of past Christmases, when almost every sleigh and cutter sported bells on steaming horses.

I remember lying awake on Christmas Eve straining my ears for the magical echo of bells which could herald the approach of old Father Christmas. It requires little imagination to link the frosty music to angelic voices over Bethlehem. As a kid, I had no trouble accepting the Baby Jesus and Santa in one story. I thought they belonged together.

Inevitably of course, a little Monster on our street shattered my belief in St. Nick. I had never liked her before this disclosure, but after I hated the Monster for as long as she haunted our street.

When the bells chimed on Christmas Eve, I knew Santa's reindeer would not prance over our chimney. But, the magic remained, and I listened content, half-dreaming of a stable, a baby, and a pulsating star over Bethlehem.

(The article first appeared in the pages of the Acton Voice in December of 1985.)



### PETUNIA PATCH

With Esther Taylor

# HEY!

Where's the best vantage point to watch the Acton Santa Claus parade on Saturday?



"We usually stake out a front row spot along Mill Street. We watch it because you might as well support your own town instead of going to see the Milton or Georgetown parade."

Carm and Bethany Winstone, Kingham Road

"I watch the parade every year from inside the Dawe Real Estate office. I wouldn't miss it — it's like the Fall Fair — it's Acton. I love to see all the kids and Santa."

Phyllis Stuckless, Kingham Road



"I'm going to be in the parade! My employer, Halton Cable, will have a float and I will be on it with my son Corey. It's a great community event and this year the theme is Wrap It Up."

Brenda Grace, Peel Street

"We won't be watching the parade. We're too busy working to take time to watch it. We just moved here are putting in a lot of hours and will be busy Saturday."

Mike Baillie, Danville Avenue

