



HAPPY GRAD: Halton Flour Milling employee Ron Lesperance (right), accepts his apprenticeship graduation certificate from Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce president Bob Malcolmson during last Wednesday's first Apprenticeship Appreciation luncheon at the Cultural Centre. Lesperance, who is an industrial mill rite, has been a member of the Halton Flour Milling team in Acton for 10 years. (Doug Harrison photo)

Apprentices are lifesavers

BY DOUG HARRISON

When Al Becker reverts back in time to his days as a thriving apprentice at Acton's Halton Flour Milling; the graduate-turned-industrial maintenance mechanic wonders what the other side of the coin would have been like.

The 29-year-old Acton resident was one of three former flour mill apprentices who were presented with certificates last Wednesday at the first Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce Apprenticeship Appreciation luncheon at the Cultural Centre. The festivities marked their graduation from the program, which began six years ago. Another Acton company, Building Products, was also in attendance.

"The Halton Flour Milling apprentice program was a nice system, better than some guys I've talked to who went through different programs," said Becker, who went to school once a week and worked four days. "The other guys had night courses and by not being part of any program, they would go six weeks at a time to school and would lose out on all the practical work."

As a result, these people would have to wait six or eight months after they finished the program to write the exam for their license. The reason? In order to receive a certificate, the apprentice must acquire 8,000 working hours over the program's four-year period.

Brian Dolotowicz, owner of Halton Flour Milling and Becker's employer for nine years, feels the apprenticeship program makes the individuals better people.

"It is an upgrading of a person's ability," said Dolotowicz. "I think it's more important to the person themselves than the company, especially in these times."

Since his enrollment in 1987, Becker has discovered many changes within the industry and is relieved he took a course to expand his knowledge of milling immediately following graduation.

"There's basic electricity and robbing now that they didn't have when I was in the program," explained Becker.

"The way things are (with the economy), I'd be stupid to leave.

I've got a stable job and I know the place inside and out."

A confident Dolotowicz thinks having apprentices has probably kept his business above water.

"I don't know if I'd be here," said the proprietor bluntly when asked of his status had he avoided employing apprentices. "Taking on apprentices turned out to be an asset. If I don't have skilled employees, I can't be a survivor."

Suggestions to conserve water resources

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

Several Halton Hills politicians want to make water-saving devices mandatory in all new homes.

Councillors Gail Rutherford and Norm Elliott are pushing to have the requirement written into all subdivision agreements, despite staff protests that it can not be legally done.

Monday night Council approved a resolution asking staff to report back on suggested wording for a new subdivision agreement condition that would force developers to use fittings that restrict water flow.

At last Monday's General Committee meeting, staff argued that the Province is looking after the issue with amendments to the Ontario Water Resources Act that reduce flow rates for toilets, kitchen and bathroom faucets.

On Jan. 1, the Province limited the flows of bathroom and residential kitchen faucets and shower heads.

In August the flush cycle for toilets will be reduced and further reductions are slated for 1996.

Staff said the graduated system lets manufacturers deplete inventories and develop new technology and supplies.

Council Elliott argued the Town should do all it can to help conserve scarce water supplies, including trying to speed up the Provincial timetable for reducing water use gradually until 1996.

"Desperate times call for desperate action. I don't think any developer would challenge us in court on this," Elliott said.

"I think this is an urgent matter that is needed in order to guarantee us the growth we need. We don't want devices put in homes now that will be out of date in four years."

Staff will report back with suggested wording to make the water-saving devices a condition in subdivision agreements at the Monday, March 22 meeting.

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All-round students

Continued from Page 1 Smith two years ago.

Other Acton winners are Acton High student Trish Denny who was described by staff as an "all-round good kid" and M.Z. Bennett Grade 5 student Lindsay Almond.

The students will receive their awards at a ceremony in Burlington on Thursday, April 22.



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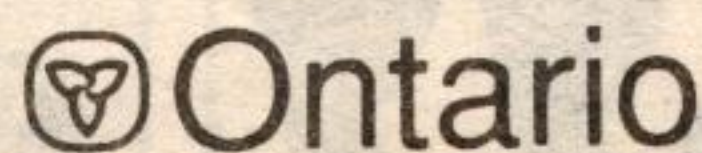
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