

SWEET MUSIC

Acton's talented Marie Zions, who performed as the guest soloist at the Salvation Army during Acton's World Day of Prayer ceremonies last Friday, belts out a hymn for the congregation gathered for the special service. (Doug Harrison photo)

Robin's gift of life

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
Acton's Robin Elliott plans to celebrate big-time when she hits 50. Not 50 years of age, but 50 blood donations to the Red Cross.

Hitting 50 has almost become an obsession for Robin, who will make donation number 49 at the Red Cross Blood donor clinic on Thursday, March 25 at the Acton Legion.

Robin grew up in a household where giving blood was a way of life.

"My father, who made over 100 donations, used to give blood regularly," Robin said in an interview Thursday.

"He's 87 and although he can't give blood any more, he always helps out at the clinic near his home in Toronto.

"The only time my father tried to cheat, in his whole life, was to try to fudge his age on his blood donor card so he could donate blood longer," Elliott laughed.

After accompanying his mother to blood donor clinics most of his life, son Matthew, 19, is now following in the family tradition and vows he will beat his mother's donations, no problem.

Acton Red Cross clinic co-ordinator Geoff Moon wishes there were more people like Robin and Matthew.

"They are the backbone of the local Red Cross," Moon said in an interview Monday.

"In Acton we have a phone list of 400 donors but usually our clinics draw about 150 people. It is the repeaters that keep us going."



ROBIN ELLIOTT



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Tanner-Bernhards big winners at Hide House

BY DOUG HARRISON

Good things do happen to people who wait.

After purchasing lottery tickets once or twice a week for the past five years, Acton area residents, Elayne Tanner and Uldis Bernhards can finally say they hit the jackpot — well, sort of.

The couple are winners of the recent \$5,000 olde Hide House shopping spree. After dining at Jack Tanner's restaurant on Jan. 3, where they filled out four ballots, Elayne and Uldis were kidding as to what they were going to do and when the Hide

House was going to call and notify them of their winnings.

Little did they know this idle chatter would reap benefits.

"It was a shock, but a welcome surprise," said Tanner during an interview on Friday after learning last Wednesday that one of Uldis's ballots was the winner. "It was kind of spur-of-the-moment because it was Uldis's birthday so we decided to go for brunch and Jack Tanner's is the best place in town."

The two of them have the option of spending their money at Flight Line, Leathertown West Wearhouse

or the Hide House. Tanner has set her sights on the latter.

"We're going to spend it furnishing our family room that painfully needs work," explained Tanner, who moved here with Uldis and their two kids from Toronto five years ago.

"Three years ago we needed the funds to fix the house, but every time we had money it was put towards a couch I needed to put in my office in our house for when clients came to see me," said Tanner, a Rockwood psychotherapist. Bernhards works as a land surveyor in Guelph.

Education wage concessions?

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

Halton Board of Education teachers and staff, including approximately 142 in Acton, have until March Break to decide if they will voluntarily give up one day's pay.

If they don't, board administration will begin to lay off 75 employees in an effort to save \$1 million dollars in this year's \$294.8 million budget.

Trustees have told staff to make \$2.4 million in cuts to bring the mill rate increase down to four per cent. One and a half million dollars can be saved by making cuts in budgets for supply teachers, lunch room supervisors and supplies and the balance from the concessions.

Although initially suggested as

a mandatory move, participation in the proposed wage concession plan for the board's 5,000 teachers and staff was made voluntary after a provincial union, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, interceded in the issue and refused to re-open existing contracts to allow the concession.

Also, lawyers for the teacher groups and the board said that for teachers to make a charitable donation of their one day's pay to the board for tax purposes, each individual employee will have to sign a contribution form.

Acton Trustee and board vice-chair Dave Whiting said the \$1 million is coming out of the budget, and how it comes out is up to the staff.

"If half the staff give us the one day's pay then we only have to lay off half the 75 people," Whiting said last Wednesday.

"It looks like we have about 75 per cent of the staff in support of the concession. It's a positive gesture in tough times. I'm going to jump on the bandwagon and kick in whatever the average donation is," Whiting said.

The average donation is expected to be \$200. That is one 200th of the average salary of \$40,000.

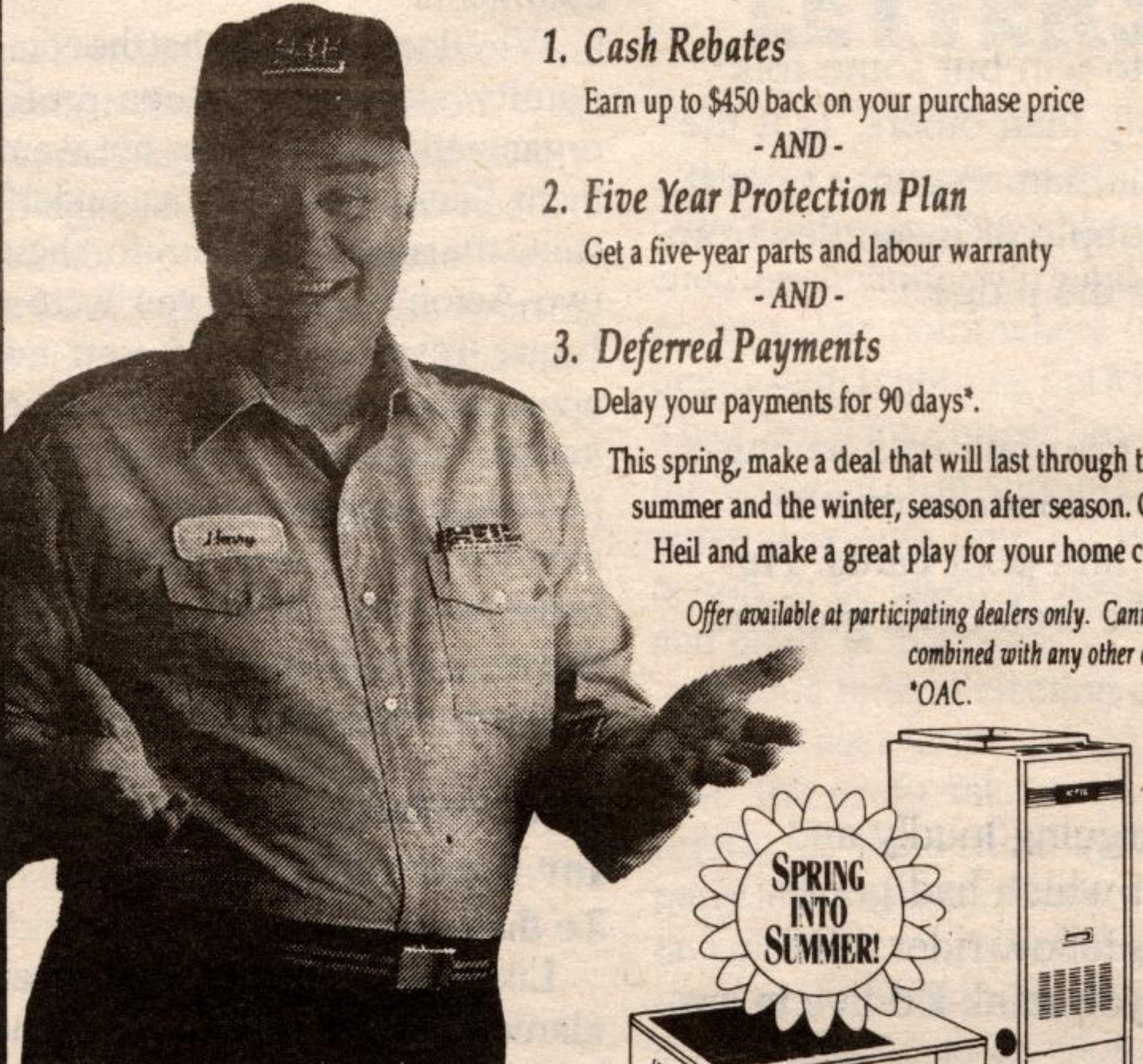
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