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VOLUME 3, NO. 22 • 60 CENTS (.56 + .04 GST)

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 1994



PRECISE PEDALLING!

Desiree Durants, 5, rides a straight line as part of the Skills test at Saturday's Bike Rodeo in the arena. Kids were taught safety, the rules of the road and then wrote a written test. Helpers Jenny Tremblay, left, and Mary Beth Robertson look on. (Lori Frechette photo)

AHS student heads to K.C.

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

No, Wilber Harrison didn't make a one-night stop at Hamilton's Copps Coliseum recently, though Dave Wray left the building reciting *I'm going to Kansas City ... Kansas City here I come.*

The Grade 12 Acton High student has advanced to the U.S. Skills Olympics on June 26 in the Midwest after capturing a silver medal in the Computer Aided Drafting (C.A.D.) architectural category at the Canadian Technical Skills Olympics.

Wray, 18, used the SoftPlan software program that won him Halton and Ontario championships to design a floor plan of a convenience store from scratch in the three-hour exam.

"It (SoftPlan) has the stigma of being the program to use. It's taking off in the States, but we are using an underdog program in Canada," says Acton High tech instructor Norbert Axtmann of SoftPlan, which was the minority to AutoCAD among the participants.

At the orientation evening the night before the competition, Wray was given the general outline of the problem for the exam. Having only some details, Wray and Axtmann stopped at every construction site on the return trip to Acton to pick up details.

They also stopped at a few convenience stores to get further details of floor plans.

"We nailed it (the questions asked) almost exactly," said Wray, who had one day following the provincial victory to prepare for the national exam. He's currently studying the U.S. technical exams of former Acton High student and two-time Ontario winner Priscilla Foster.

"I said they're going to ask for this, this and this and they did," added Axtmann, who trained with Wray until 1 am the day of the exam.

Wray thought he had a chance for the gold. He wasn't the only one.

Axtmann said the performance of Wray and the winner in the Canadian competition, which was sponsored and judged by AutoCAD "was close enough that the judges could justify going either way, but they couldn't put him lower than second."

Axtmann said if nothing else the national event — the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America skills competition — will be a great learning experience and look attractive on Wray's resume.

"It's nice to have students who, when you give them the rope, will run with it. He's doing stuff that I don't know how to do. He's just going and going," said Axtmann of Wray, who has been given version 7.0 of SoftPlan as a congratulatory gift by the software company.

And the aggressive Wray has already lined up his co-op placement for next year. He'll be working with local architect Bev Gray.

The only uncertainty for Wray and Axtmann is how long it will take to raise the \$1,200 for each to travel to Missouri.

Any local businesses wishing to sponsor the duo can contact Norbert Axtmann at Acton High (853-2920).

Hwy. 25 repairs will take years

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

It will be years before long-identified safety problems on Hwy 25 between Acton and Ospringe are repaired.

Multi-million dollar improvement plans are moving through the Ministry of Transportation development process but project engineer Martin Favell predicts it will be years before construction begins.

"We have narrow lanes and high truck volumes on Hwy 25," Favell said in an interview on Friday as he explained the safety concerns.

"Because of the narrow lanes the trucks move to the outside and that breaks down the edges of the highway.

"We are part-way through the pre-engineering and environmental assessment process and after that it depends on the availability of government funding."

The project includes re-surfacing and lane widening on Hwy 25 for the nine kilometres from Acton to Hwy 24 at Ospringe. The plans call for paved shoulder sections at Acton and Ospringe, a truck climbing lane, new guardrails and new culverts and drainage.

Several local residents attended a public information meeting earlier this month and Favell said comments and concerns are being reviewed.

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