

GRAPE VINE

Same-sex debate may resurface in Ottawa

Now that political posturing has killed the Provincial bill which sought to extend benefits to same-sex couples, MP Julian Reed expects the "attack" will now shift to the feds.

"There are many more interdependent couples, above and beyond homosexual couples, who are also taxpayers," explained Reed last week.

"If benefits are going to be extended to homosexual couples the quest should not stop there, but go on to other couple groupings. We all know of mothers and daughters, mothers and sons, fathers and sons, etc."

Also, Reed reiterated his position that "the standard heterosexual relationship should be recognized as the foundation of our society."

Strawberry Social time

One of the local delights of the spring season is the Strawberry Social at Ebenezer United Church, where friends and neighbours meet once every year to enjoy the best in berries.

The big night will be Friday, June 24 from 5 to 8 pm, and a press release from the church urges us to "skip dinner and enjoy a scrumptious dessert!"

The Strawberry Social is always enjoyed by the whole family. Tickets are available at the door at \$5

for adults and \$2.50 for children under 12.

The church is located on the Guelph Line, north of the 20th Sideroad (just 10 minutes west of Acton).

Local educators retiring

Some 124 Halton Board of Education employees were honoured at a retirement ceremony yesterday (Tuesday). Robert Little's Mary Smith and Lenora Vickery, along with Acton High's Clare Henderson, were recognized for their years of service.

The unusually high number of retirees was addressed by Bob Williams, director of education: "The number of retirees has grown considerably this year in part because of the early retirement incentive offered to non-teaching staff. Forty-two people, in roles such as secretaries, managers and custodians, will be taking advantage of this opportunity."

Former Acton High teacher Jim Goring is also retiring. The Rockwood resident teaches at E.C. Drury high school in Milton.

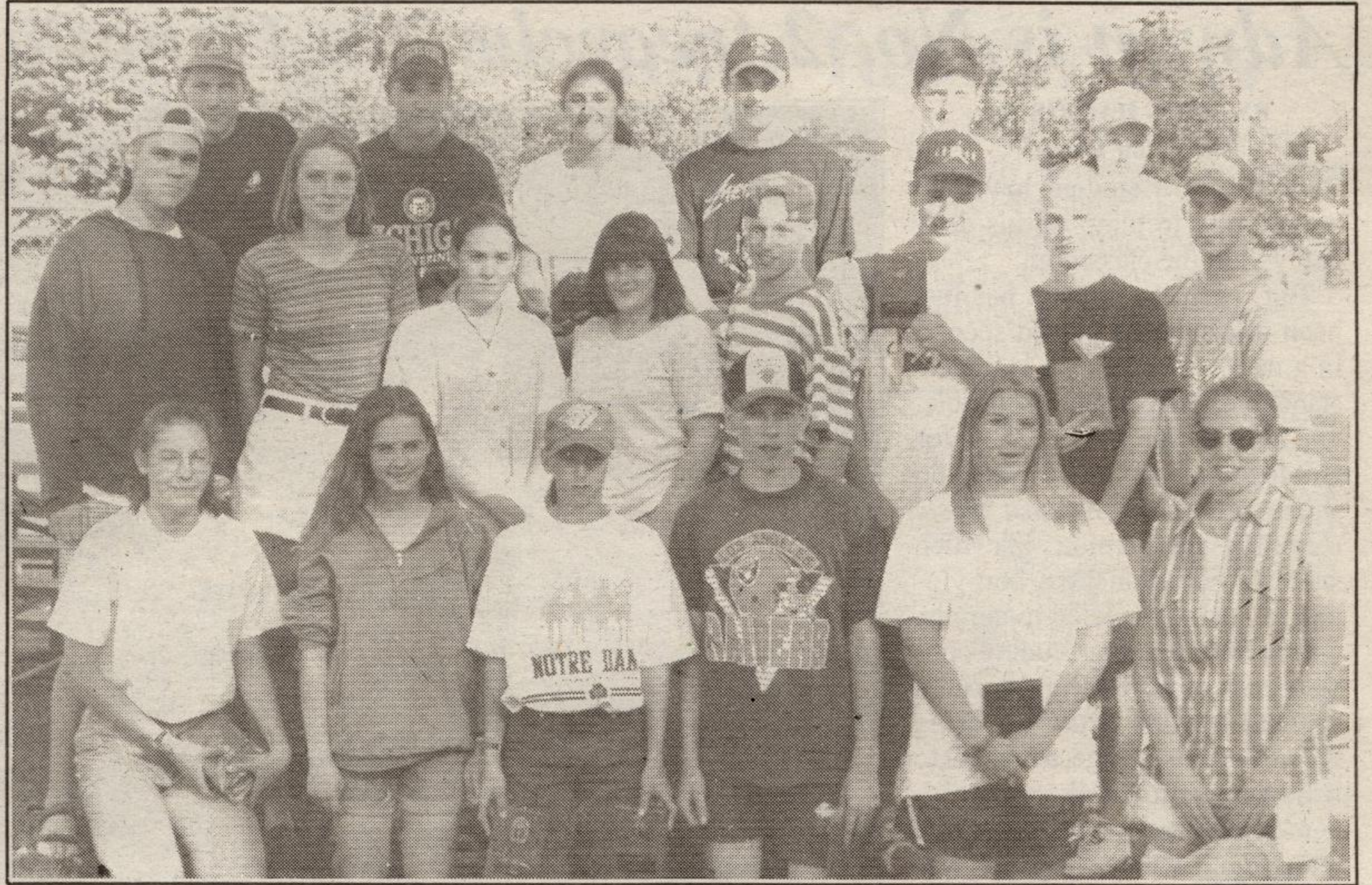
Magic at the Library

Local kids can "kick off" their holidays with a visit to the Acton Library on Wednesday, July 6 to see popular magician Owen Anderson.

The "Reading is a Magic Trip" show will represent the beginning of the library's Summer Reading Club activities and it features lots of fun, audience participation and a live bunny too!

Admission for the magic show, which begins at 2 pm, is only \$2 per person.

Call the Acton Public Library at 853-0301 for more info.



TOPS! Acton High honoured its athletes at a picnic in Prospect Park last Wednesday. Back row, from left: Steve Turkosz, Dave Moore, Denise Katsilieris, John Eddolls, Giancarlo Scappin and Matt Boycott. Middle row: Todd Chumley, Jenny Goy, Shelby DaPonte, Stephanie Jones, Derek McIntyre, Dave Dolliver, Greg Finley and Chris Cullen. Front row: Amanda Bonnell, Sharon Kearsey, Michael Andrews, Chris Young, Shelley Hand and Amanda Garwood.

Excuse me...ahem...EXCUSE ME!

Hold your horses. Wait just a moment. Just a cotton-picking-minute. Cool it!!

The rhetoric surrounding the Legion decision on headgear is getting completely out of hand. Emotions are running high on both sides of the issue. Some pretty scurrilous insinuations are being directed towards our vets. I believe they have to stop.

There is no doubt that those who oppose this decision are moved by a deep conviction to fairness. Those who voted in Calgary were exercising what they thought was their right to establish guidelines under which they would operate their clubs. They failed to recognize that you can only speak your mind these days if what you say is deemed to be socially correct.

I'm not a Legion member. Had I been a delegate, I would have voted against the exclusion of those who wear religious head-coverings. I am more concerned with what's *in* a person's head, rather than what's *on* it. I don't think that this Legion tradition was established some 60 years ago with the intent of being discriminatory. If anything, the Legion exec is guilty of not recognizing the political-social realities of Canada today.

I regret that they picked this battle to fight because in the long run it's not one that they will be allowed to win. Notwithstanding this issue, there is no reason why we should add insult to injury and stand by as others heap abuse on our vets and their memories of those who died in the wars.

One Toronto columnist wrote that she suspected that those who fought and died in Normandy might be embarrassed with the Legion's vote. What a pile of crud. How dare she try to conscript the glorious dead to her point of view: The young men laying in Normandy these past 50 years would probably be, as today's vets are, divided on both sides of the issue. They would not have been "embarrassed to stand with their comrades."

A vice-president of B'nai Brith said that the vote was a posthu-

The Way I See It

With Mike O'Leary



mous victory for Hitler. It is beyond me to understand how anyone in his position could make such a cruel accusation. True, Hitler might never have allowed headgear in a private club. He would have slaughtered these people and their families long before now. And he tried! He was stopped by the very people who are now carelessly accused of having some pseudo-Nazi agenda. Let's keep the Nazis out of this, shall we?

One of my pet peeves with today's Canada has surfaced again in this debate. Those who are insistent that their vision of socially-correct Canada is infallible, claim they occupy a moral high-ground from which they proceed to lecture anyone who disagrees. If you don't see the error of your ways you are assumed to be pond scum.

This act is getting pretty threadbare. Why can't we just have a disagreement and then sit down and try to resolve our differences. Must we polarize every issue? Have we become so intransigent that differences must be immediately escalated to the government and courts by way of vitriolic rhetoric?

Our freedoms to disagree were paid for on the beaches of Normandy, in France, Holland, Italy, Germany and a thousand other places. Absolutely, Sikhs and Jews were there to fight and die. These veterans also deserve to be heard. Let's let the rational people in these organizations work through this difference of opinion without declaring war on either side.

Before anyone else is tempted to pepper their arguments with denigrating adjectives like Nazi, racist or bigot, perhaps they should consider this: The vets on both sides of this issue fought and died so we would have the liberty to disagree. Had they wanted a bond-

blue-eyed uni-racial world, they *all* would have stayed home.

The latest NDP debacle ended in disaster, as usual, last week. The contentions Bill 167 proposing radical changes in the legal definition of spouse and family was defeated. There were no winners in this exercise.

You can't help but wonder why Bob Rae put this province through the meat grinder again. They knew weeks ago that they didn't have the votes to pass this legislation. So why inflame the passions on both sides when they knew it would fail? Playing politics, that's why.

The NDP has alienated almost everyone in this province. Their usual allies, organized labour, have, for the most part, turned their backs on them. Labour takes a dim view of those who ignore signed collective agreements as the NDP did with the social-contract legislation. An election has to be called in the next year.

Traditionally the NDP has been supported by most organized homosexual groups. This whole sham was perpetrated so the NDP could say "we tried." Not so, you say. Well, read the statements from the government since the legislation went down to defeat.

For the record, you, the citizens of Halton, voted in favour of Bill 167. When the time comes to vote, on both occasions, 'ol Noel stood in his place and voted yes. Don't you think that when an issue this important was being considered he should have made some effort to see what we thought of it? It couldn't be because he knew that 60-70 per cent of us opposed such changes could it? Nahhh, 'ol Noel wouldn't do that.

The days of the People's Republic of Ontario are thankfully drawing to a close. The NDP legacy will be one of massive debt, failed promises, confrontation and unemployment. At least they've managed to compact the language. Instead of having to say "the government has screwed me," now we just say "Rae-days" ... and we all know what that means.

HEY!

Your reaction to the defeat of the same-sex rights bill?

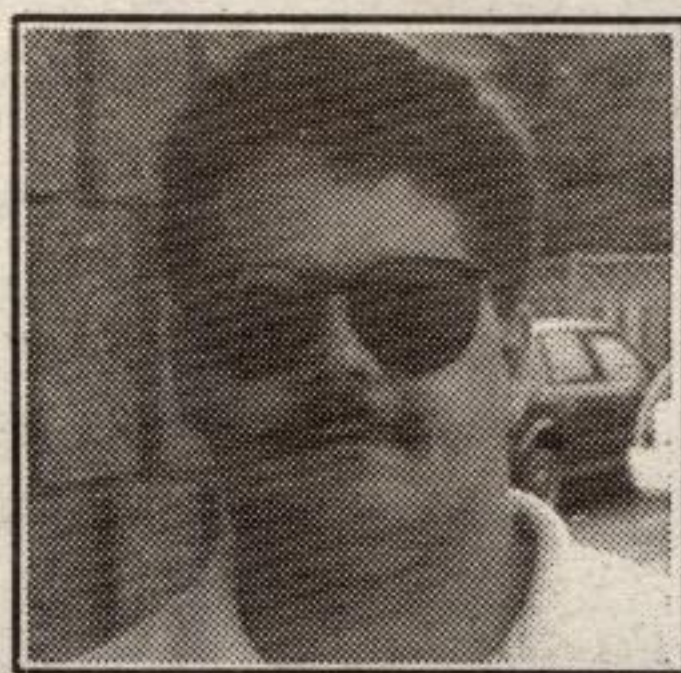


"I agree 100 per cent. Men and women were put on this earth to be together. Not man and man or woman and woman."

Monica Moore, Greenore Crescent

"I don't think it was good. They (gays and lesbians) should have the same rights. First the bill was going to pass and then it was stopped. I'm sure there will be a lot of commotion about that."

Mike Overland, Kingham Road



"I don't believe in two people who are not spouses. You get married to have a wife or a husband. I'm glad it got defeated."

Charlene Douglas, Guelph

"I didn't think it would pass, but it should have. It's equal rights. They are people who are happy the way they exist. It's not what I would want, but they pay taxes like everyone else."

Joe Mathieson, Rockwood

