

EDITORIAL

With Paul Nolan



Rennie sets the record straight

Acton municipal councillor Gerald Rennie last issue was the topic of our fourth and final segment on "issues that affect Acton." The first three installments featured the comments of Mayor Russ Miller and local councillors Rick Bonnette and Norm Elliott.

There were a couple of misleading statements attributed to Counc. Rennie in last week's *Tanner*, so I spoke with him on Monday in order to clarify his thoughts, for the record.

Rennie began the discourse speaking as a representative of municipal council, but by the end of the interview he was wearing his other hat, that of a board member of the Acton Business Improvement Association.

As you will see, the councillor was in a talkative mood on Monday — but it was all *straight* talk. Refreshing, really. It's obvious that Gerald Rennie is one of those rare birds who possess a definite vision for the future of our fair town. His heart is in the right place, and he has a good hold on reality.

Let's all hope he decides to seek re-election in the fall; this community can't afford to lose such a clear vision of Acton's future at such a crucial time.

The first question of last week's interview, conducted by freelance reporter Craig Ross, asked about stalled residential development in Acton.

Rennie in fact is *not* in support of "a study that leads to other studies." Rather, he states that "I hope that we've had the last of the studies. I think the cost of the last study was \$277,000, and the only people who are getting rich are the lawyers and the consultants."

"Once the study is completed, my hope is that the Ministry of the Environment and the Department of Fisheries will agree that we've taken the right measures to protect the environment and that we can proceed with full development in Acton east.

"I hope we go the distance, with not just a few hundred homes, because I think we need a population of at least 10,000 in order to ensure a viable downtown business core."

Rennie went on to correct, and expand upon, his thoughts about the depressed retail economy in Acton. This topic is close to the councillor's heart, as he's an active member of the BIA (having served as that group's secretary for the past nine years).

"There are two things that I see. One is to increase our population, and that's obvious.

"But the other thing that must happen is to change the nature of business in town. The future of downtown Acton is in the tourism business.

"The Acton Business Improvement Association is actually spending thousands of dollars to enhance the appearance of downtown and make it more attractive to tourists and to those in the tourist industry.

"We hope to eventually attract the same kind of boutique-type shops found in Elora and St. Jacobs."

Rennie assured that the "promotion of downtown is definitely going ahead, by way of street signs that reflect our Leathertown heritage, highway signs at the entrances to town, improvement of the parkette and the beautification of Mill Street with trees, planters and more greenery.

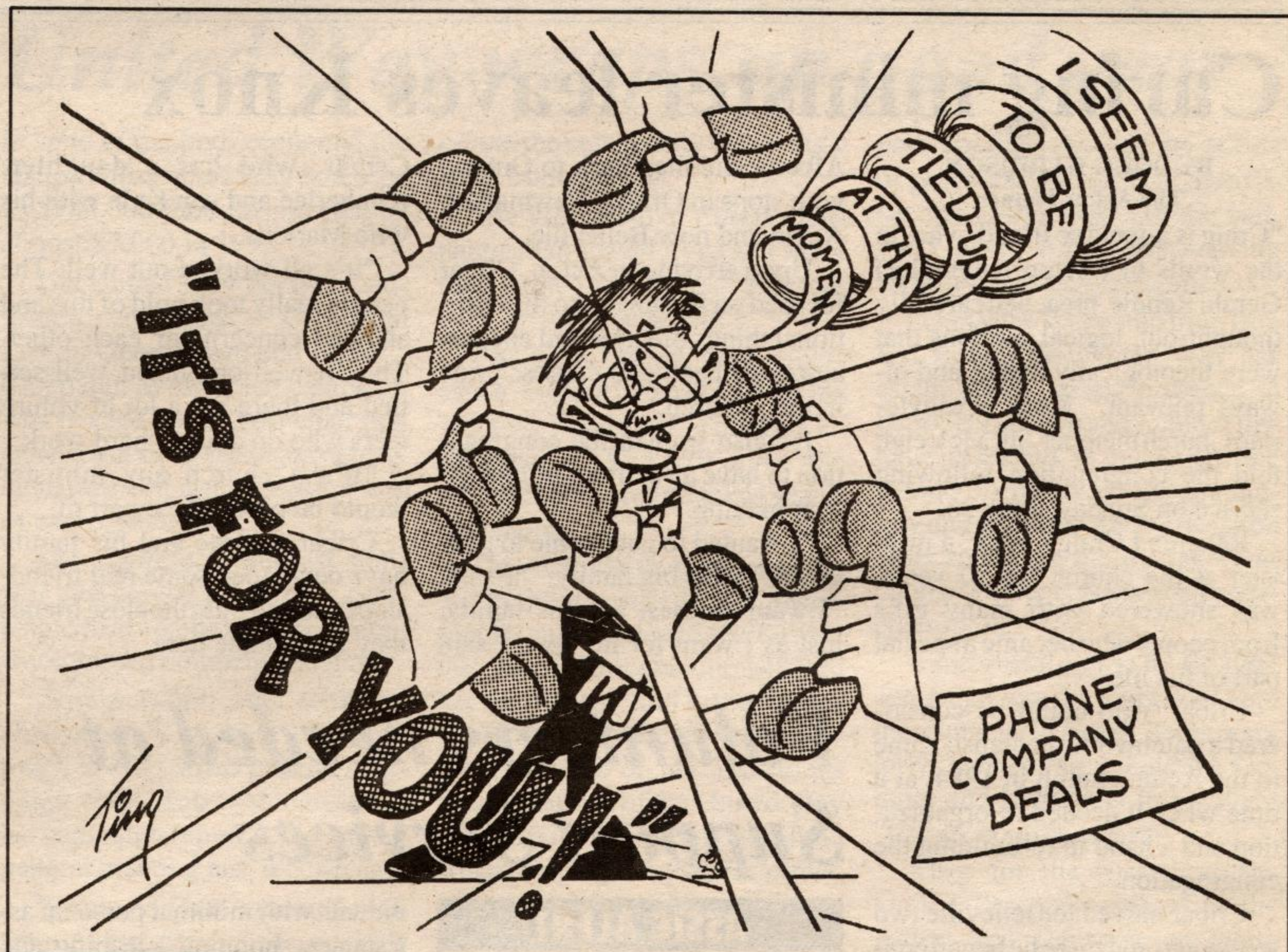
"We've got an urban design consultant, Juris Berzins, who is going around to all downtown businesses and offering his services free of charge in helping to make the building exteriors more attractive to the public."

Berzins, a Toronto consultant, has designed a Victorian-era theme for downtown Acton, and the BIA is pointing toward the Doll Emporium as a model of what can be done.

"Acton merchants have to do some new thinking about how to attract and serve those tourists," explains Rennie.

"The BIA is buying new Christmas decorations and we continue to manage the downtown planters in the summer. We also pay a student to sweep the streets, water the planters and take care of the weeds."

Talk about tangible results!



LETTERS

POWER thanks its volunteers for effort

To the Editor,

A celebration sponsored by POWER was held last Wednesday at Andrews Scenic Acres, for the passing of Bill 62 in the Ontario Legislature and the prohibition of dumps in the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area. This is important to Halton Hills on two accounts.

First, it will save the taxpayers of Halton Hills over \$1 million in the cost of an environmental assessment hearing (E.A.H.). This

is based on the cost to the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth of \$1.4 million to the end of May for an E.A.H. on a dump in an old quarry that is currently in progress.

Second, it removes the concerns the community might have that the leachate will effect the drinking water for both rural and urban users.

For those who might have received incorrect directions to the celebration, we are sorry you were not there.

For all those who supported POWER in the past by helping with research, garage sales, and delivering newsletters and who could not attend this event, please accept our thanks for all your effort and concern for the community.

Fraser Robin,
Director, POWER

We don't need any more criminals

To the Editor,

Ahhh! What's the matter with us? We must be the wimps of the world!

Bob MacDonald's Toronto Sun column (June 24) indicates:

- 25,000 deportation orders were issued last year;
- 9,000 were carried out (only

36 per cent)

• 3,000 criminals, who have been ordered deported, are still at large.

Why do we put up with this? Please, please, anyone who thinks this is deplorable, phone, write, fax, your elected officials and insist — get these people out of this country! *And, do it now!*

Dick MacDuffee,
Palgrave, Ont.

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

A Weekly Round-Up of Coming Events in Acton & Area

July and August, Tuesdays — 2 pm: Reading is a magic trip at the Acton Public Library. Children participating in the Independent reading club are invited to attend a weekly 45-minute program of fun activities.

July and August, Fridays — 2 pm: The Acton Public Library holds a regular drop-in craft session all summer long. There is no fee, and registration is not required.

July 4, 6, 11, 13, Monday, Wednesday (evenings) — 6:30 to 9:30 pm: First Aid Course to be held at St. John's Anglican Church, Stewarttown. For info call Yvon Essiembre, 853-4889.

July 17, Sunday — 1 pm to 5 pm: Surprise "80th" Birthday Party for Jim McKnight at the Acton Legion (Games Room). If you would like to drop by and extend to Dad your best wishes, we will be happy to see you!

July 22, Friday — 2 to 4 pm: Beat the heat the Hawaiian way! Come out to the public swim at the Acton Indoor Pool and enjoy some fun and games.

August 15 to 19, Monday to Friday, 9 am to 11:45 am: Daily Vacation Bible School at Acton Baptist Church, 80 Mill St. E. Ages 5-12. Fee for the week is \$5. Call 853-0690.

THE ACTON Tanner

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