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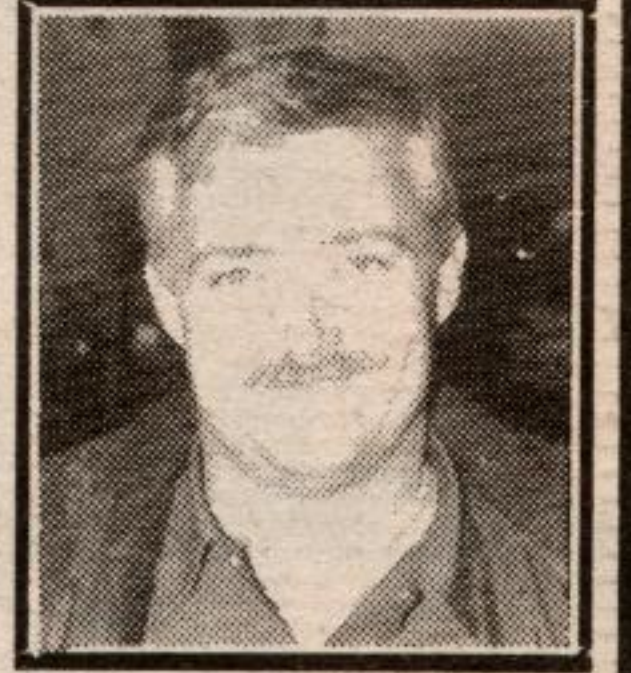
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1994

Holiday parties have workers in Christmas spirit

BY DOUG HARRISON
 The Acton Tanner

Christmas is fast approaching, and that means power shopping and Power Rangers are on the minds of many Acton parents.

However the mood is different at many local businesses as staffers are either frantically organizing, anxiously awaiting or have already enjoyed their yearly reminiscing session — the annual office Christmas party.

Last week, *The Tanner* approached three large and two small Acton businesses and inquired as to how each was going to spread their holiday cheer.

About 150 staff and guests from both the Milton and Acton IGA stores enjoyed a roast beef dinner and a night of dancing on the weekend at the Acton Legion.

"It's a time to get together, thank the employees and get into the Christmas spirit," says Acton manager Kelly McArthur, who adds IGA has run a holiday party for about 25 years.

Plus means much more!

Readers of *The Acton Tanner* will be getting something extra with this week's edition. Our first-ever PLUS! supplement hits the streets today!

December's installment of our new once-a-month PLUS! will feature many holiday gift ideas from area advertisers. The second section also includes some Christmas-time articles for your interest and enjoyment.

To cover some of the cost, each employee took \$1 off their pay cheque through the year, while IGA covered the balance.

Also, the money was put toward purchasing flowers for any employees who were sick and unable to attend the event. McArthur says Acton IGA conducts an internal gift exchange.

At a larger company, like BPCO on Main Street, a gift exchange isn't easy, so each department gets together for lunch.

As well, a week before Christmas, BPCO will hold a dinner and dance at the Guelph Legion for 200 people, including 120 hourly employees, 40 salary workers and 40 retirees.

After lavish affairs in the '70s and '80s, a downsize in the company and a faltering economy, BPCO's parent company Emco Ltd. has deemed the Christmas function be self-funded.

So a Christmas social committee was formed two years ago to raise money for the event through barbecues, 50-50 draws, etc.

"With shift work involved, we make sure it's accessible for everyone," committee member Dave Evans says. "It's a good time, a decent meal and not too lavish."

Likewise, the Hide House transferred their party this year from a formal gathering at the Legion to a casual meal at Jack Tanners for 55 of the 75 employees.

"We usually get together the first Monday in December before the season gets busy," says Susan Allen, assistant general manager. "Monday is the quietest night for us and the restaurant."

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KRIS KRINGLE AMONG THE 'PRINGLES'!

Acton youngsters Kara DeVaun, left, and sister Leanna, couldn't resist a pre-Christmas visit with Santa at IGA on Friday. The jolly old elf flew into town for a two-hour visit and returned on Saturday. Mom (Sue) also got up on Santa's knee. (Doug Harrison photo)



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