

ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson



Making memories

In a moment of genius on the weekend, I had an idea, and it turned out to be a good one.

Working at Acton's community newspaper, I felt it was my duty to participate in Acton's most recent community event – the Deck the Halls wreath contest, sponsored by the BIA.

And after seeing what our staff could do with a few ornaments and some film, making our wreath for the contest, I was curious to see what the other businesses in town would come up with.

So on Saturday we planned our route, bundled up, and the kids and I headed downtown to decide for ourselves who had the best decorated wreath.

With some 20 or so wreaths to judge, it was not an easy decision. There are, quite obviously, some creative and artistic souls in this town. In my opinion, Andy's, the I.G.A. and Royal City Realty had the most beautiful wreaths.

I was also taken with the imaginative and humorous – ways some business owners decorated their wreaths to 'fit' their business. The Red Dog Cafe, Home Hardware, Power Entertainment and the Bank of Montreal all made clever use of the tools of their trade to decorate their wreaths.

My personal favourite was the wreath hanging at Acton Motors – wrapped with booster cables and bits of wire, and using spark plugs and dashboard lights as decoration, the wreath was clever, attractive, amusing and reflected what went on inside the shop.

Even though the contest is over, it's not too late to check out the wreaths for yourself, and see if you agree with me. Kudos to all who participated in what I hope will become an annual event!

Our tour of downtown Acton turned out to be a winner too. Not only did we see all the beautiful wreaths, but we went into a few shops we hadn't been in before and bought a few more Christmas gifts. We also ran into the Acton Citizens' Band, who were performing at the Red Dog Cafe, and saw some of the Hands Up Puppeteers with their puppets, who were out promoting their show. It was a fun family outing.

It brought to mind the many times my parents, sisters and I headed to downtown Toronto to see the windows at Simpson's when I was kid. We too would bundle up for the subway ride down. We'd look at the windows (always appreciated with oohs and ahhs from the crowds), have lunch in Simpson's cafeteria overlooking Queen Street, do a bit of Christmas shopping, and go skating at Nathan Phillip's Square.

It's so hard to find the time before Dec. 25 to do these simple yet fun things. I know I should have been home on Saturday finishing some sewing, or getting the decorations up, or doing some baking.

But I'm glad I took the time to enjoy the season, even in some small way. One day the kids might forget tromping through the snow in the cold with the dog tugging on his leash the whole time, and be left with a terrific Christmas memory.



LETTERS

Tax assessment tips

To the Editor,

I am submitting the following guidelines for anyone planning to appeal their new tax assessment.

While assessments can be appealed, the onus is on the taxpayer to prove an error has been made by the provincial assessors, who decided what your property was worth in 1992. This may require some research.

If you think your assessment is too high, you must file an appeal by Jan. 9, 1996.

What you should look into are

the following points:

1. Ensure the assessor has applied the correct information about your lot size, building size and building description.

2. Ask what comparisons the assessor applied to determine the 1992 market value of your home.

3. Review the assessment rolls at the town hall to ensure your property value is fair in comparison to similar properties in your area.

4. Speak to knowledgeable real estate people and obtain sale prices of similar properties.

5. Consult with neighbours who may have sold or purchased a property similar to your own.

6. Visit the Land Registry Office, which has details on the sale of all properties in your area.

Rick Bonnette
Acton Councillor

Probe at your door

To the Editor,

Pollution Probe, one of Canada's foremost environmental organizations, is coming door-to-door in Acton and Rockwood during mid-December, to get residents' views on pollution issues and to raise funds.

Acton/Rockwood residents will get the chance to learn about Pollution Probe's latest achievements in protecting the quality of our air and water and to share with the canvassers their local and global environmental concerns.

This is also an opportunity for residents to help fight back against pollution – by pledging a tax-creditable donation in support of the group's environmental work.

A non-profit organization, Pollution Probe depends on the financial support of individuals to achieve its goals of reducing pol-

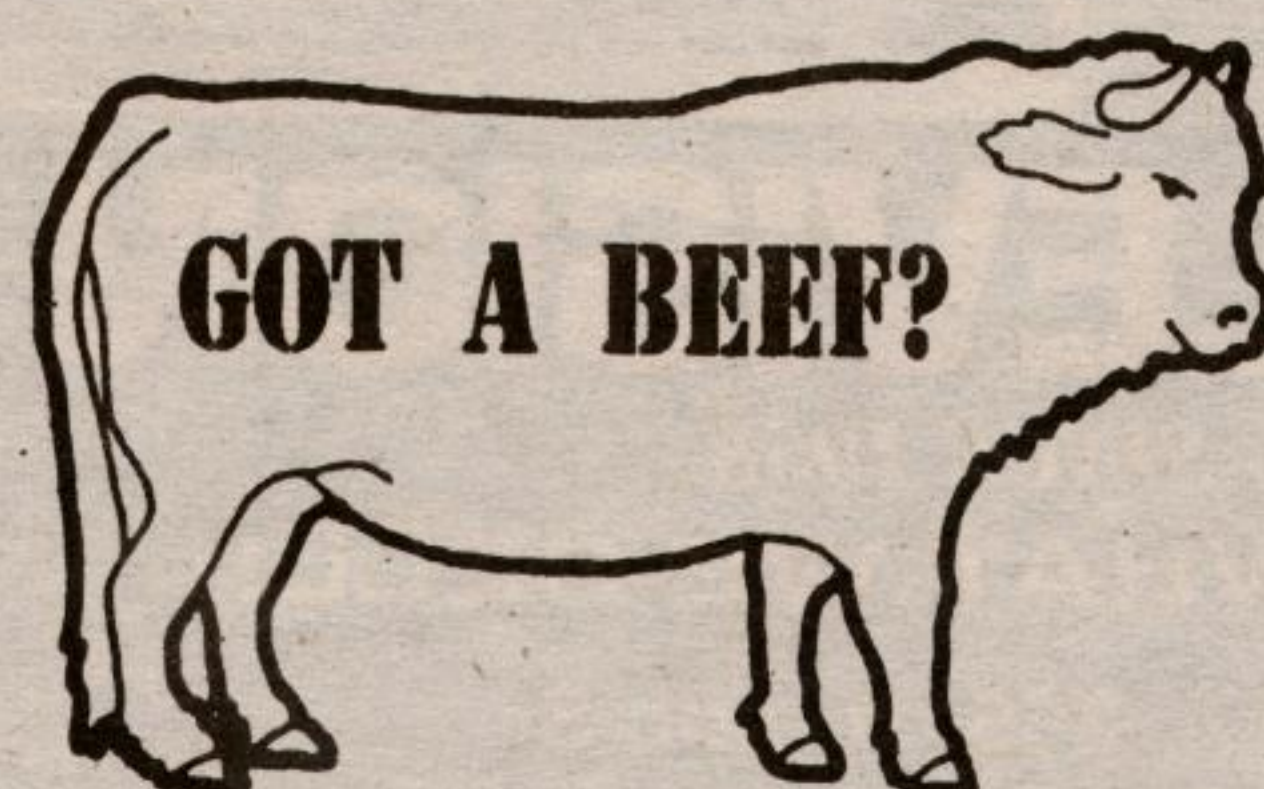
lution to protect human health and the environment. Donations by individuals account for almost 60 per cent of the organization's total revenue, with less than five per cent coming from government.

Individual donations have helped Pollution Probe achieve many impressive victories since it was founded more than 25 years ago. These include a ban on DDT use in Canada, the introduction of recycling programs in Ontario and the removal of lead from gasoline.

Current projects include reducing harmful smog and ground-level ozone, and phasing out mercury in the Great Lakes Basin. Pollution Probe's efforts are important now that budget cuts are prompting governments to spend less.

For more information, speak with the canvasser who comes to your door, or call (416) 926-1907.

Shirlene Courtis
Pollution Probe



Write a Letter to the Editor!

THE ACTON Tanner

"Neighbourhood News" from Acton's Award-Winning Hometown Newspaper

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