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'HOMETOWN PAPER, NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS!'

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 1996

Rowdy hockey fans will be barred from arena

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
 The Acton Tanner

Local minor hockey officials hope that the Town's tough, new, no tolerance attitude will quash the atrocious behaviour of some spectators at recent Midget hockey games at the Acton Arena.

The spectators' fighting, verbal assaults on players and referees, littering of the ice with coins and intimidation of visiting fans and player family members, forced the

Acton Sabres Minor Hockey Association to hire pay-duty police to patrol two recent Midget games.

During a previous Midget game, nine police cruisers responded to problems at the arena during a game with Arthur, when several players refused to quit fighting and one parent threw a 45-gallon drum onto the ice.

While both representatives of the Acton Minor Hockey and the Ontario Minor Hockey Association

downplayed the seriousness of the incidents in interviews with *The Tanner*, Halton Hills Superintendent of Facilities Paul Stover, said it is serious.

"There is a whole host of problems and unsafe things going on at the Acton arena that we are not going to accept any longer."

"Spectators have reefered on the glass, spit on people, and intimidated players and other fans to the point you almost need a police

escort to get out of the building," Stover said.

After insisting that the Acton Minor Hockey Association hire and pay for pay-duty police at several games, Stover said both the OMHA and Acton officials are co-operating to try to solve the problems.

People entering the arena were given a letter from the local Association, warning that the Town will issue trespass notices, which will be registered with the police, and be barred from the arena for one year if they misbehave.

Acton arena manager John Archibald, who was caught in one recent melee, said the mob mentality can be scary.

"At the first sign of trouble we will call the police immediately and we usually have a rink assistant on with the full-time staff during the Midget games so we have a witness if anything happens," Archibald said. "I heard that other fans and other teams are scared to come to the Town to play."

Acton Minor Hockey Association

president Dave McIntyre said a "few bad apples" are to blame for the problems.

"You can't call these instigators fans - they are teenage spectators, and not just from Acton, who can't control themselves."

"Our Association got together and decided to issue a warning letter to show not only the Town, the OHMA and the rest of our league that we are serious about these problems," McIntyre said, as he noted that minor hockey can't afford to pay \$246 per game to hire pay-duty police.

McIntyre explained that the recent police involvement should not reflect negatively on the local minor hockey association.

"You can talk to different hockey centres where they've had on-going problems and not just with Midgets, but with Bantam and Peewee teams as well.

"There is nothing negative about our hockey team, or the organization in one way, shape or form," he explained.

For more, see page 14.



A JOB WELL DONE!

The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce awarded Tuitman's Garden Centre with its Business of the Month award last Friday. At left, Dave Manes, Chamber president, presents the award to business owners Elly and Len Tuitman, with the assistance of Pat Hatch, chair of membership service and Anne Sidebottom, executive director of the Chamber. (Eve Martin photo)

Christmas sales up for Acton businesses

BY DOUG HARRISON
 The Acton Tanner

Ron Kuiken, owner of Halton Hills Furniture and Appliances, figured his business was "off to the races" following the Quebec referendum. But Ontario Premier Mike Harris' subsequent cutbacks stalled sales by about 30 per cent during the Christmas season.

"He could have waited until after Christmas," the Mill Street merchant complained on Tuesday. "People are cutting back on major purchases, unsure if they're going to have a job."

But in a *Tanner* mini-poll of five Acton businesses, four re-

ported increases in Christmas sales from a year ago.

While that may suggest that the economy is improving, if only marginally, Kuiken has yet to catch that wave.

He said sales did pick up during the two weeks before Christmas, but downplayed that to impulse buying. November, on the other hand, was fairly quiet and a usually respectable December was noticeably poor this season.

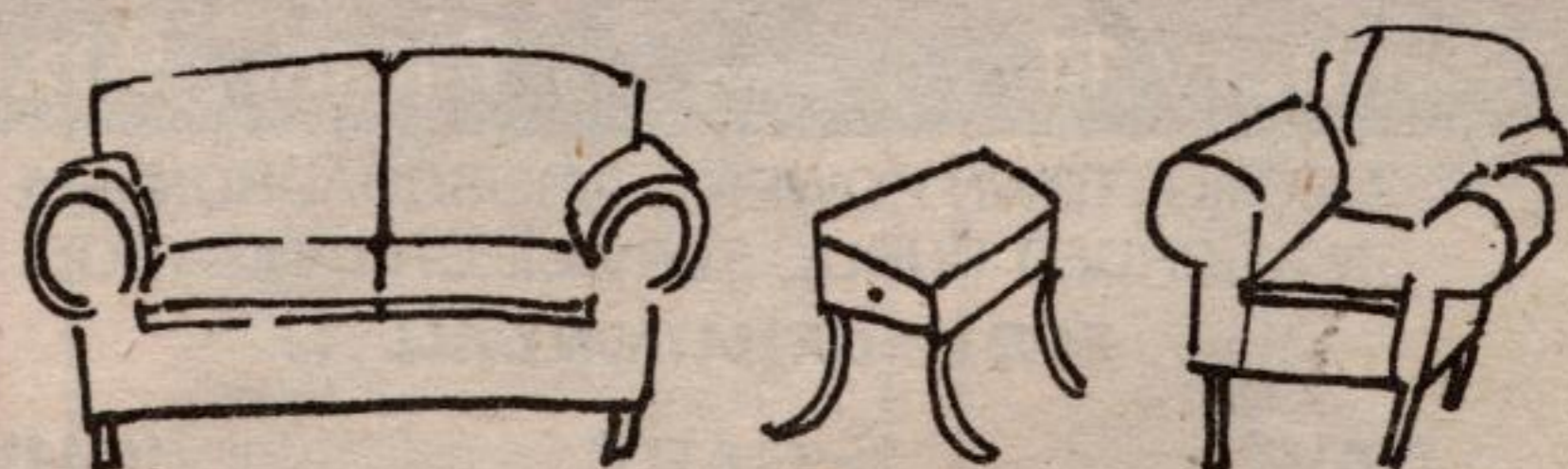
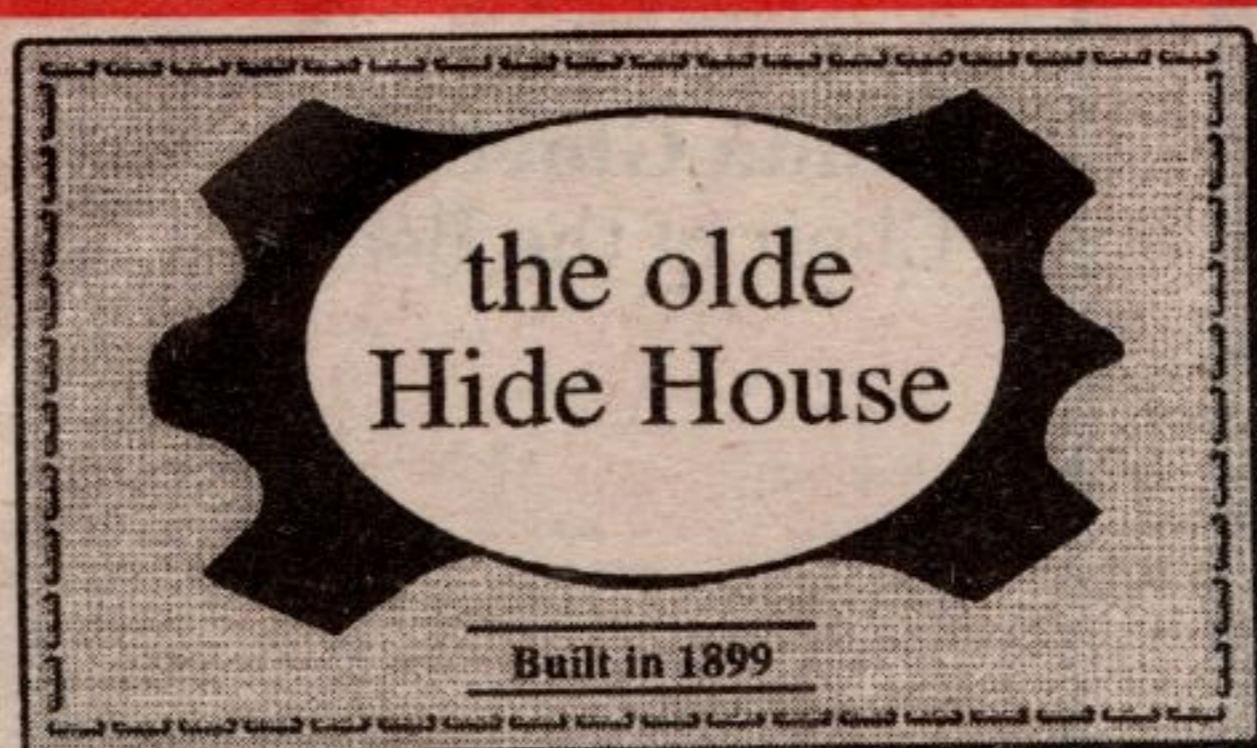
"Last year I sent out a four-page colour flyer that did very well," recalls Kuiken, "but an eight-page black-and-white one with the same

See INCREASED, Page 2

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