

GRAPE VINE

Bruce Hood Travel and the Halton Credit Union.

Plant care speaker

Local resident Linda Ellis will be speaking at the Acton Horticultural Society's next meeting on Tuesday, March 19 at 7:30 pm at Knox Presbyterian Church.

Linda is a landscape architect who employs her expertise at Blue Springs Golf Course. She will be giving tips on plant care and design, all ideas which can be used in home gardens. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting.

For more information, call Max at 853-0001 or Trina at 853-0519.

New location in sight

Optometrist Dr. John Pond will be moving his practice to the corner of Mill and Bower Streets in September. Dr. Pond, who had been leasing an office at 20 Mill St. for more than five years, has bought the former residence of Ina Mellon.

"With the practice growing and extra space needed for equipment, it just made sense to move," he said. "We're going to try to keep the house and especially the gardens as close to what they were."

Renovations, including creating parking spots in the back of the house, will begin in the summer.

Blood donor clinic

The quarterly Red Cross Blood Donor Clinic will be held Thursday, March 21 at the Acton Legion hall from 5 to 8:30 pm. Babysitting will be available.

The Red Cross asks that you bring your donor card or some photo identification.

For more details, call Joe at 853-4686 or Julia at 853-4896.



SIGN ME UP! A sure sign of spring means registration for a new season of sports, including soccer, baseball and lacrosse, which 11-year-old Justin McPherson had his sights on recently during the Acton Rams' registration, which he attended with mom Diana. (Eve Martin photo)

School history lesson

The Esquesing Historical Society explores the history of the "little red schoolhouses" in the area at its meeting tonight (Wednesday).

The earliest schools in Esquesing were opened by a group of parents and were called Common schools. Parents paid a fee to send their children to school, which usually paid the teacher's salary.

The first schools opened in the 1820s. Area parents started schools in the Scotch Block, Churchill, Ballinafad, Hornby, Acton and Norval. Everyone is welcome to find out more about these schoolhouses at 7:30 pm at Knox Presbyterian Church in Georgetown.

Slow bowl so far

Rotary Club member Rob Charette reported Monday that local interest is off to a slow start for the Club's Bowl-O-Rama.

The club is hoping to raise money to purchase computer equipment for McKenzie-Smith Bennett school. Teams of four will compete during bowling week, April 14 to 21, for prizes including a trip for four to Florida. Cost per person is \$20.

Rob said he's looking forward to the community getting involved. "Remember, it's for our kids."

Entry forms are available at MSB school, Halton Hills Furniture, Acton Bowling Lanes, CIBC,

Sometimes bland can be good

The big news last week was the federal budget. There seems to be a mixed reaction to Mr. Martin's third effort at setting a national economic agenda. In retrospect, I see it as a non-event.

I was pleased that Martin didn't raise gasoline taxes. Except for those who live in major cities, commuting is a fact of life. For those of us in sales, a gasoline tax is just another form of income tax. Notwithstanding those who harangue anyone in sight to maintain the status quo, dare we hope that government is finally getting the message that there are no more tax dollars out here?

I couldn't find much in the budget to address the pressing unemployment question. Payroll taxes are job killers in this country. I had thought Mr. Martin might take action on this issue but so far - nada. Until the government makes it more economical to hire additional workers instead of paying overtime to existing staff, the big employers won't be hiring to any large extent. Small business, in many cases, just can't afford to pay the payroll taxes.

I thought Mr. Martin's comments that "banks pay a lot of taxes" was ill advised. After record (some might say obscene) profit years, Canadians now hate banks more than they do the government. The problem is not that the banks should pay more taxes. Just because they're profitable, why send more money to Ottawa for them to fritter away. It would have been better for the Liberals to change the Bank Act so service fees were reduced and the banks forced to stop downsizing and hire some folks. It's probably easier to go after east coast fishermen than the banks though.

The feds, through Mr. Martin, have finally acknowledged that there is a malaise spreading through the population. Those who have been living off government programs can't see how they can carry on with substantially reduced benefits. The middle class, who are staggering under today's taxation load, see their disposable income shrink every month. Many, myself included, are working longer hours

The Way I See It

With Mike O'Leary



than ever before and are scared they will lose everything they have. The middle class entrepreneur has traditionally been the driving force behind job creation. Frightened people don't take on the extra obligations of hiring someone.

The silly socialist brigade is still droning on about "taxing the rich." Hell, if we taxed everyone making \$100,000 per year into bankruptcy, we couldn't solve the problems in Newfoundland, let alone the rest of Canada.

Instead, government should be encouraging people to create wealth and jobs. Who cares how much an employer earns if they hire 30 or 40 people?

I fear the changes to the tax laws regarding spousal support will only cause more problems. I think the number of "deadbeat Dads" will increase, not decrease. The number of cases going to court will only enrich the legal profession and the federal treasury, which stands to gain some \$350 million. Mr. Martin's boast of "no new taxes" rings rather hollow to those paying support. Minister of Injustice, Allan Rock, disclaims such accusations of future turmoil. Of course, Rock is a lawyer by trade, isn't he?

In the end, the budget appears to be a rather bland document. There is some good news and hope contained in it though. At least the Liberals didn't screw things up more than they already are.

Those who think Canadians are becoming a cruel and uncaring society were proven dead wrong last Sunday. Deidre Scholtz, a little girl from Milton, desperately needs a bone marrow transplant. A call went out for volunteers to have their blood tested in search of a match.

The clinic, held at Bishop Reding High School in Milton, was scheduled to start at 1 pm. By 1:07 the parking lot was full and cars were parked on the south side of Main Street in front of the school. At 4 pm, the lot was still full and cars lined both sides of Main, from Thompson Road to the James Snow Parkway. The response was overwhelming.

Many others couldn't get near the school. Our local police tried to go en masse but were frustrated in their efforts because they couldn't be off the road for the time it would take to work through the line up.

Is this the sign of a selfish and hard-hearted society? I think not!

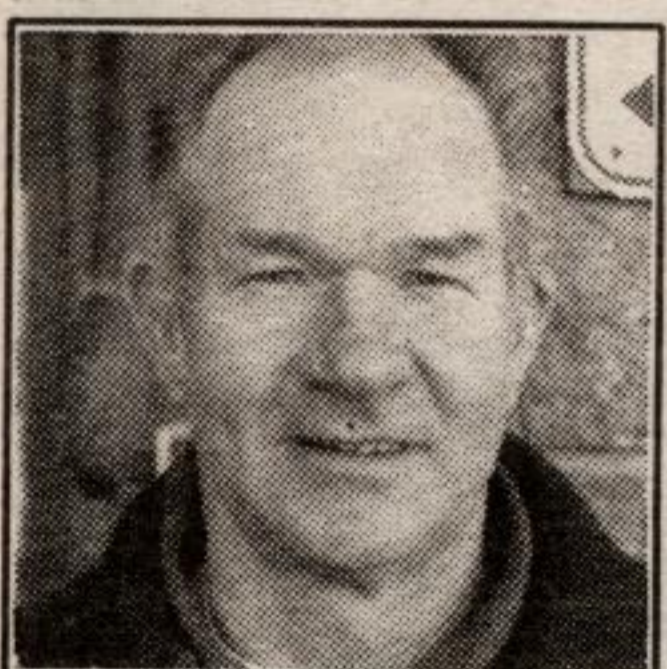
Next Sunday we celebrate the joyous feast of St. Patrick. I would be remiss if I did not extend to everyone a Happy St. Paddy's Day.

With "the Day" falling on a Sunday, I'm anticipating that a local Italian priest, who will remain anonymous (his initials are Fr. Valeriotte), will again proffer his scandalous theory that Patrick is from really southern Ireland - Italy to be exact.

It's issues like this, dear readers, that cause us to celebrate St. Paddy's Day in a somewhat liquid manner. But then, it's better than no excuse at all.

Happy St. Patrick's Day to one and all. Good health, good luck and good-bye. See you next week.

HEY! Are you part Irish or wish you were?



"Yes I am part Irish. My wife and I just decorate the house with shamrocks and leprechauns. St. Patrick's Day isn't even celebrated in Ireland. I don't drink, so it's just a normal day for me."

Barry Cole, R.R.4, Rockwood

"Yes I am. I've researched back seven generations. My family left during the potato famine in Ireland and settled in the States. Our family is the only one to move here. St. Patrick's Day is more family history than a party."

Kelly McPhail, R.R.3, Acton



"No. I'm a Newfie and proud to be who I am. St. Patrick's Day is good for everyone to enjoy and have something to celebrate, but I'll probably be working. It's just another day to me."

Brandy Sheppard, McDonald Boulevard

"I don't wish to be Irish. No reason. I'm just happy who I am. St. Patrick's Day is my parents' wedding anniversary, so I'll give them a call. Otherwise, it's just another day."

Carol Bonus, Rockwood



Same time last year ...

Santa Claus Parade Chair Bill Spielvogel reveals a \$1,070 net loss for the 1994 parade ... Grade 7 and 8 McKenzie-Smith students open a Breakfast Club, following the example set at Robert Little school ... New Business Improvement Association (BIA) chair Edna Perkons says in order for Acton to prosper, the BIA must act as a team.