

GRAPE VINE

solely to funding and promoting arthritis research. Campaign chairman Jos Bosvoom said he hopes to have at least 25 canvassers on the streets this month. The fundraising goal in Acton is \$4,500.

Fair foul-up

A scheduling glitch means Halton public school students won't go on school-supervised trips to Education Day at the Acton Fall Fair, but students are invited to come, as long as they are accompanied by an adult.

Education Day chairperson Linda Inglis said all events will take place as planned, despite the fact that Friday, Sept. 20 has been designated as a professional development day by the Board, which means no school and no class trips to the popular Education day, now in its 9th year.

"We don't know how many students to expect but have planned a full day of events for those who do come with their parents, caregivers or older brothers or sisters."

St. Joseph students *don't* get the day off, and will attend Education Day at the fair with their classes, as they have done in the past.

Charity tourney

Blue Springs Golf Course will host the annual charity golf tournament for the North Halton Association for the Developmentally Handicapped (N.H.A.D.H) next Wednesday (Sept. 18).

The tournament will include a shot gun start, special events, dinner and a prize presentation.

The cost is \$150 per golfer. For more details call (905) 873-8181.

Ambitious amount

\$230,000. That's how much the new Acton Arena and Community Centre fundraising committee hopes to raise to help pay for upgrades at the \$5.1 million facility.

The goal and the name of the fundraising chairperson - Acton's Kathrin Andersen - were revealed at a special Council meeting last Tuesday. Andersen, a special projects co-ordinator for Peel Police, said committee members would hold their first meeting this week.

"This core committee will work very closely with current and future user groups, along with many community groups, to co-ordinate the fundraising for our new facility," Andersen said, noting the committee will have a booth at the Acton Fall Fair so people can make a donation or learn more about the proposed fundraising events.

Arthritis blitz

Always generous, Acton residents will be asked to dig deep for the Halton-Peel Arthritis Society's annual residential fundraising campaign this month.

Once again, the Acton Knights of Columbus will go door-to-door in a campaign to raise money for the only organization in Canada devoted



Remember the Grade 7 class of Acton Public School in 1943? Daisy Folster was the teacher and maybe you can pick her out of this photo, loaned by Shirley McKeown. Some pupils include: Roy Kirkness, Wes Fountain, George Musselle, Fred Kentner, John Dennis, Eleanor Beatty, Olive Musselle, Phyliss Robertson, Shirley Palmer, Pat Chew, Helen McLaughlin, Joyce Greer, Jacqueline Currie, Joan Ford, Molly Creasey, Marvin Hunter, Jack McCutcheon, Ray Everdell and Martin McCristall.

Let Voltaire settle the issue

Usually I have to content myself with commenting on the mundane issues of the day. (Should we hang child-murderers? (Immediately, if not sooner!) Should the U.S.A. nuke Sadaam? Will my daughters ever finish school? This type of thing.

An editorial in last week's *Acton Tanner* and the subsequent controversy it generated, changed my plans for this week's topic. It's not often that a small town writer gets the chance to speak out on such a pithy issue. Here's what happened.

Two years ago the directors of the C.N.E. Fair pageant and others, put substantial pressure on local fair boards to re-name their pageants from "Miss—Fall Fair" to "Ambassador of the Fair."

The proposition was that the term "Miss" was exclusionary and "sexist." Renaming the winner "Ambassador" was supposed to bring the annual pageant into the '90s as well as being perceived as being more politically-correct.

In Acton, the reaction was swift and vocal. People from the community, fair board officers, past Miss Actons, current contestants and yes, your humble scribbler, all rallied against the change.

At this year's Ontario Fair Board's convention, the Acton group noticed that a number of fairs had changed back to the traditional title. The Acton Agricultural Society Committee, believing it was acting according to the wishes of the community, changed the name back to Miss Acton Fall Fair. The change was announced weeks ago and didn't seem to generate any big reaction. Until last week however, when *Acton Tanner* editor Karen Wetmore entered the debate.

In her editorial, Karen left no doubt she did not like the name "Miss" attached to the title. It was a substantial piece wherein she argued the "Ambassador" title was much more appropriate. She acknowledged the Miss Acton title

The Way I See It

With Mike O'Leary



was traditional, "but even traditions can be altered to fit the time."

Karen proposed that some accommodation should be made for males to participate. Her bottom line was that the "Miss" had to go. "How," she asked, "does Ms. Acton sound to you?"

Sorry Karen, but it sounds like a *ms-take* to me. I had the opportunity to discuss this issue with the hard-working chair of the Miss Acton pageant, Linda Robson, herself a former Miss Acton. Her letter on the page opposite makes the Board's position clear.

Linda, a committed feminist in her own right, made it plain there is no hidden design in the name change. The return to tradition is just that - nothing more, nothing less. It was a direct result of community input. The contestants and sponsors welcomed the move.

The idea of having a male participate is a non-starter. This is a small town and I don't care if you change the name to "Quarterback of the Fair." Any guy who entered would go through hell from his buddies. There's only one high school and no chance of anonymity. For those who think this is a huge injustice, I think you're living in Neverland.

Besides, if the world is as male-dominated as many claim, what's the matter with having a contest skewed towards women?

Several board members contacted me to say that they took Karen's comments personally. That's regrettable because, knowing Karen as I do, I don't believe her piece was meant that way. It's a sensitive issue, but I think the pageant will be even stronger because of the debate. Touchy issues deserve public discussion. I also don't believe that the

pageant will be hurt by the fracas.

When president of the Fair Board Jim Warrington called, I reminded him of the sage advice of early feminist Mae West, who said: "There's no such thing as bad publicity!"

Having said that I disagree with Karen's point of view, let me also say I think she was absolutely right to publish this editorial. There's a larger issue here. As the editor of a community newspaper, Karen has an obligation to focus the spotlight of public scrutiny on anything she perceives to be wrong. The obligation is not to herself; it's to you, the readers. Some people prefer the name Ambassador - maybe they're in the minority. Isn't it in the finest journalistic tradition that the editor of a community newspaper would champion the minority point of view? Would you really want it any other way?

One reason I enjoy writing this column is because there are no taboos. This paper lives with the belief that no ox is too big to be gored, no injustice too small to merit indifference. Karen and I often see things from different perspectives, however, she has never tried to influence my column's slant nor discouraged me from blasting hell out of my target of the week.

The diverse opinions you read here make, I hope, this paper a welcome visitor to your home. If we ever become predictable, we'll be in big trouble.

It was 250 years ago when Voltaire said, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." We stand with Voltaire.

I would remind Linda Robson and the other fair board members of the words of Mark Twain: "When angry, count four; when very angry - swear."

I hope to see you all at the Miss Acton contest, Friday, Sept. 20. Long may she reign.

HEY! What does the Acton Fall Fair mean to you?



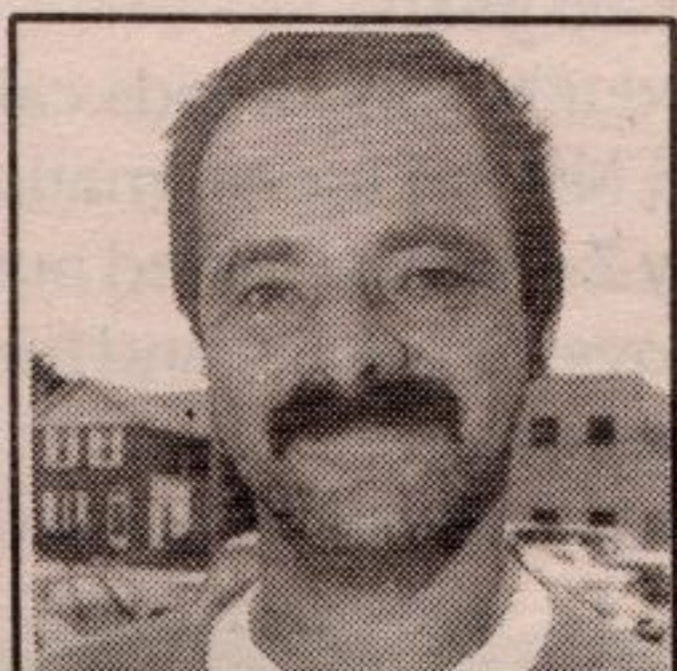
"Great fun for the kids. It's a good family outing and everybody's in a good mood."
Barb Maer, Main Street



"I love being with my friends and having fun together. The midway's the best part!"
Tara Kirk, R. R. #1, Acton



"The family event of the year. We love it and really look forward to it every year."
Lillian and Crystal Landsborough, R.R. #2, Acton



"It brings back people who have moved away. It has a wonderful country, upbeat feeling."
Ron Schmidt, Scene Street