

GRAPE VINE

Photo ID clinic offered

A KidCare photo identification clinic will be held at the Acton Public Library this Saturday (March 8).

Children will receive a free photo and information booklet, which can be used should a child go missing. The photos can also be computer-aged. All are welcome to attend the clinic, which will run from 10:30 am to 5 pm.

Mega Pizza coming soon

How does pizza with hand-tossed, stone baked dough made with distilled water, made with specialty sauces and gourmet toppings sound?

Well, Acton residents will be able to put a new pizza to the taste test within weeks as Mega Pizza comes to town.

Mega Pizza is a franchise operation based in the Kitchener-Waterloo area and the new outlet at 113 Mill St. E. will be operated by Trudy Van Grootel who has lived in Acton for about a year and a half.

"We will offer good prices and a gourmet line of pizzas with take-out and delivery service," Van Grootel said, noting that she'd had over 200 applications for the seven full and part-time employees that she hired.

Van Grootel hopes to have Mega Pizza open by mid-month.

Tobacco controversy surrounds Acton native

Former Acton resident Robert Parker, President of the Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers' Council was in the news last week as the Women's College Hospital Foundation Board voted unanimously to keep him on the Board, despite bitter criticism by anti-smoking groups.

Parker defended his position on the fundraising board saying he was not there to represent a client but because he'd known the hospital for 40 years, that his mother had been a patient and he wanted to be part of the work done there.

Critics complained that Parker's position on the Board was an affront to the thousands of women dying of tobacco-caused lung cancer.

BIA brochure planned

Acton artist Irene McIlveen has been chosen to do the drawings for the BIA's (Business Improvement Area) new walking tour brochure.

The BIA has distributed all of the 10,000 walking tour brochures done in 1994 by Acton High students and is currently working on plans for a new one, which will highlight different historic Acton buildings.

McIlveen, who also produced the drawings for the Tourism Halton committee's driving tour brochure, said that the pen and ink drawings of the old buildings are "fun to draw" because she is "taken with the architectural detail."

The new BIA brochure should be ready by the end of April.



HAT DAY!

Robert Little School celebrated "Hat Day" at school last Friday, where some students also put their best faces forward. Showing off their nifty head-gear and faces only their parents could love, in front from left are Valerie Seeger, Sabastian Mena, Megan Gillberry, Erica Mills and Stephen Yeo. Middle row: Emma Goddard, Matthew Henry and Star Honeywell. Mrs. Black is holding the sign many *Tanner* readers may be wondering about: Why is principal Don Warren always jumping out in front of *The Tanner's* cameras? And where's his hat?

(Karen Wetmore photo)

The truth behind the Eaton's story

The news started to trickle out around mid-afternoon last Thursday. By dinner hour, the unbelievable had been confirmed: Eaton's, after 130 years, was forced to seek protection from the bankruptcy courts.

In the first great war, Eaton's continued to pay staff who were serving overseas. They were one of the first companies who offered benefits to their employees. Eaton's was more like family than a business. My grandfather worked there, as did many others in a much smaller Toronto. Eaton's was as solid as their motto: Goods satisfactory or money refunded. After two world wars, the Great Depression and the recession/depression (whatever!) of the '80s, it's disheartening to think that this once-proud symbol of Canadian retail might was brought to its knees by ... yuppies?

As a boy, Eaton's was a big part of my life. Simpson's was regarded as the "establishment" store; Eaton's was where the working class shopped. It helped, of course, that the Eaton family was originally from Ireland. We were keeping the money in the family, so to speak.

I'm not sure if I remember, or was told so often that I just think I remember, their delivery horses. Eaton's had matching bays and Simpson's had matching greys.

Certainly I remember bread, ice and coal wagons plying their trade up Lauder Avenue in Toronto's west-end Irish/Italian ghetto. I'm not really that old (40 metric), I just have a fantastic memory.

My first bike, a giant three-wheeled trike, was from Eaton's. I can still hear the creaking of the wooden-stepped escalator in the old main store at Queen and Yonge. Does anyone else recall the vacuum tubes which would whisk your money away to the cashier and return in minutes with your change and receipt? The tube would bang into the tray and scare the devil out of me.

Eaton's Christmas parade and windows meant Santa was near and you had to be on your best behaviour. Sure, Simpson's had windows, but they had a lot of clothes and junk in them. Eaton's windows had toys - and Punkinhead! All the guys knew that the real Santa was in Eaton's Toyland. The one in Simpson's was the fake Santa that older kids would talk about.

Even the National Film Board got in the act with a cartoon feature about the young French-Canadian lad who got a hated Toronto Maple

The Way I See It

With Mike O'Leary



Leaf sweater by mistake from Monsieur Eaton. This delightful tale is based on a popular children's book whose title escapes this aforementioned fantastic memory. (F.Y.I.: "The Hockey Sweater" - Ed.)

You're going to hear many stories over the next few weeks as to what caused "the troubles" at Eaton's. Some will blame an intransigent management who would not change with the times. Although a fair measure of the blame has to lie with this group, that's not the whole story. I could tell you tales about dealing with Eaton's buyers for 30 years (I was a very young saleskid) but Publisher Nolan won't let me print those words. It's hard to write a sentence when you can't use the proper descriptive nouns, verbs and adjectives, but you get the idea.

Others will blame the advent of big box stores such as Walmart. I've heard many comments lately about the lack of service and staff at Eaton's. This is a far cry from the old days, when "The Bride" used to work nights and weekends at the Queen Street store to pick up some extra Christmas money.

All of these situations contributed to the current fiscal problems

Eaton's is wrestling with. There is another major factor which not many people know about. I'm proud to bring you the inside story here in *The Tanner*.

Eaton's was sabotaged by the Americans! Yep - it's those damn Yankees. Again! Here's why!

My sister Maureen works for an American-based conglomerate that operates several companies in Canada. Their office used to be right at the Eaton's Centre at the corner of Yonge and Dundas. It's been rumoured that Mr. Eaton used to prowl the elevators to see which floor Maureen would get off at. Then he could dispatch appropriate staff to handle this one-woman shopping spree. Maureen, you see, has elevated shopping to an art form and Eaton's was her favourite store.

It was hard enough for poor Eaton's when Maureen's office was moved to the Royal Bank building, but a few years ago they moved again, to the wilds of Etobicoke. The smart money says this is when the real problems at Eaton's began. When her credit card stopped smokin', Eaton's cash flow started chokin'.

So now you know the rest of the story about Eaton's. I trust they will overcome their troubles. Remember, you got the complete scoop here first.

Them carpet bagging Yankees have struck again!