

**Treat your sweetheart ...**

to a romantic Valentine's fireside dinner and evening of jazz and blues classics featuring George Grossman & Swing Noir at the Halton Region Museum on Saturday, February 8. Doors open at 6 pm, buffet style dinner is at 7, followed by entertainment until 11:30 pm. Cash bar. Tickets are \$35 per person. Advance tickets only at 905-875-2200, ext. 0.

**Tooth Chatter**

by ALEX TRENTON, DENTURIST

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Our office does not charge for consultation. If your dentures are loose, bothersome, damaged or if you just want a check-up, don't hesitate to call our office for a free, no obligation consultation. We would be happy to discuss any concerns or questions you may have regarding your dentures.

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 Alexander Trenton, D.D., F.C.A.D.(A), Denturist  
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 www.georgetowndentureclinic.com

**Horticultural Society Meetings**

The Milton and District Horticultural Society would like to invite newcomers to attend our monthly meetings in 2003. Join us and learn more about gardening. Our meetings include a flower show, a guest speaker, a discussion period and what is going on in the world of horticulture. We hold bus trips, plant exchanges, a plant sale and much more. We are involved in the gardens at the Town of Milton, Milton Public Library and Chris Hadfield Park. Our Meetings are held at the Royal Canadian Legion, Charles Street in Milton, the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m.

**WINTER WEEDS**

Learn how to identify winter weeds and their role in nature on March 2nd. Meet at the J.C. Taylor Nature Centre (2:00 pm) with binoculars if you have them. This walk is free with a suggested donation of \$3 per person. For more information please call the Arboretum at 519-824-4120, ext. 52113.

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**Just Kidding Around**



It's that magical time of year when Valentines and frostbite abound! There are quite a few family events taking place in the area this month, some with a Valentine's theme and others that are just old-fashioned family fun.

The Town of Halton Hills is offering a one-night workshop for kids aged 15 and up with an interest in *Watercolours & Drawing*. Join a professional artist as he provides guidance, advice and tips on how to get started. This workshop takes place February 3rd from 7-9 p.m. in the Art Room at the Georgetown District High School. Cost for the workshop is \$20. Bring paper, watercolours and pencils to the class. For more information, please call 873-2601, ext. 2262.

Enjoy a day of entertainment, food and displays at the *Heritage Day Multicultural Festival* on Sunday, February 16th. This event is free and runs from noon to 4 p.m. at the Wellington County Museum and Archives in Guelph. More information is available by calling 519-846-0916 or by checking the website at www.wcm.on.ca.

Crawford Lake invites families to take part in Snowflakes and Snowsnakes on Sunday, February 9th. Celebrate the magic of winter with legends in the longhouse, marshmallow roasts, native games, craft making and more. A special event fee applies to Snowflakes and Snowsnakes; you can find out more by calling 905-854-0234.

The Ontario Early Years Centre begins a nine-week program for parents on February 6th from 1-3 p.m. *You Make the Difference* is designed to help parents promote children's social, cognitive and language development through positive parent-child interaction. This workshop is free of charge and daycare is provided on a first-come, first-serve basis. To register, or to find out more, please call 905-876-1244, ext. 10.

Upstairs at Loblaw's Cooking School offers a wide range of kids' cooking classes. Two parent and tot programs are offered this month. *Sweetheart Cookies* takes place on February 10th and offers the fun of playing with and shaping cookie dough to create heart-shaped cookies. While the cookies bake, the tots can make a special Valentine's card. *Clay Play*, on February 24th, offers a chance to measure, mix, and use your hands to create both a favourite colour of no-cook clay and a masterpiece. Both of these classes take place from 10:30-11:30 a.m. and have a cost of \$7 each. Kids aged 6-11 might enjoy the class on the *World's Simplest Breads* being offered on Saturday, February 1st. Discover the steps for making a master yeast recipe and try your hand at shaping a mini traditional loaf, pretzels and a teddy bear-shaped loaf. This class runs from 10:00 a.m.-noon for a cost of \$12. For more information on any of the kids' cooking classes, please call Christine Thomas at 905-875-6871.

Kids from grades 5-8 can dis-

cover that *It's Hip to Be Me!* at a workshop presented by the Town of Milton, Mondays from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. This program runs from February 3rd to March 31st at the Milton Seniors Activity Centre and is designed to aid in the development of positive self-esteem through fun and interactive activities, events, sports, guest speakers, and discussions. Topics will include communication, anger management skills, body image, decision-making and more. This program has a cost of \$62 and additional information is available by calling Tammy Corless at 905-875-1681, ext. 227.

The Town of Milton is also offering two Valentine themed activities this month. *Valentine Escape* is aimed at 6-12 year olds and takes place on February 14th from 6-9 p.m. Crafts, games and Valentine activities are provided along with a pizza dinner. This activity takes place at the Milton Leisure Centre for a cost of \$35. Also at the Milton Leisure Centre is *Be Mine*, a program aimed at kids aged 6 - 8 years on Saturday, February 8th. Running from 1:00-3:00 p.m., this program offers baking, playing games, and making special Valentines for family and friends. The cost for *Be Mine* is \$23. To find out more about either of these programs, please call the Town of Milton at 905-878-7252, ext. 2189.

Well, that wraps it up for this month. I'll be back next month with some suggestions for March Break.

**New Milton Players Show**

Assumptions can be dangerous as the Manningshams are about to find out it in Angel Street, the latest production by the Milton Players Theatre Group. Written by Patrick Hamilton, this play is a must-see for any fan of mystery and suspense. The Manningshams may look like a happy and loving couple, but looks can be deceiving.

All performances take place at the Milton Seniors Activity Centre, 500 Childs Drive. Show tickets are available for February 7, 13, and 14 for \$12 a person. Dinner theatre tickets are available for February 8 and 15 for \$30 a person. Tickets can be purchased at Delacourts in Milton. For more information call 905-875-0629 or log onto www.miltonplayers.com.



**Givin' you the dirt - Winter Interest**

By SEAN JAMES N.P.D.

I'm sure folks have already had just about enough of winter. My dad was ready for spring on Boxing Day. As a landscaper, the season used to get me down. From the fall of the last leaf to the first blooming bulb, I was the only thing that had any colour - blue - a deep blue actually.

Then one day I got tired of my constant blue funk and decided to look for the beauty inherent in winter. Granted it takes a bit of effort, but I believe the time has come to share some of these insights with you.

The landscape needs "bones." Bones are the plants that have form in the winter.

Evergreens, by their very nature, have structure. Dwarf conifers are those plants that grow very slowly but over time will not outgrow your yard. My favourites are the False Cypress varieties (Chamaecypress); they have great form and colour. There are some wonderful weeping specimens such as Weeping White Pine and Weeping Norway Spruce. The Blue Star Juniper is nice, as is the Golden Canadian Juniper (Juniperus communis 'Depressa Aurea'). Another great plant for the patient gardener is the Dwarf Rocky Mountain Fir (Abies lasiocarpa 'Compacta'). It has a pyramidal form, the blue of a Blue

Spruce, and yet it's nice and soft to touch. At 10 years old, it will only be about four feet tall.

Dwarf conifers range in size, habit and speed of growth. Read the tag at the nursery and do a bit of research. And remember to think long-term. Since they're slow growing, they're not cheap.

Many deciduous and broad-leaved evergreen shrubs provide winter interest. Two examples are Corkscrew Hazel and Japanese Maple. The familiar Red-twigged Dogwood has a lovely sister, Winter Beauty Dogwood with great fall colour and orange twigs tipped with red. The Oak-leaved Hydrangea is lovely all year; in winter, it has cinnamon bark which peels away in fluffy layers like a birch. Mahonia is a broad-leaved evergreen with purple winter colour on glossy leaves. It also has yellow flowers in spring and blue fruit in late summer.

The Witch Hazel blooms with delicate yellow flowers in December or in February/March depending on the variety. I'm not kidding. Snow will be on the ground when these shrubs are in full bloom. It is great as a specimen in the lawn in full sun, or in a partially shaded garden. Yellow fall colour is a bonus.

Don't forget about seed heads. Certain shrubs such as Spirea, Butterfly Bush and more so Beautybush (Kolkwitzia) carry their spent flowers and seeds into the winter. These hold the snow in interesting ways.

Make a list now of attractive plants out in the winter landscape. Try to see with better eyes through that drab window into the more subtle beauty of form, texture, and delicate browns, greys, golds and whites. Tack that list to the fridge and on the day the garden center opens in the spring, rush out and buy some plants. Put them where they can be seen from your windows. Be patient and enjoy.

**TIP OF THE MONTH:**

Don't over-water your plants in the winter. More plants die from over-watering than from under-watering. Before you water your plants, stick your finger in the soil. If the soil is cool and moist, check it again in a day or two. An over-watered plant will wilt just as if it were under-watered. This is because the roots are drowning. If you have over-watered a plant, it is important to keep the soil just right for a month or so while it regrows new roots. And never let a plant sit in a saucer of water.

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