

It's worth the drive...

Continued from page 1

"The Town of Halton Hills purchased the property at 15 Main Street North in Acton in 2003, removed the existing building and created another parking lot. Access to the lot is from Willow Street, north of Mill Street. About 55 new parking spaces for the downtown Acton business area have been provided. In addition, parking on Mill Street and Main Street and Willow Street has been changed to 'No Parking' zones to better facilitate the traffic congestion at the busy intersection of Main Street in Acton and helps with sight distances for traffic entering Mill Street from Willow Street."

Transport trucks trying to make their way through downtown Acton are expected to benefit from this new situation and when one thinks about the congestion that is involved with various cars slowing down to obtain parking, it seems like a well thought out business decision.

But the reduction of downtown parking results in shoppers becoming frustrated - they don't want to put the time or effort into hunting for a spot just so they can run in for a coffee or a can of pop. And of course, this means downtown businesses are affected and they aren't happy about it.

A longtime employee of the Starlight Café on 35 Mill Street is already noticing a drop in customers -

especially in the mornings. The customers she was used to seeing are no longer coming in. Others, she admits, are not as easily deterred. "It's a funny situation. Some folks are taking their chances by parking illegally and getting off with a warning."

In addition, the elderly community within Acton who enjoy a regular morning drop-in for coffee will find it increasingly difficult when the winter months arrive. Parking further away from what has always been a comfortable destination and a much needed outing will force many to stop coming in.

The Scotia Bank is in the process of bringing its case to council but must refrain from comment at present due to the sensitive nature of the issue. It is particularly affected by the new parking situation and is not about to let it remain the way it is, but its argument, however valid, needs to be presented through proper channels.

Acton is known for far more than leather. In fact, there are many seasonal activities that draw strong interest from surrounding communities. People want to visit the downtown to see what else Acton has to offer but may not be as enthusiastic once they see how limited their choice of parking is.

Already petitions are being passed around for signature from businesses and the patrons who rely on them.

"IT'S A FUNNY SITUATION"

Sasha Trudeau to give the Guelph Lecture this year

On Becoming Canadian

This year, The Guelph Lecture - *On Being Canadian* will be held on November 5 at the River Run Centre in downtown Guelph.

This year's lecture features Alexandre Trudeau, an independent documentary filmmaker and freelance journalist. The son of Pierre Trudeau, Alexandre will screen portions of his films and discuss his experiences living with typical families - in such places as Israel, Liberia, Belgrade, and Baghdad - who tried to live as normally as possible in spite of bombings and hardships. In Baghdad, he lived for 40 days and 40 nights with a family as they endured the "Shock and Awe" bombardment and the U.S.-led occupation. His latest documentary, "The Fence," tells the story of families on either side of the recently erected security barrier between Israel and the West Bank.

The evening will also include remarks by Mading Angeth, a B.C. high school student who says that only from his position here in Canada can he see that there might be a solution to the conflict in his native country of Sudan. Angeth, who left the Sudan 4 years ago, has aspirations to return to the Sudan one day. CBC's Shelagh Rogers says that he is one of "the most impressive

people I have ever interviewed."

The evening will also include live music by House of Velvet. This year's reading features William Whitehead reading from Timothy Findley's *A Nation of One*.

Tickets are available on line at www.riverrun.guelph.on.ca or by calling 763-3000. For further information, visit the website at www.aramosa.org.

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