

14th annual Acton Leathertown Festival was definitely worth the drive

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KAREN COLEMAN

Acton's 14th annual Leathertown Festival attracted an estimated 10,000 visitors last Sunday, the highest attendance Josey Bonnette has seen in her five years of organizing the festival. "For me and my committee, it's the best festival we've put on in the five years I've been co-ordinator," said Josey. "The street was packed all day long." The festival drew in 168 street vendors and around 10 artisans, while entertainers, such as Doug Barr, Princess Karma and Ben Burland on the kids' stage, and Alysha Brooke, LTD and Jennalynn Flesch on the main stage kept audiences captivated all afternoon.

This year's festival had many firsts: the first Leathertown Ambassador, who received many gifts donated by downtown businesses; its first Classic Car Show, which drew around 30 classic car enthusiasts; its first mechanical bull, which proved very popular with festival goers testing their riding skills; and its first Acton Idol Final.



Pictured above is some of the audience for the Acton Idol contest. "People were Idol crazy," said Theresa Ball, entertainment chair for Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce. "Kudos to organizer Dean Haughie."



Sean Ryan opens the Festival with Elizabeth Romanowicz, both from Acton, singing O' Canada.

Local resident, Dave Jude with his cockatoo Simon drew the attention of the Festival goers as he strolled Mill Street throughout the day.



Cedar Trail recording artist Alysha Brooke performs her US country hit "Nuthin' but a Chevy", accompanied by her band (from left to right) Adam on lead guitar, Fernanado on drums, Don on bass guitar, Mike on lead guitar and her young dance troupe (left to right) Kristina Guglick, Amy McCahery, and Rachel Guglick (missing from the photo are Alexis Westwater and Stephanie McCahery).



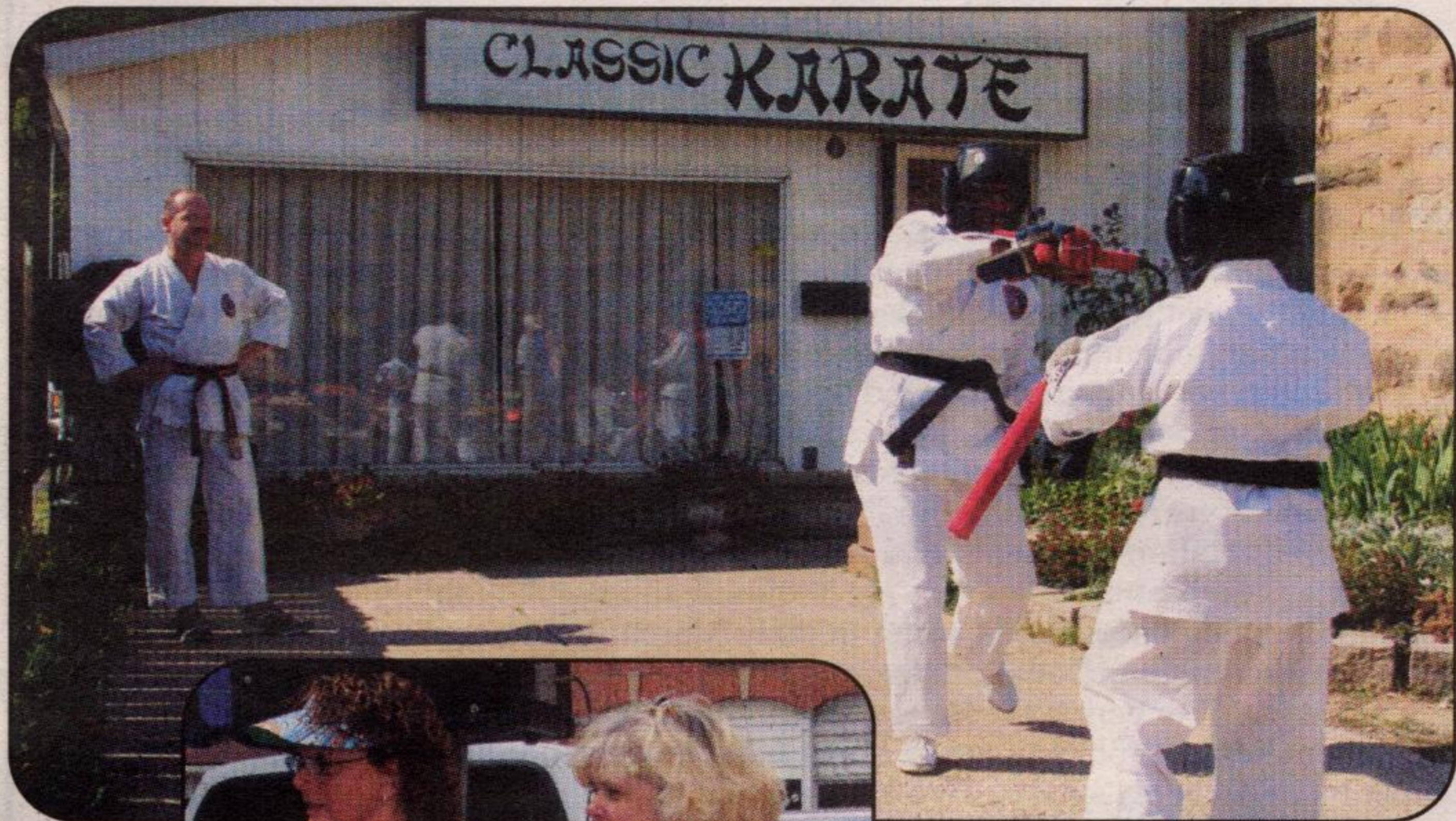
PHOTO BY ANDY BALL Daniel Nickolich (right), aged 11, of Milton, the Leathertown Festival's first Acton Idol winner, wowed the packed audience with his acapella performance.



Jesse Barnes, of Cedarview Ranch Animal Sanctuary, Acton, holds one of the many kittens available for adoption. For more information call 905-691-2948.



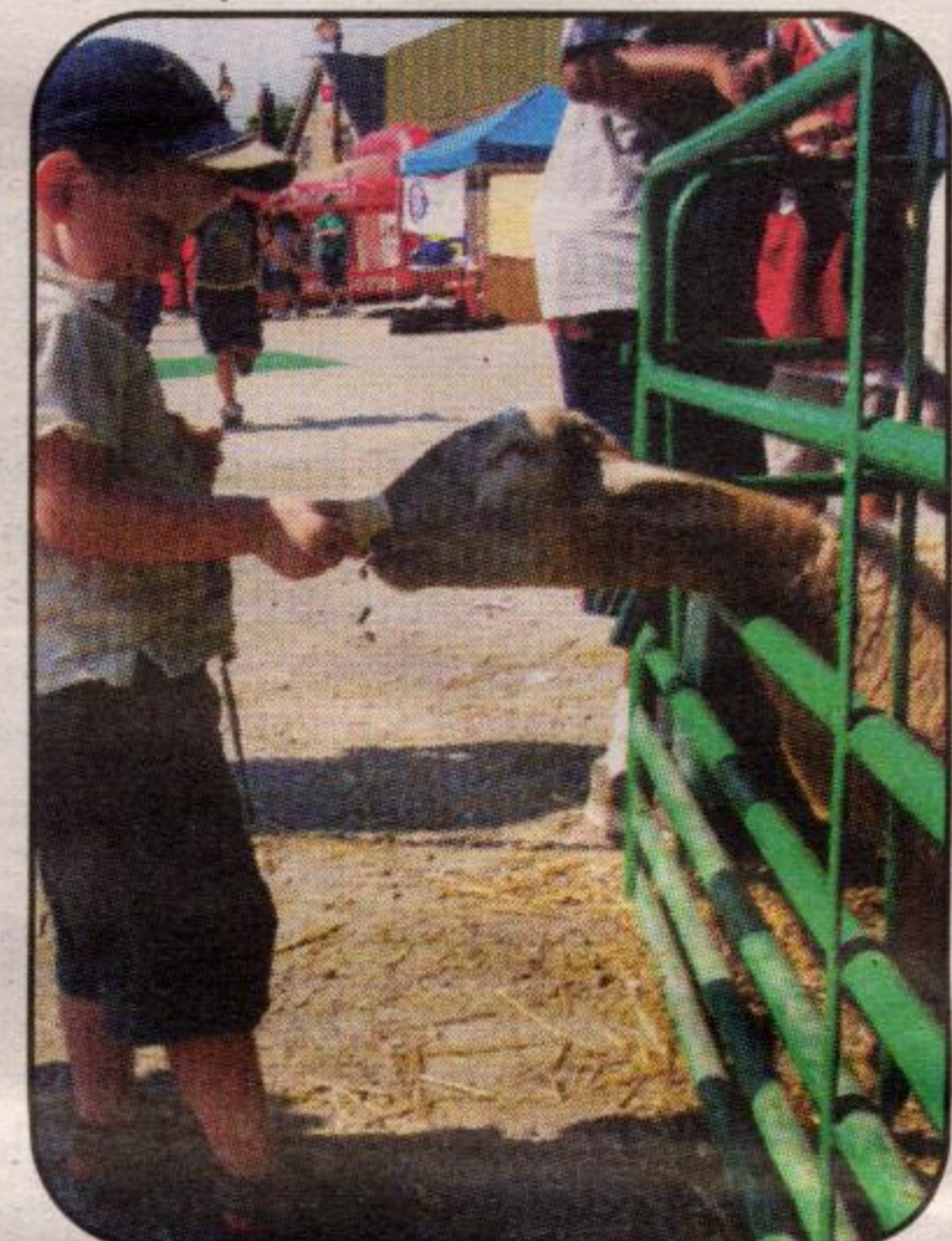
Acton's first Leathertown Ambassador, Dana Bowman (10) reads the letter she wrote to the Acton BIA telling what the Festival means to her. Ambassador gifts were generously donated by Acton businesses.



D.R. MacGregor (left) of Classic Karate watches as two of his students, Sandra Rogers (centre) of Acton and Mike Young (14) of Guelph demonstrate their skills.



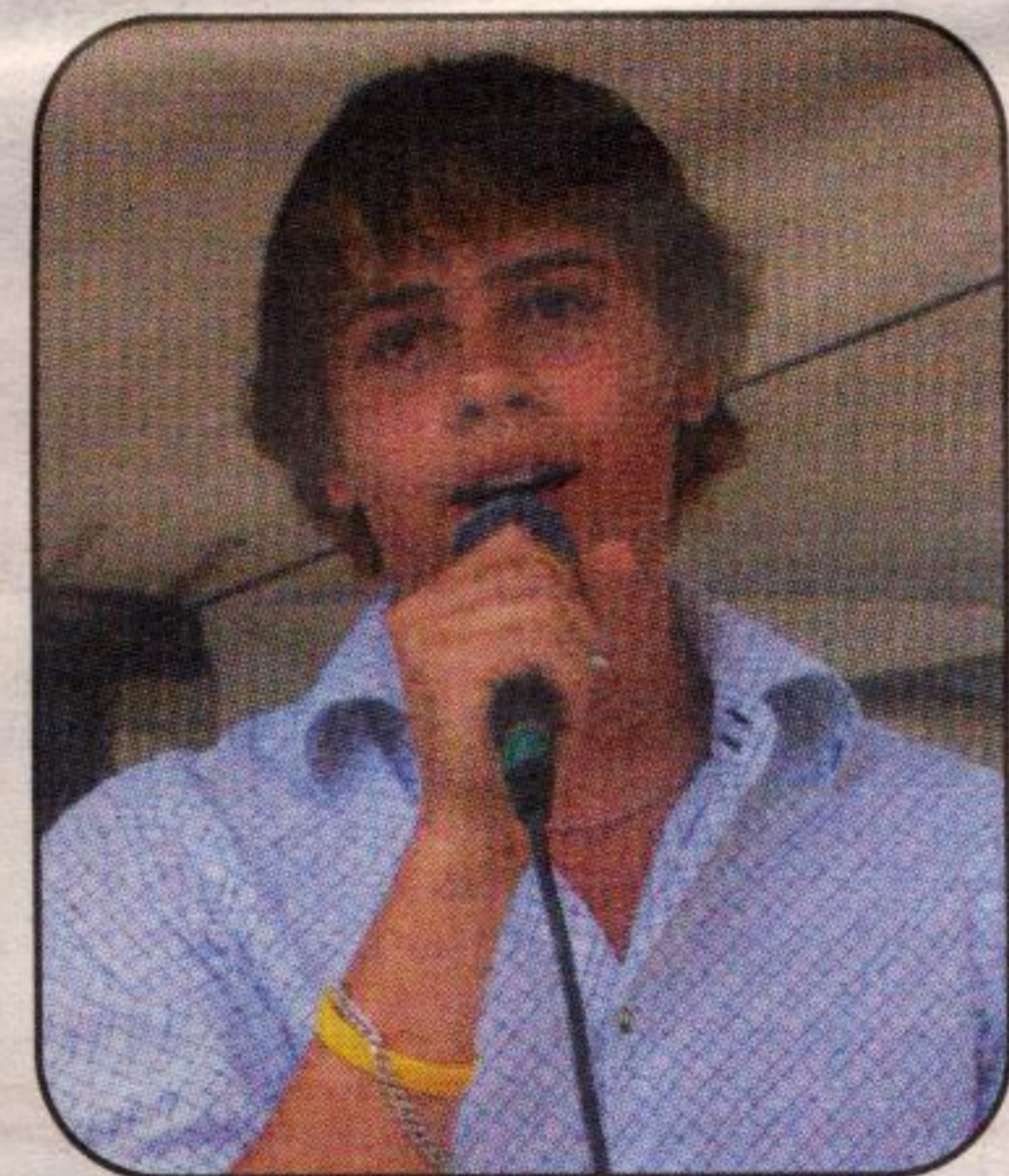
Josey Bonnette (left), Acton BIA and Leathertown Festival co-ordinator, with Deb Fendley, who received a cheque on behalf of Acton Sports Action Park (ASAP), one of two organizations each receiving \$1000 from festival proceeds. Acton's Off The Wall Youth Centre was the other recipient.



Adam Griffin (3) of Georgetown shyly feeds one of the goats in the ever popular Petting Zoo in the Kids' Zone.



Jennalynn Flesch, who was also a judge in the first ever Acton Idol contest, was a hit with the festival audience for a second year running.



New to the festival was Sean Zuidema (19), performing a wonderful rendition of Blue Rodeo's "Try". Sean came second at the Georgetown's Nashville North Idol Contest earlier this year.



Life Time Drive (LTD) had the audience tapping the toes as they performed a mixture of songs they wrote themselves as well as a number of popular cover songs.