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## What's Inside



John DeJong is one maple syrup producer who just enjoys making it for his own use. Page 7.



The Early Literacy Program is one reason Halton students did so well on recent provincial tests. See story on page 6.



At last, the Ministry of Transportation is starting some work on Highway 7 between Acton and Georgetown. See page 3.



**JUST HANGING AROUND:** Work continues at the Halton Hills Hydro facility with the new Bell Mobility tower. - Angela Tyler photo

# Danny Pursoo strikes gold

## Acton skater tops in Ontario Senior freeskate

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

Acton's Danny Pursoo landed two solid double axles and skated a clean program to win gold in the senior bronze men's freeskate at the all-Ontario skating championship in Gravenhurst last weekend.

Pursoo, a 13-year-old Grade 8 student at McKenzie-Smith Bennett, also took a third place finish a week earlier at the Central Ontario Sectional Inter-Club Championship.

Pursoo is a jumper, a technical skater whose arsenal at the all-Ontario competition included double loops, flips and lutzs, giving him the skate of his life against 12 of the best senior bronze men skaters in the province.

"I knew I could win if I did really well," Pursoo explained in a recent interview.

"I've only been doing the double axle since December, but it's getting more consistent and I put it all together for the competition after missing the double axles a week before at inter-club."

Pursoo, who trains with the Acton Figure Skating Club and the Halton Hills Skating Academy, joined the Oakville Skating Club two years ago. He's been skating for nine years and his aim is to get to the nationals - the Olympics are a dream. To be a contender at the national level Pursoo needs consistent triple jumps.

"I've landed four triple salchows in practice, but they were flukes and I haven't landed one since, but I know I will," Pursoo said, adding that he will train at the Mariposa Club this summer - Elvis Stojko's quad country.

Pursoo wasn't alone in skating circles around the competition at recent events. Acton's Cara McGilloway won the silver medal in the ladies' silver artistic program and Mandy Timmings, 13, of Rockwood won bronze in

preliminary ladies' solo dance at the Central Ontario championship in Richmond Hill three weeks ago.

The cheering crowd and the judges loved McGilloway's artistic *Mafia Girl* program, a showcase piece.

"I skated really strong in a flight of 12 girls and you can tell when you're 'on'. It's a fun program I like to do, something different than just jumps, another side of skating," McGilloway said.

Mandy Timmings skated two strong dances for a third place finish at the Central Ontario championship.

"I started learning the dances in December so I felt comfortable and my timing was good. I had first and second place finishes with the same dances at earlier competitions," Timmings said adding that it was great to win bronze in a 17-girl field.

## Expect tax hike

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

If not another penny were added or cut from the Town's proposed budgets, and if there are no more changes in Provincial spending that affects municipalities, the owner of an average residential dwelling in Acton would pay an extra \$28.34 cents - a 5.8 per cent increase - in Town property taxes this year.

The Town's budget committee, consisting of all councillors and the mayor, kicked off in depth reviews of the operating and capital budgets with a staff overview on Tuesday night and the budget debates continues tonight (Thursday) as the committee tackles the capital budget.

The budget committee's  
See TAX, page 3



**SENSATIONAL SKATERS:** Rockwood's Mandy Timmings (left) and Danny Pursoo and "Mafia Girl" Cara McGilloway, both of Acton, mug for the camera following a recent practice session at Acton arena. Pursoo recently won first place gold in the all-Ontario senior bronze men's championship. Timmings recently won bronze in ladies' solo dance and McGilloway took silver in the artistic program.

## Potholes, politics don't mix

If it weren't for politicians, there wouldn't be any gravel roads in Halton Hills.

"If there was no election there would be no problem (with gravel roads) because council would put all their money into the rural area to ditch, gravel and put a hard top down," Town engineer Bob Austin said during Monday night's general committee debate on the roads needs study.

Asked why the Town would spend money to repair a paved road instead of increasing safety by paving a gravel road Austin said paved road repairs are done for preventative maintenance,

for structural reasons and that there are as many reasons to do the work as there are councillors.

Austin said the Town would be better off today if 50 or even 25 years ago, it had put all its capital spending into ditching the rural roads.

"It is a political decision....I can spend as much money as you can give me. It's getting the consensus as to how much money that should be, and whether or not it should all go to rural roads" Austin said.

The roads needs study assesses a road's condition and its usage and gives it a prior-

ity rating for repair. The total cost to repair all of the roads in the "now" category is \$32.9 million and between \$2 and \$4 million was spent by the Town on roads last year. Councillors began budget discussions this week armed with the study and a long list of requests from rural residents to fix their roads.

A group of Halton/Erin Boundary Road residents who live between Churchill Road and Fourth Line went away from the meeting unhappy that proposed repairs to their unpaved road, which they claim is unsafe, are still at least two years away.

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