

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## "Better to be safe..."

Better to be safe than sorry is an old maxim but it describes the situation that occurred just after 8 p.m. on Monday night in Acton.

Alarmed when someone told them they were worried by the actions of a man believed to be suffering from mental problems, Halton Police converged on the area around the olde Hide House where they set up a command base in the parking lot. At least 20 officers, a number of cruisers and the Tactical Response Unit, referred to as the SWAT team, blocked off streets and stopped residents from going home.

Police also surrounded the residence where the man, believed to be in a depressed state, lives.

Naturally, the number of officers and cruisers and the presence of the Tactical Response Unit, attracted the attention of a lot of residents who gathered to watch the drama unfold. Rumours soon circulated about a robbery at the olde Hide House, a hunt for a fugitive, ad infinitum.... Acton's grapevine, which is often more effective than the most modern communications equipment, drew more people.

After several hours and with all the precautions in place, a police crisis negotiator awoke the man with a phone call. He talked with police and there was no further incident.

The precautions police took may have seemed overzealous but they responded in a way that should establish the effectiveness of emergency procedures in Halton, even here in the north end. It was also a good exercise in training for the officers involved.

## Congrats to Robt. Little

Acton schools sometimes get a bum rap from people who unleash their fury about the education system on the nearest target. So it was good to see that the student-run career day at Robert Little school has earned a prestigious award from the Learning Consortium at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto.

The award - and \$2,000 - goes to the students, teachers and parent co-ordinator who staged the event when the Grade 5 French Immersion class invited all Acton Grade 5 students to question nine professionals about their careers and the life skills necessary to get a good job.

As The New Tanner story shows, the students did most of the planning and organizing of the event. They earned high praise from everyone involved for their enthusiasm and the way they handled the exercises.

The awards recognize teachers, students and communities whose exemplary work shows creativity and dedication, the consortium executive director said. The fact the career day was student-led and organized and there was a large degree of student, parental and community support, was a big factor in Robert Little's selection for the award, one of 25 in 138 submissions.

The project also received high marks for the participation by both public and separate school students in grade five.

The New Tanner congratulates the school and all involved in the project. It certainly shows our students and educators don't need to take a back seat to anyone else in the Province for enthusiasm and organization skills.



**FILL 'ER UP:** Acton Horticultural Society members enjoyed a barbeque at the Brozic home recently. While Karen and Mike Brozic, left, worked the burgers and sausage brigade, Ed McGilloway, centre, and Bruce Shoemaker lined up with the plates ready to start handing out the meals. - Maggie Petrushevsky photo

## That's just Dad - doin' his job

BY MAGGIE  
PETRUSHEVSKY  
The New Tanner

Father's Day is coming and with it another excuse for a family gathering.

Don't think I'll get Pop any shirts or socks, this year. We'll just settle for having him back home from the hospital.

Whenever I'd grumble about something concerning Dad, my husband always used to say, "Be thankful you've got him. I'm an orphan, you know, and I miss my parents all the time."

Well, I've got him and I've had him for years.

In fact, Dad has lived through a lot of changes this century. As a boy, he was the only English-speaking kid in the one-room school he attended on the Ontario-Quebec border. When he landed in Acton at age 11, he was pretty much bilingual. In other words, he was well ahead of his time. Of course, he lost it all and hasn't much patience today with Quebecers' sovereignty complaints.

More than 20 years younger than his two sisters, Dad grew up much like an only child.

When my grandfather bought the farm on Highway 7 at the Fifth Line in 1922, Dad went to Bannockburn School. The teacher boarded with my grandparents, it seems, so when all the boys except Dad were sick and slightly green, Evelyn was more than slightly suspicious. Seems my grandfather had just received his annual supply of tobacco braids from one of the old neighbours in Quebec. He cut and mixed his own pipe tobacco. Dad had been sneaking some of that tobacco and rolling his own smokes for several years, I gather, so he was well used to it. The other boys to whom he offered the powerful mixture were not so prepared and Evelyn had no trouble discovering the cul-

prit.

Still later, as a 16-year-old, he got his licence to drive a truck when they were building Highway 7. Exactly how those vehicles worked I have never quite understood. There was something about the clutch and the brakes being on the same pedal so you pushed it half way to change gears and jumped up and stood on it to stop.

Dad also loved his horse Lil. She was a western cow pony with a bad attitude. In those days we didn't have mail delivery at a box at the driveway. There was a central group of boxes at the Fourth Line corner and Dad regularly rode Lil over to get the mail. She used to toss him every once in a while and the sure sign was Dad wearing long sleeves so no one could see the scrapes.

He married Mom in 1935 at the height of the Depression and brought her to live with his parents. Probably that's the worst part of his old age - the fact Mom has Alzheimers and had to go to a nursing home.

During World War II he worked

at the Tannery for a time as well as being a "Saturday Night soldier" with the Lorne Scots - when he wasn't farming, that is.

The year dad had me carrying grain to make chop was when I was finally allowed to get jeans. He was concerned I might get a skirt caught in machinery so I had to get slacks for wearing around the barn.

Work came first, always. I remember one year on December 23 Dad still didn't have our Christmas tree. He was butchering that day so old impatient here, decided to go to the bush and cut the tree herself. I did and dragged it home as far as the back of the barn where it stuck in a big snow drift. The hired man went and dragged it the rest of the way in for me at supper time. No wonder I was stuck. The darn thing was about 15 feet high.

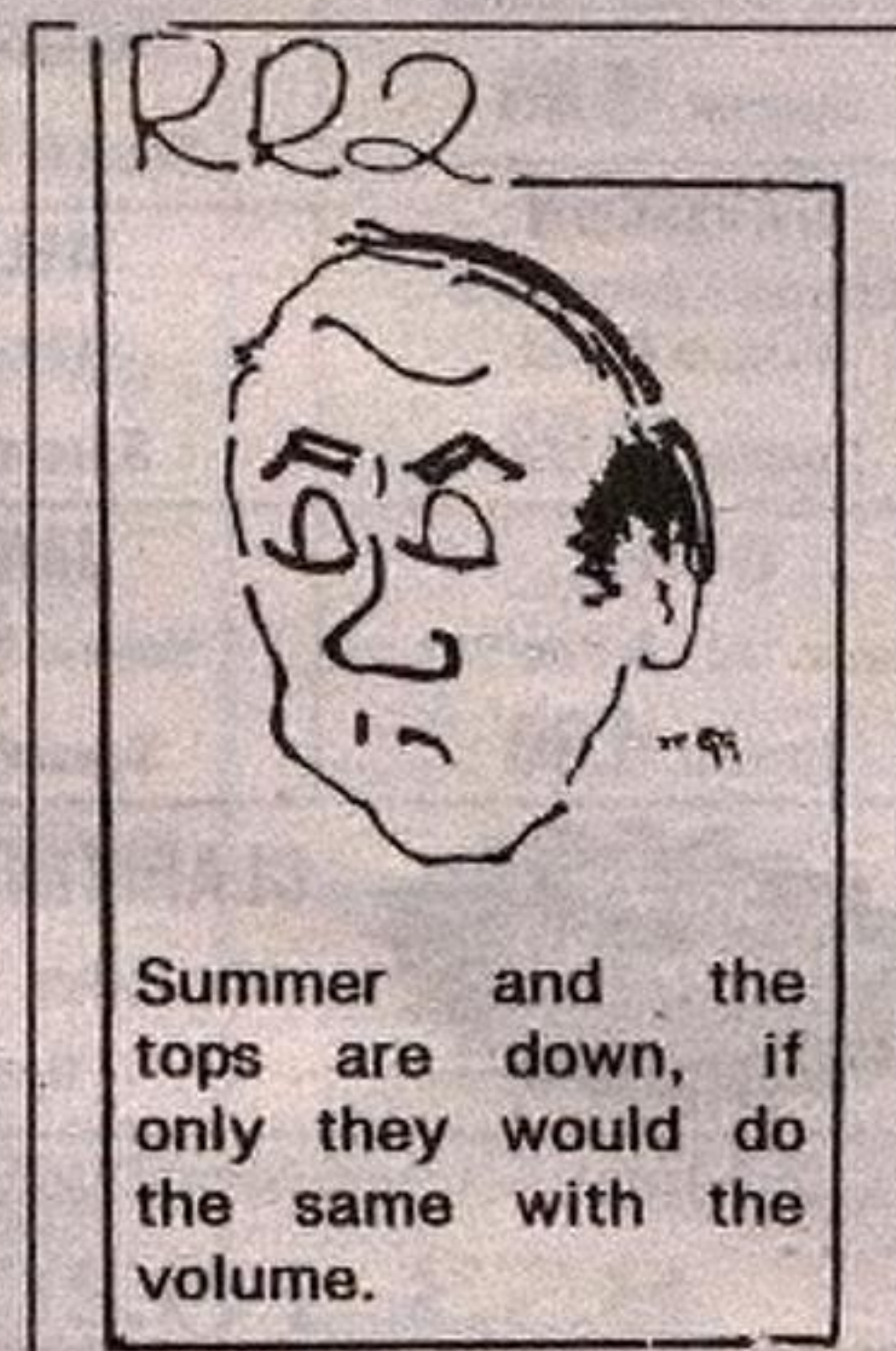
Some kids joke about giving their parents grey hair. I turned Dad's hair white - literally. In grade 12 I caught red measles. It was hunting season and Dad was in the bush on a couple of afternoons with a gun. I don't remember him getting any deer, but he sure got a terrible cold and pneumonia out of it. Then, as things began to settle, he developed this red rash. Yup. I had given him the measles only being out in the cold had delayed the symptoms. His dark hair went iron grey in months and has been snow white for years.

Of course, my son was even meaner than I was. He gave Dad the mumps at 60 something.

Dad tried to teach me to drive the car. Of course, being mechanically-minded he thought I ought to know about everything under the hood. I couldn't care less about that and wound up taking driving lessons. He still tells me I oversteer and I remind him I learned on a tractor.

I also remember the difficulty of getting into the garage. That was

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