

GRAPEVINE

Ambulance goes 24-7

With no fanfare but great relief, 24-hour-a-day land ambulance service began in Acton last Monday. Until then, Acton's ambulance depot was manned only from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., and ambulances were dispatched from Georgetown to answer daytime calls.

Halton's land ambulance director Jim King didn't know how many daytime ambulance calls there have been, but said the crews "had been busy." The next step is to find a new location for the cramped depot, currently housed at the rear of the Becker's store.

Bridge reopened

There were great cheers in Limehouse last Thursday when CN Rail reopened its bridge - two days late - on 22 Side Road, which had been closed for major repairs for most of the summer.

The new bridge has a new steel span and beams, new timber deck, handrails and braces. The original 10-tonne maximum load limit, which was reduced to six-tonnes following deficiencies found in a 1996 inspection, will be reinstated. That's good news for school bus drivers and some farmers who were forced to detour around Limehouse for the last three years while Halton Region pressed CN to repair the bridge, built in 1912. While CN initially refused, Halton appealed to the Canadian Transportation Agency and it ordered CN to do the work.

Indoor kick

Looking for a fast-paced indoor sport with fewer rules than the outdoor version of the game? Maybe indoor soccer is for you. The Acton Indoor Soccer Club is in the midst of registrations for the new season that

kicks off November 6 and 7 in the gyms of McKenzie-Smith Bennett and Acton High school. Last year 140 local kids and adults played on 20 teams and club officials hope to draw as many players this year. For more information call 853-4917.

Future park

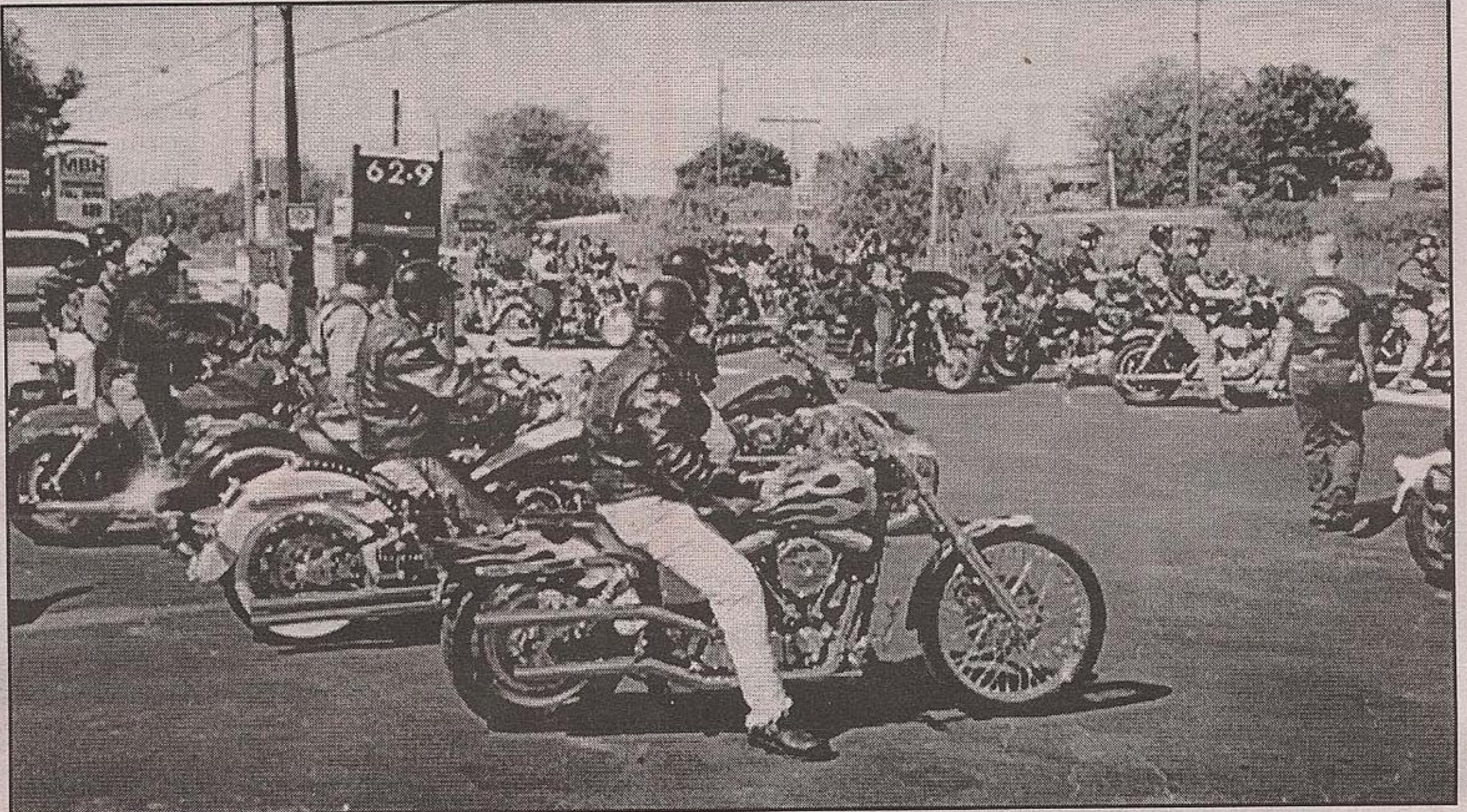
The public will be asked what kind of neighbourhood park it would like to see developed on the west side of Wallace Street from McDonald Boulevard to Commerce Crescent. Town staff installed a sign announcing the future park location on the 7.5-acre site and next year's capital budget will include money to develop the land. The Town purchased the site from the developers of the West Meadows Village for \$130,0230 in 1997, to eliminate what staff called a "significant deficiency" of local parkland in Acton, particularly in the neighbourhoods north of Queen and Mill Streets between Highway 25 and Churchill Road.

Town staff hopes they can get public input on several alternative plans this fall.

Rural leadership

Kudos to Kevin Thompson of R.R. 3 Acton, one of 30 applicants from across Ontario to be accepted into the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) at the University of Guelph. The executive development program is designed to expand and strengthen the pool of effective leaders in agriculture and rural Ontario. Over the next two years the AALP participants will attend nine three-day seminars in Ontario, take a North American study tour and go on a two-week international travel experience.

Thompson is a part-time farmer, with cows and crops, who also works for the Chicken Farmers of Ontario.



JUST PASSING THROUGH: A group of bikers on a Poker Run recently used Toth Motors as a stop-over on their route, filling the lot with their precisely aligned bikes. - Ted Tyler photo

So, did ya miss me?

With fall upon us, my summer hiatus comes grudgingly to an end. Grudgingly - because I am not looking forward to winter and The Bride and I had a great summer. Perhaps the best in our 31 years of wedded bliss.

We had big changes in our family. Daughters Colleen and Christine both graduated from university/college. Both are now searching for full-time careers and getting on with their lives. Over the Labour Day weekend, we moved our youngest daughter Erin to Waterloo as she begins her university experience. The house seems suddenly empty.

I guess this is called the "empty nest syndrome." For those of you with a gaggle of ankle-biters still at home who long for the day when they grow up, words of advice: Be careful what you wish for. Personally I dislike the feeling.

I know the kids have to grow up and make their own way in the world. We all did after all, but I must confess to never considering how my folks felt about it all. I'm proud of our girls' accomplishments but I'm not at all sure I'm ready to have the house empty out. The facts are though, ready or not, there they go. The time seems to have gone by so fast.

Perhaps major changes like this forces us to acknowledge the march of time and therefore confront our own mortality. Perhaps the frustration of a parent's natural protective instinct causes additional stress. It's tough to be protective when the children are miles away. We could probably psycho-analyze it 'till the cows come home. I'm sure that, like others before me, I'll grow out of the feeling. One huge concern does loom above me. With the girls gone - who will protect me from The Bride?

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Congratulations to the Agricul-

The Way I See It

with Mike O'Leary



tural Society on this year's fair. You have already heard that we had record crowds. The last fair of the 1900s set a high standard for next year's first fair of the new millenium. The planning is already under way for that event so mark Sept. 15, 16, 17 in your new calendar now.

One thing did concern me at the fair. I have worked the main gate for 14 or so years now. Over the years we've seen some weird and wonderful things but I've never seen so many drunk or stoned adolescents in the 13 to 17 years age group. They weren't sneaking in the beer tent, they were arriving under the influence of whatever. I asked other volunteers and they agreed with my observations. I don't know what the answer is but I mention it only to alert other parents. As a favourite teacher, Fred Springer, used to say, "Parents have to stick together because the children are meeting in the schoolyard every day and are plotting against us."

I saw MP Julian Reed at the fair. Didn't get the chance to thank him for nothing. During the summer our Governor General, Romeo Le Dull, quit. I figured I would at least be short-listed, but Mr. Reed let me down again. Again! That's it for him. He's toast in my book. But then, what can you expect from someone who was pictured kissing a cow at the Georgetown Fair? Maybe a wholesome young man like me is just as well to steer (no pun intended) clear of the Ottawa scene. I know politicians have to cosy up to an assortment of horses behinds but when your head starts to turn at the sight

of big lips, long languid eyelashes and big udders, enough is enough. A guy has to have his principles, you know.

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There was a big hue and cry over the demise of Eaton's. Unfortunately, many of those who mourned this Canadian retail institution had obviously not shopped there in years. In a way it's sad to see Eaton's go as it's a bridge to our past. The cruel reality is that bad retail decisions and corporate pomposity pushed Eaton's over the abyss they had been teetering on for close to 30 years. No one in the industry is especially surprised at this turn of events. I feel sorry for the thousands of long term employees. Bit by bit we're turning into a U.S.A. North.

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An incident last week where a child with Down Syndrome tumbled from a bridge in B.C. has brought the euthanasia debate to the fore again. I have never left any doubt as to where I stand on this issue. I am pro-life against euthanasia. Period.

I am concerned that those pushing for euthanasia are shrouding their intent under the guise of compassion. Next week, in this space, you will see the words of Judith Snow on this issue. Judith has a perspective few of us have on the question of euthanasia. Her words will not make you comfortable if you think the kindest thing you can do for someone in pain or infirm is to kill them.

We are so intent on the concept of "quality of life". But who am I to say that the quality of your life is so diminished that you have no right to live? If this were just we would have nuked Calcutta years ago.

I warn you, Judith tells it like it is. She has to. She's fighting for her life.

WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?
Put it in a letter to the Editor!
Deadline is Tuesday at noon.

Surprise in my yard

Continued from Page 4

sippi Valley where it has considerable commercial value as a source of carbohydrate for making starch, sugar and alcohol. Would you like to suggest a name for the liqueur it might produce? In the U.S. and France, particularly, it had former importance as a basic food. It is now enjoying increasing importance as a salad and cooking vegetable.

"I have a haunting feeling, Hartley, that you planted Jerusalem artichoke in your backyard as an elaborate hoax. (I didn't - it just grew!) I am sure I detected a glint in your eye

when you asked me to identify it. After all, it is only spread by cultivation. No doubt you are looking forward to my response with interest.

"By the way, we sampled it, and suffered no ill effect. What does it taste like? I lack both taste buds and a vocabulary to explain flavour. For want of words, I would say a blend of sunflower seeds and Yukon gold potatoes."

So there it is. You never know what's growing in your backyard. If you see a guy named Jack going up your bean plants, better investigate. I'll bet it hasn't got the pedigree of Jerusalem artichoke.

FIRE DRILLS
The Great Escape!
Develop a home escape plan and practice it on October 6 at 7:00 p.m.
FIRE PREVENTION WEEK
OCT. 3-9 1999
SPARKY
FIRE MARSHAL
M.I.K. FIRE SAFETY COUNCIL
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Trains block tracks - riles Town

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

The Town will file a formal complaint with Transport Canada after two CNR trains blocked two level rail crossings at Trafalgar Road and 17 Side Road last month.

Recently Councillor Rick Bonnette said it was "unbelievable and unacceptable" that trains could block level rail crossings for up to 40 minutes. He added it was also "inexcusable" and asked Council to authorize the

clerk to lodge the complaint.

Ward 2 Councillor Kathy Gastle raised the issue after complaints about the trains blocking the crossings, causing massive traffic jams, on Aug. 26 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. She persuaded councillors to ask staff to come back with the cost of an underpass at budget time and supported Bonnette's request for more action.

Staff reported the trains weren't stopped, but were moving slowly in opposite directions and under federal legislation each train could block the

tracks for 40 minutes, resulting in stopped traffic for up to one hour and 20 minutes. In the case of an emergency the Town calls the OPP who contact the rail company to separate the cars so emergency vehicles can cross the tracks.

Bonnette said in the event of an emergency that's too long.

"For emergencies and essential services, fire and ambulances...it's not the type of way to do business and it puts the Town at risk," Bonnette said.