

# GRAPEVINE



## Good bye, Mrs. Parker

After 17 years, Robert Little public school secretary Joan Parker is calling it quits on January 31 and she will be sorely missed. From her gentle care and compassion to her love of children and sharp eye for detail, Mrs. Parker has made Robert Little a very friendly place for a lot of students and parents. Mrs. Parker said she will miss everything about Robert Little - especially the students and staff and her retirement plans include "family, friends and travel" and waiting until her husband retires in April.

## Thanks from clinic

Kudos to the 86 people who turned out to give the gift of life at last Thursday's Acton blood donor clinic. While only 73 of those people were able to donate and the clinic fell short of the 80-donation goal - local officials are very thankful that at this busy time of year, so many people took the time to make an unselfish donation.



Matthew Fritz picked up his penguin from Glenlea owner Gary Barton.

## Rotary skate

The Rotary Club of Acton will continue its long-standing - and much appreciated - tradition of buying ice time at the Acton arena during the Christmas holidays so people can skate for free. Rotary will pick up the tab for public skating on December 24 and 31 and again from January 3rd to the 7th.

There's no public skating at the Acton arena from December 27th to the 30th as the Acton Tanners rep. hockey league is hosting its annual Christmas tournament on those days.

## Let there be lights...

One regular reader told The New Tanner that the Christmas lights on Lasby Lane are among the most outstanding this holiday season with almost every house is nicely done - particularly the one on the north corner of Churchill Road and Lasby Lane where a star in a backyard tree house looks like a shooting star.

The same reader gives the best decorated doghouse award to 24 Young Street where the resident pooch has very good taste, but declined to list what she considers the worst displays - the ones that are "way overdone."

## Penguin prize

Congrats to rural Acton's Matthew Fritz, 5, winner of the Glenlea Drug Mart's customer appreciation day. Matthew picked up his prize - a huge stuffed penguin - from Glenlea pharmacist Gary Barton who staged the draw to thank his loyal customers and to get into the holiday spirit.

## Holiday cheer

To all of the people who fed me Grapevine tips, made gentle suggestions and offered thanks and (sometimes) praise - Merry Christmas, happy holidays and see you next year!

-Frances Niblock

## Writer has questions for MPP Ted Chudleigh

Dear Editor,

This is an open letter to Mr. Ted Chudleigh, MPPS for Halton. Mr. Chudleigh has been quoted in the newspaper twice this month. Both times, he has expressed his government's view toward education.

Mr. Chudleigh's words seem to be identical to those spoken by both Mike Harris and Janet Ecker. I suspect that his comments originate from press releases from the Premier's office. It is never clear whether these are his own views or not.

So, Mr. Chudleigh, I and many other of your constituents would like to know, in your own words, why you voted the way you did on two important pieces of legislation last week.

First, you voted against a public inquiry into the controversial shooting death of Dudley George. For the past four years, your government has spent millions of taxpayer dollars to cover-up what actually happened that night on September 6, 1995 outside of Ipperwash Provincial park.

Mr. Harris has been called to answer questions under oath from lawyers for the family of Dudley George. He has refused to attend. The attorney-general and solicitor-general at the time of the shooting have also ignored summonses to appear in court. I find this particularly ironic since your government has taken a strong law-and-order platform. How can you expect people to respect our laws and courts when our own premier and top legal officials do not?

So Mr. Chudleigh, why did you vote against holding a public inquiry

into the shooting once all the matters related to the shooting had finally been dealt with by the courts. As your government continues with a strategy to cover-up the events surrounding the shooting, we are starting to believe that there is something to hide.

The second important piece of legislation that you voted on was the 'Fewer Municipal Politicians Act.' Among other things this bill creates three megacities for Hamilton, Sudbury and Ottawa. The number of councillors in these areas will be cut drastically. Also, the bill gives the provincial cabinet the power to change any law in the province of Ontario.

My question, to you Mr. Chudleigh is why did you vote in support of this bill? Already, the minister responsible for the bill has said that Halton will be looked at in the future. If a similar bill comes forward that will affect the citizens of Acton, how will you vote? Currently we have one representative on regional council and two on Halton Hills council. Where do you stand on this issue, Mr. Chudleigh?

You have been voted to represent the constituency of Halton. Please explain why you voted the way that you did with respect to the Ipperwash inquiry and to the Fewer Municipal Politicians Act.

I await your reply.

Yours truly,  
Richard Boychuk,  
Acton



WAITING PATIENTLY: Locals and visitors alike lined the route for the Parade of Lights in Rockwood. Back row from the left Melissa Stewart and daughter Emma, Mark Slack, son Christopher, wife Sarah and son Jonathan, all of Rockwood with Roseanne Wood, son Connor, and in front, Lucas and Mitchell Wood, of Guelph. The gang brought blankets to keep warm and wagons to sit in as they waited for the floats to start arriving. - Ted Tyler photo

## Making Christmas memories!

Two more days until the big night. As children, of course, we all looked forward eagerly to Christmas eve and Santa's visit. My family's Christmas day was filled with the excitement of seeing what was under the tree, going to church and then Christmas dinner with family from near and afar. Once I had my own family I must confess I found Christmas so hectic I came to the point where exhausted, I was just glad when it was over. Now with our children grown, I listen to them as they reminisce about their past Christmases. We all have memories, real and imagined, of great Christmases; usually when we were kids. The warmth these recollection generate is a major part of what we now call our "Christmas Spirit."

I got to thinking about all this during a recent visit to a major mall. A young mom, with a gaggle of kids in tow, was obviously nearing the end of her string. The children, being children, were excited and making a nuisance of themselves. The mom finally blew a gasket and started yelling at the little ones that they'd better shape up or Santa wouldn't come, they'd be sorry when they got home, etc., etc. I was feeling sorry for the kids when I realized I was being pretty judgmental of this poor woman. It's easy to do that when you don't have any kids of your own in tow. Let's be honest, most parents have been in that situation before. You work so hard, and get so frazzled, trying to create the perfect Christmas that we forget two things. One: it's your Christmas too, so find a few moments to enjoy it. Two: you are creating, for your children, those memories of Christmas past that will be fondly remembered long after you're gone. In a way, you are building your immortality. Christmas carol by Christmas carol. The advertisers would have you believe Christmas is all about toys and other material things. Toys, however, are soon cast aside and forgotten. My experience is that what's remembered are the hugs

### The Way I See It

with Mike O'Leary



and kisses; the laughter, warmth and love of family. None of these gifts can be bought but, in the final analysis, they are the most precious.

One of our family's most anticipated Christmas activities happens on Christmas eve. We go to mass together and then it's home and a quick change into comfy clothing. We have plates of hors d'oeuvres, cheese and Christmas cookies. Then, the six of us just sit around the tree and talk. We all look forward to this time and I know that, for the rest of their lives, Christmas eve will be a time for our girls to tell their children, about our times together. Mary and I never planned to make Christmas eve the focal point of the family celebrations. It just evolved over the years. Thus, traditions are born.

In my family we were not allowed to open any gifts on Christmas eve. I think it had something to do with our not going to church until Christmas morning. In those days the only mass Christmas eve was at midnight, long after we were tucked in bed. My folks always ensured the religious celebration and the toys were intertwined. There was more to Christmas than Santa.

Imagine my surprise then when, after we were wed, "The Bride" informed me that her family tradition was to open one gift on Christmas eve. The theory behind it was that, with one gift opened, the kids would toddle off to bed easier. Sacrilege, I thought, but being young and in love I agreed that "The Bride" would open one present whilst I would remain a purist. This was fine for the first few years until the children got to the age where they realized Mom was getting into her loot Christmas eve and they wanted equal rights. What to do, what to do? A clash of traditions. I'm

pleased to report that, being responsible, mature adults we reached a compromise. We did it her way and now we open one gift Christmas eve. Every so often I defer, just to remind everyone that I'm an unwilling participant in this pagan ritual. My reward is a resounding chorus of "Oh Dad!" from the girls and a giggle from "The Bride". Thus, traditions are born.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a merry Christmas. I hope the peace and joy of the season percolates throughout your home. I hope you will find the time to sit back for a moment and enjoy the season. I hope it snows Christmas eve.

The first Christmas, some 2000 years ago, started with the words "Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, to you is born this day in the city of David, a saviour. May that joy be in your heart this Christmastime and every day throughout the year.

A very merry Christmas to all.

★★★★

An update on the "festive foolishness." My source "Deep Mug" tell me the staff at Zellers in Georgetown were very quietly saying "Merry Christmas" because someone in management told them not to use those words.

I am pleased to report that several shoppers refused to buckle under to political correctness and wished a merry Christmas to all, while nicely informing staff that they, as customers, were offended by Zellers management's directive to consign Christmas to the trashbin. You'd think "Merry Christmas" was a curse.

Keep up the good work, friends. We "Christmas people" are never rude but I encourage everyone to spread the Christmas message: maybe we should only shop for "festive" at these stores and do our "Christmas" shopping elsewhere. Imagine, telling staff not to say merry Christmas. What a bunch of humbug.

Try a Tanner ad - it pays!