

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

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Your Hometown Newspaper

Volume 2 No. 52

Wednesday, December 29, 1999

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What's Inside

Delivering hampers of food to needy families in Acton and area prepared by the IODE, St. Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army was a chore Rotary Club members enjoyed. See photo on Page 3.

Acton was knocked out of the Acton rep league's Christmas tournament on Monday. See Sports, Page 13.

A young man from Orton has won a spot on the Canadian Sledge Hockey team. See Page 13.

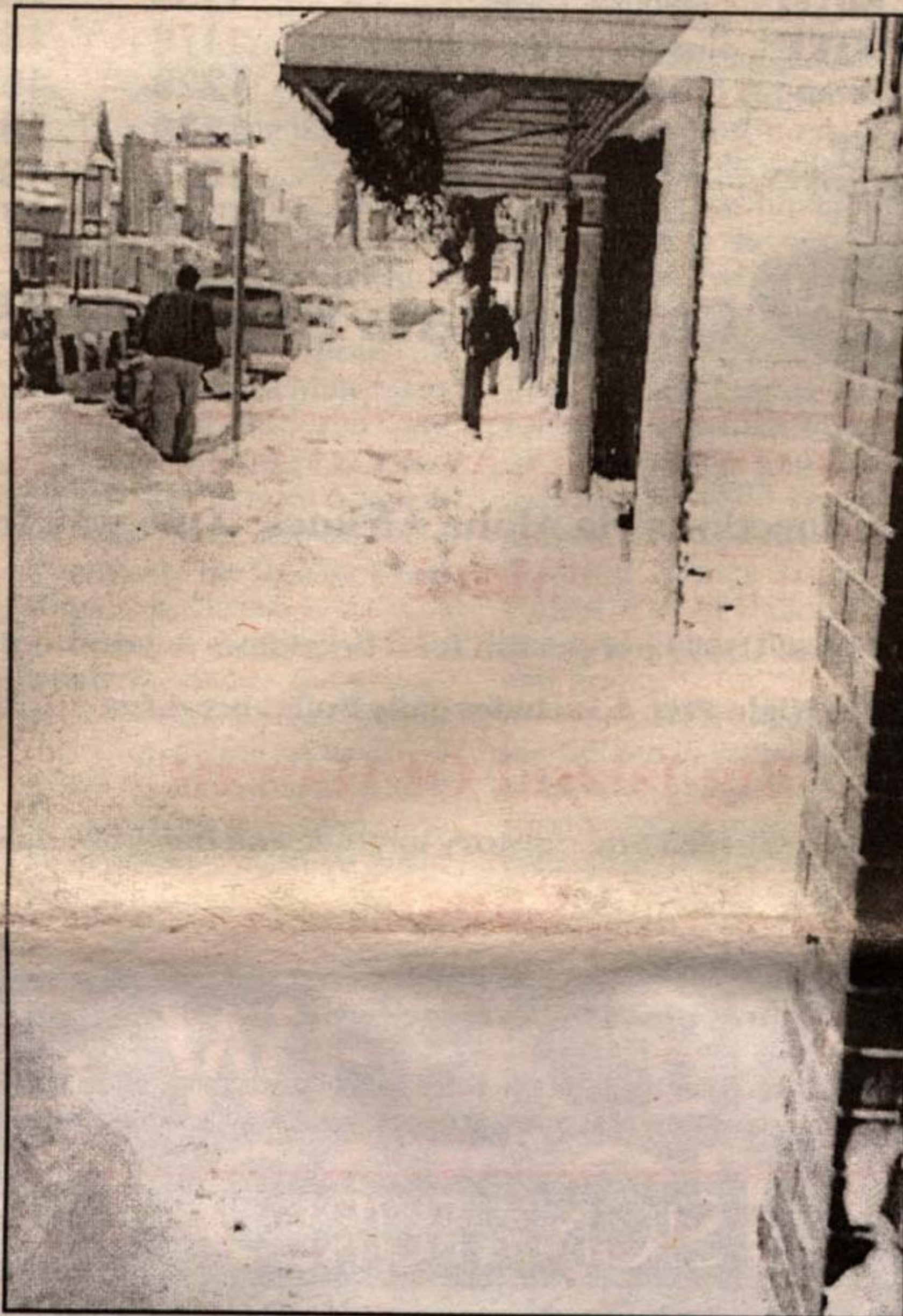
Acton Junior Achievers are a hot item in the merchandising business right now. See Page 10.

Fewer shoppers spend more \$\$

Reject estate lots

Good news for the Worden View residents who opposed plans for 10 estate lots as a continuation of their neighbourhood. The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) recently ruled against Canadian Tire Corporation and an Ontario numbered company that appealed Town and Regional decisions not to allow the estate lots to be developed on the site, bordering on Highway 7 and the Fifth Line.

Canadian Tire and the numbered company wanted to subdivide their respective blocks of land into five lots each, for a total of ten. The OMB ruled the proposed plan is not good planning and accepted arguments from the Region that while it is a small number of units, the development outside of a hamlet or rural cluster would be the "thin edge of the wedge."



Looking back at 1999
See Page 12

Pay, benefits cut at HHCSI

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

The New Year will bring staff salary and benefit cuts and service cuts at Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI) as the umbrella social agency deals with balancing its budget in light of funding cuts.

The executive director, Rosslyn Dowell, led by example and proposed a salary cut for herself and the board of directors also cut staff RSP contributions, saving about \$25,000 next year.

As well, the agency is selling its van, used to drive clients to appointments and meetings, and will reorganize the program to use volunteer, not paid drivers.

HHCSI is a charitable, non-profit, multi-service organization supporting people of all ages

in the development of a caring and responsive community. While there's ongoing funding from the provincial government for seniors and children's programming - there is no source of funding for youth and community support programs. That means about 25 per cent of annual operating budget - approximately \$260,000 this year - will have to be raised through agency-generated funding that includes clients' fees, donations and fund raising.

Dowell said two part-time van drivers would be laid off because of the cost cutting and the loss of a regional social services grant that equalled \$40,000 last year.

"We are trying to use our volunteer drivers for some of the rides and we've let the agencies that we drive for know that this re-

Continued on Page 3

Downtown businesses elated with sales

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

There were fewer shoppers with deeper pockets this holiday season in Acton - much to the delight of local merchants.

At Halton Hills Furniture on Mill Street, owner Ron Kuiken said there were fewer people shopping in the downtown this year, but the shoppers were buying big-ticket items.

"Those that are coming into the store are spending more than they did last year," Kuiken said on Friday.

"We've sold a lot of curio cabinets, recliners and a lot of smaller items like prints and there's been a large demand for coat racks. People also seemed to be waiting longer to shop this year."

At Blue Springs Flower Sop, owner Dot Gould, agree there hadn't been as much walk-in Christmas business as past years.

"Since the Home Hardware and pet shop closed there haven't been as many people in the downtown, but I've had a lot of phone orders to keep me busy all week," Gould said, adding that people seem to have been spending a bit more on flowers, arrangements and stuffed toys this year.

At Pamper Me Pets, owner Dennis Purton said business was better than last year, partially due to the traffic generated by the Halton Credit Union that bought the Beckers plaza and opened its Acton headquarters there.

"The increase in traffic is also partially due to the fact that the image of Acton, coming in along Highway 7, is much improved because of

the new development, including Home Hardware and the recent reconstruction of Highway 7," Purton said.

"I think the over-all appearance of the town is picking and there is an improvement to the image that Acton has and things are starting to look up."

On Boxing Day, staff at the olde Hide House were facing their biggest sales day of the year and president Steve Dawkins said holiday sales were "certainly strong, up 10 to 15 per cent, and would surpass last year, despite a slower than usual November because of the relatively warm weather.

"We're looking for a good year. The economy is generally going to continue to be strong and that's important for a discretionary business like ours because people will only buy discretionary items when they feel comfortable."

Perhaps one of the best indications of the amount of holiday shopping that was being done in some Acton stores this year was at Country Reflections where owner, Judy MacDonald, couldn't take time to talk about holiday shopping because of a long line of customers waiting at the till.

"Catch me next year," a harried, but happy MacDonald said as satisfied, last-minute customers crowded the Mill Street gift shop.

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