

# GRAPEVINE



## Party for Mrs. Parker

There will be singing, laughter and probably a few tears on January 20 when the Robert Little public school community bids a reluctant farewell to long-time secretary Joan Parker, who retired earlier this week after 17 years at the school. The retirement celebration runs from 4 to 7 p.m. with presentations and a school choir performance at 6 p.m.

## Year end services

A number of Acton churches will be holding services to usher in the new year on Friday evening, Dec. 31.

St. Joseph's will hold masses at 5 and 11:30 p.m. as well as masses at 9 and 11 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 1. Knox holds its service Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. while Acton Baptist's service is set for 10:30 p.m. The Salvation Army service is set for 11 p.m.

Trinity won't have a New Year's Eve service but will share its Epiphany service with St. Joseph's on January 6 at 7 p.m. at Trinity.

## Hamper happy

Over 100 Acton families had a much happier Christmas this year thanks to a very generous community that donated food, money, toys and gifts to both the Salvation Army and Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI).

HHCSI continued its long-stand-

ing tradition and handed out 33 hampers jam-packed with toys, warm clothes and gifts to needy families. Various community groups, businesses, schools purchased toys and clothes to match the needs of a family profile. HHCSI used some of its cash donations to put together baskets, all of which were distributed early last week. The Salvation Army hampers - which were put together with the help of local churches, included food for a Christmas dinner and staples.

## Home harmonies

Shoppers liked the holiday music they heard at Home Hardware this holiday season and the voices included the dulcet tones of an employee - Don Lindsay - a member of the Royal City Ambassadors whose Christmas recording was playing in the background.

Lindsay, Acton's Jim Pope and former Acton resident Paul Tamblin are featured on the 20-song recording that is the Ambassador's fundraiser for its charity - Harmonize for Speech - which provides training and equipment for children with speech development problems and stroke victims.

Holiday sales were brisk with 40,000 tapes and CDs sold. For a copy call Don at 853-2057.



**CHRISTMAS CHOIR:** Members of the senior choir at Robert Little school sang some of the holiday favourites as they entertained proud parents, families and teachers at the school's annual holiday concert last Wednesday. - Frances Niblock photo

# 33 families in Acton benefit from generosity

Dear Editor:

Halton Hills Community Support and Information would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who helped to make the holiday season special this past year for 33 families in our community.

During the months of November and December, members of our community donated many items to our agency, including toys, clothing, knitted hats, mitts and sweaters, and money. It is always wonderful to see how generous a community can be. Thanks so much to everyone who took the time to donate!

Many groups, churches, businesses, and individuals assisted with our program by providing hampers

for local families. They purchased clothing and toys and put hampers together for families. We are very grateful for their continued support of this program.

Many families continue to struggle through difficult financial times. It is always very reassuring to know that people are willing to share their resources in order to help others. The families that received hampers would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to very generous and caring community.

Sincerely,

Cathy Gerrow, Community Support Worker

Halton Hills Community Support and Information.



**FAMILY GIFTS:** Susan Kuechler, family services coordinator with the Salvation Army, poses with a room full of toys and gifts donated for inclusion in hampers for needy families. With her assistants Teresa Curlew and Gerd Arnott, Kuechler arranges the gifts so hamper recipients can come and pick appropriate items for the young members of their families. - Maggie Petrushevsky photo

# Kiss my Y2K goodbye

My friends, I come to you today, a man overwhelmed by the responsibility handed me. This, my last column of the millennium, is expected to be full of enlightened insight, intelligent forecast and pithy observations as homo sapiens embark upon the third millennium since Christ (or festive if you prefer) last laid his sandals upon this earth. So, as the saying goes: here goes nuttin'!

The Y2K panic is a boondoggle. Nothing, of any great consequence, will happen when the clocks roll over to 01/01/2000. I base this prediction on two considerations. First: if I am right, and nothing happens, you will all be singing my praises as an intuitive prognosticator. People will be comparing me favourably with Nostradamus, Edgar Casey and other notable philosophers. It will be enough to turn my head. If, however, worse comes to worse, you'll all be so busy trying to save your butts you won't even think of my musings. It's a win-win situation for me.

I wouldn't want you to think I did absolutely no research into this matter. Our daughter Erin attends Waterloo University. Waterloo is known as one of the top computer schools in North America. Their senior people are confident that Y2K will be a non-event, at least in North America. I know, I know that other experts have different opinions. I'm content to go with the academics. In other words, my geek can beat up your geek. So my prediction stands.

I have one big question regarding this whole Y2K controversy. Why are we letting the computer companies get away with this? Are we supposed to believe that the brilliant minds who invented computers are astounded to find that the year 2000 is happening less than 20 years since the PC explosion? It sure looks like planned obsolescence to me and it's costing us billions. Don't you think that if every Chevy in the world stopped on a given day, at a given time, that GM would end up getting their hubcaps sued off? So why aren't we telling the computer companies to take a byte and ram it?

## The Way I See It

with Mike O'Leary



During 999 A.D., as the last millennium turned, I understand there was widespread panic that the world would come to an end. There are still doomsday cults today. One such group of over 2,000 souls lives in the Philippines. They feared the sky would rain down fire at the start of the new millennium. To save themselves they hid in deep caves. Unfortunately, an earthquake forced them to flee for their lives back into the open. I can empathize with them. As I often tell The Bride: with my luck, when my ship comes in, I'll be at the airport.

Of all the millennium products offered my vote for the most bizarre is the \$10 million millennium bra being offered by Victoria's Secret. Talk about "My Cup Runneth Over." The garment sports 3,024 gems including a five carat diamond on the front. If that's too rich for your honey's hooters, a Japanese company has its version hand woven of 24-karat gold thread with a 15 carat diamond nestled in front. In both cases the girl is an extra. And some folk worry that our society has become too materialistic. Imagine!

You will be comforted to know that, in the event of some Y2K disruptions, your federal government will be standing on guard for thee. Four "key" ministers - Lucienne Robillard, Lloyd Axworthy (is my Nobel prize in yet?) Jonly Manley and Art Eggleton - will be in charge. Heaven help us all. Locally, I assume key staff and possibly the mayor, will be on duty. So party hearty knowing your governments will keep you safe. And if you believe that I have some swampland I'd like to tell you about.

And now for my enlightened forecasts for the next millennium. Man will continue to search the universe for other intelligent life. Recently, new planets were discovered which are just the right distance from their suns to support life. This need to explore

is the same drive that led Columbus to the New World. Sometime, in the next 150 years, we will develop a propulsion system to enable us to explore, at least, the Milky Way. The recent failures of the Mars missions will not deter us.

Cures will be found for the major diseases plaguing us today. Unfortunately, new diseases will develop. Microbes are a fact of our existence. Humans will never be disease free. We may manage illness better, as indeed we do now as opposed to 1000 years ago, but some virus or other will always be attacking us. We will never take control from Mother Nature.

Political correctness will go the way of the dodo bird. Already, people are becoming fed up with many of the silly cases. Very few want to return to the bad old days when you were judged by your religion, nationality or the colour of your skin. The current situation where almost anything you say offends someone will not be tolerated by future generations.

There will not be a catastrophic world-wide nuclear war. There will be, in the near future, a nuclear terrorist attack. The bomb will stay with us. Pandora's Box, once opened, cannot be closed. Self-preservation will control those who would blow up all of mankind.

There will be a World War 3 using horrific but conventional weapons. Nationalism and tribalism are rampant around the globe today. Like the Romans, the American empire will crumble to be replaced by a Chinese/East Asian political-economic zone.

We've come a long way in the last 1000 years. Then, the world existed under a feudal system. Many would say we still practice feudalism except cash has replaced land as the currently of control. One thousand years ago we had no electricity, motors, sanitation or information that we enjoy today. People then could never even dream about our lives today. Nor can we imagine what life will be like in 2999. One thing is for sure - it will be one hell of a voyage.

Wish I could be there. Let me know if my predictions are wrong. Have a nice millennium.