

# 1999 was a momentous year here

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

Looking back over the past issues of The New Tanner, medical issues – an acute shortage of doctors and extension of ambulance service around the clock – made headlines in 1999.

Here's a look at the good, the bad and the ugly of the past year.

## JANUARY

The last year of the millennium started as a winter wonderland in Acton with a 25-centimetre snowfall that forced Town crews to work around the clock to clear it. In sports, the Acton Major Novice Tanners edged Brampton 4-3 to win the championship at the rep. Hockey league's annual Christmas tournament. Four downtown stores close, leaving the downtown BIA (Business Improvement Area) pondering how to convince people to shop locally. Ground breaking takes place at the Beckers plaza, purchased by the Halton Credit Union, which will build its new Acton headquarters on the property. Several groups urge the Town to beef up its smoking bylaw to protect people from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. Construction ABT Building Products was sold to Louisiana-Pacific of Oregon for \$225 million.



## FEBRUARY

In order to slow traffic on Mill Street West near St. Joseph's school, the Town designates the area as a Community Safety Zone where anyone issued a traffic ticket will pay double the fine. Acton councillor Norm Elliott makes the first of a series of requests for the Town to look at the issue of how to get owners of basement apartments to register them to ensure building and fire code regulations are met. The Halton Catholic school board locks out its secondary school teachers in a labour dispute, prompting one Acton parent to seriously consider pulling her son out of Bishop Reding High school in Milton and enroll him in the public system. Acton's Kyra Parker, 9, is accepted in the elite summer program of the National Ballet School. Mental health officials begin the search for homes for residents of the Village Manor that will be closed.



## MARCH

Longtime Acton businessman Dave Manes is named as the Acton Citizen of the Year. Two Acton skaters, Jenny May and Bronwyn Marshall, members of the Ice Image synchronized skating team, skate to a Silver medal at the Canadian championships. Poorly ventilated classrooms force McKenzie-Smith Bennett officials to open

classroom windows on a daily basis to lower high levels of carbon dioxide. An Acton newcomer, who couldn't get medical help for her sick son, complains that pets get better medical treatment than humans do after she can't find a doctor willing to accept new patients. The McKenzie-Smith Bennett senior girls' Mustang basketball team captures second place at the all-Halton championships. A Rockwood couple gets hit with hefty fines after pleading guilty in connection to a conspiracy to smuggle booze into Ontario.



## APRIL

The extension of Queen Street to ease traffic through Acton's downtown core is identified as an option for study in a long-term traffic study. An Acton family and several downtown stores are featured in the children's book, *Melted Star Journey*, illustrated by Acton's Karen Ruczuch, an award winning artist. Halton staff investigates expanding ambulance service in Acton to 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week. Students at St. Joseph's Catholic school receive environmental awards at a ceremony at Ontario Place. Plastics Eighty Ltd., a custom manufacturer of plastic products, relocates to Milton because it's cheaper to move than try to expand in Acton. The Town begins the process of having Acton designated as an under serviced area to try to bring more doctors to town. The Acton Minor Atom Tanners make a clean sweep at a Milton tournament and capture the championship.



## MAY

Plans to reconstruct Highway # 7 from Silvercreek into Acton are announced by the Ministry of Transportation. Acton's Dorothy Allen, a retired teacher and longtime volunteer and foster parent is name one of four winners of the Halton Woman of the Year Awards for 1999. A Guelph woman who works in Acton wins \$250,000 in a Lotto 649 draw and pays off her mortgage, plans for a trip and makes her husband and three

grown children very happy. Candidates in the provincial election begin kissing babies, shaking hands and making promises. Acton Jiu-Jitsu members spar and grapple their way to 15 medals at the Canadian championships. Plans for a 190-unit seniors' housing development adjacent to the new West Meadows subdivision are unveiled. Four options for redeveloping prospect Park are discussed at an open house.



## JUNE

The death of a man visiting Acton sparks questions about the adequacy of ambulance service in Acton. Triple V Plastics Ltd. is sold and will relocate to Milton. The Town backs off plans to make Halton Hills 100 per cent smoke free and meets with bar owners who are worried they will lose business if patrons are forced to butt out. Acton Cadets help the BIA (Business Improvement Area) clean up the grungy downtown. Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh steamrolls to victory in the provincial election. Over the objection of Town planning staff, councillors vote not to appeal a committee of adjustment decision that approved Home Hardware's plans for a new 8,000-square-foot-store in east Acton. A 30-year-old Acton man is sentenced to 21 months in jail after pleading guilty to starving his toddler daughter who, because of the neglect, will never lead a normal life.



## JULY

Acton celebrates Canada Day with a huge cake, entertainment by the Acton Citizens' Band and a ghost tour featuring local haunted houses. Veteran Acton firefighter Herb Dodds retires after 41 years. Wet weather means bumper crops for local farmers who report higher than average yields and improved quality. The Acton Youth Centre finds a home at 45 and 47 Mill Street and Halton Hills community support and information plans to move from the former ASSIC Willow Street HQ. Halton Region uses Acton ambulance

call volume and response times to back requests for around the clock service. Two young Georgetown men and one from Milton die after their car slams into two horses that had escaped from a paddock on 17 Side Road, east of Georgetown.



## AUGUST

An Appeal Court judge orders a new trail for Blue Circle Aggregates on privately laid charges that it quarried without a licence. Perfect weather, top-notch entertainment and record crowds make the 8th annual Leathertown Festival the best ever. Developers of the proposed Leathertown Junction at the Mill and Queen Streets receive necessary planning approvals but complain about how long it took. Balloons and speeches from lots of dignitaries mark the long overdue official opening of the new \$1 million Halton Credit Union building in Acton. In a burst of civic pride, a group of citizens, led by Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette, stage a cleanup day at Fairly Lake. Acton Agricultural Society members are asked if they are willing to go door-to-door to help raise \$350,000 for a new building in Prospect Park – they say no.



## SEPTEMBER

Halton officials announce Acton will have full-time ambulance service before the end of the month and the search begins to replace the cramped ambulance bay behind the Beckers store. Halton police use a high tech helicopter to locate hundreds of marijuana plants growing in the area. The United Way of Halton Hills kicks off its annual fundraising campaign without the usual door-to-door appeal for donations. The promoter of a rave party in rural Acton was fined \$3,000 – a "ludicrous" fine according to one Town staffer who reported it cost \$6,000 to prosecute the man. The Town considers a request to exempt the Acton and Georgetown Legions from a proposed tougher smoking bylaw. Plans are finalized to reconstruct Mill

Street from Acton's eastern limit to the railway tracks at Mill Street. The 87th edition of the Acton Fall Fair breaks attendance and gate records. Fifteen thousand people visited the fair.



## OCTOBER

Town politicians want more information but refuse to be "spooked" into Greater Toronto Area amalgamation talks. Grade 8 students at McKenzie-Smith Bennett interview local seniors about their lives and times for an intergenerational book. Council bows to a patriotic plea from local Legions and will allow them to light up with an exemption to the smoking bylaw. Acton's outdoor mall, the trunk sale, wrapped up another year of great bargains, fresh produce and all the news that fits. Trillium Funeral Services continues to deny it has sold Shoemakers. Five thousand dark purple millennium tulips are planted all over Acton by the Horticultural Society. The Education Improvement Commission tells the Halton public board to sell its underused schools if it hopes to get provincial cash for new schools in growth areas. Acton High school honours the student leaders of tomorrow at an awards ceremony. Forty thousand dollars in federal funding is announced for murals in Acton.



## NOVEMBER

Heavy rain and high winds turn to flurries and Acton gets its first snowfall. After 22 years on Mill Street, Andy Katsilieris sells his restaurant to Emmanuel Dalios. A gravel truck driver dies after colliding with a VIA - operated Amtrak train on the Fourth Line north of the Acton quarry. Eleven passengers and two crew are taken to hospital, treated and released. In less than three-and-a-half hours, 9,100-pounds of food were collected in the 9th annual Scout-Calvinist food drive. Acton remembers its war dead with a moving wreath laying ceremony at the Cenotaph. Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh accuses Halton

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