

# GRAPEVINE



## Heart & Stroke winner

Congrats to Acton's Ken McIsaac, 26, winner of \$1,000 in the North Peel Heart and Stroke Foundation's lottery. McIsaac, whose ticket was selected in a televised draw last Tuesday, will pick up his cheque at an awards ceremony on Monday in Brampton.

McIsaac has bought hospital lottery tickets in the past, but never had a winner. He purchased the \$100 ticket over the telephone and forgot about it until recently when he opened his mail.

"There was a letter saying I'd won \$1,000. I was in shock," McIsaac said on Sunday, adding he had no plans for his windfall.

The annual lottery, with cash prizes totaling \$5 million and 42 cars, is one of Ontario's most successful, raising nearly \$10 million for heart and stroke research.

## Kudos to Krasnay

Acton's Louisa Krasnay gets full marks from parents, students and staff at St. Joseph's Catholic School where she's an educational assistant in charge of bus duty and a parent of a Grade 6er. With good humour and precision the military would envy, Krasnay turned the chaotic gridlock of before-and-after school buses, cars and students - 75 per cent of St. Joe's 385 students are bussed - into a carefully orchestrated system.

Wearing a glowing orange safety vest, Krasnay routes the traffic safely and quickly, dispensing good cheer optimism and, on Fridays, gum to the kids who have had a good week. On the back of her vest there's usually a hand-written sign announcing how many more schools days are left, or recently, counting down to March break.

"If the kids were miserable when they came in I'd always tell them there were only so many days left, then I thought everybody should know so I started making the signs and it cheered them up," Krasnay said, adding that she loves her job. It shows.

## Musical skating

From Mozart to Martin (Ricky that is) skaters will perform to an eclectic music list as the Acton Figure Skating Club stages its season finale 'Musical Moods of the Millennium' - on April 1, at the Acton arena.

The Club's 200 members, from three-year-olds in spandex and diapers to young teens with double jumps, will strut their stuff along with some coaches and special guest star, nationally ranked skater Krista Petty of Rockwood. The club's synchronized skating team, the Acton Starlets, will also show their precision skills.

Club president Bev Bailie promises a great show and has special thanks to several generous sponsors, including Acton Kinsmen, Georgetown Optimists and Acton Legion/Peewee Hockey Tournament organizers.

## Aye, carumba!

Although their goals were few and far between, the Mexican bantam hockey team used its three games in the Georgetown International tourney on the weekend as a learning experience. The team, made up of players from a Puebla, Mexico hockey school run by an American, also played five exhibition games, shopped, and went sight-seeing with their Georgetown area host families.

Acton faced off against the Mexican squad on Thursday in Acton. They stopped counting when the score reached 9-1 for Acton and turned it into a fun match for the rest of the game. A Mexican player took a hard fall after a check and was taken to hospital as a precaution to have his bruised and swollen leg checked out.

The large crowd cheered louder when Mexico scored than it did when Acton scored. The Mexican players received leather key chains at the end of the game from the Acton team, courtesy of the Olde Hide House.

## Postcards from Down Under

The 18-hour time difference makes it hard to stay in touch, but Acton's John Eddolls has called home a couple of times from Australia, where he's competing at the International Life Saving Federation's world championships in Sydney, as a member of the Canadian team.

Mom Margaret Eddolls reports the team is tired after competing up at the Australian nationals and is primed for the worlds, which begin tomorrow (Friday).

"John was invited to attend another competition, representing Canada east at an inter-club competition after the worlds wrap up on Sunday," Eddolls said, adding John, who celebrates his birthday April 1, reports the weather is great and the beaches are beautiful.

## Road warriors

Kudos to the Acton Agricultural Society and Acton's Blue Circle Aggregates for their on-going commitment to the environment through Halton Region's Adopt-A-Road program.

The two local groups were among 11 publicly thanked for their participation in the public service program at a Halton Council meeting earlier this month.

Groups "adopt" a section of road right-of-way and keep it clean with regular litter collections. The Region erects a roadside sign for each sponsor with their name and logo on it to acknowledge their dedication to a cleaner environment. Blue Circle adopted part of Regional Road 43 and the Agricultural Society adopted approximately six kilometres of Regional Road 25 (formerly Highway 25) from south of Acton to Speyside. The Rotary Club of Acton adopted Highway 7 from Acton's eastern boundary to Sixth Line, Nassagaweya, under a similar provincial program.



SOAP STARS: Krista Fay (left) and Alicia Goldean took part in a soap carving session on Friday at the Acton Library as part of the March break activities. - Shannon Lee photo

# What is the message?

Wow, Actonians are certainly up in arms about the Halton District School Board's proposal to sell off a significant portion of the McKenzie-Smith Bennett playground. Good. Keep up the pressure. This is not the time to let-up.

I can't remember another issue which has generated so many letters to the editor. I am especially pleased to see our students becoming involved in what may yet end up as an old-fashioned donnybrook. If you haven't signed the petition circulating around the stores, please make an effort to do so.

One reader thinks the provincial government, and not the local school board is to blame. We are admonished not to "fire at the messenger" as the school boards cannot "raise money for education on its own." but rather get grant money from the province to operate. Like most parents, I'm concerned that the funding model may not be sufficient. At the same time, I am not convinced this is the answer to all the problems we face in education. His letter got me to thinking though about the motives behind this ridiculous proposal. What, exactly, is the real message?

I'm starting to wonder if the object of this exercise is not a continuation of the education establishment's fifth column campaign against the government. A campaign I might add, that started when Bill Davis was Premier and has continued, in one form or another, to this day.

This Windsor Board is in open rebellion with its illegal deficit budget. The Durham Board has still not resumed extra curricular activities. The unions are sabre-rattling and recently gave a rough ride to the Minister of Education. And now, in an election year, the Halton Board is proposing to sell off a playground. The board can't seem to accept that the public is not prepared to go back to a system which gave them a blank cheque.

The board's abused that privilege. Its not going to be re-insti-

## The Way I See It

with Mike O'Leary



tuted. School boards need to accept that and move on.

The problem is Halton seems to be that the board will not make the hard decision to close several facilities in south Halton that are underutilized. Until and unless they do, they can't build needed new schools in Georgetown South and other places. Meanwhile, the board has been sitting on Speyside and Wrigglesworth schools for years. I understand that there has been solid interest in the Speyside property in the past but the board wouldn't even respond to the inquiries. This sale would have returned much more to the board than the proposed sale of playgrounds. Why have these properties, which negatively affect the funding model, not been disposed of? Why pick on our playgrounds? What is the secret agenda? Perhaps this debacle will push the provincial auditor to have a good hard look at the Halton board to see if our assets have been properly managed.

I am still hopeful that the Town will come down hard and categorically state they will not change the zoning. Sure, a developer could appeal to the OMB, but with public opposition already a matter of record, the chances of an appeal are remote.

The bottom line is that the Halton public Board doesn't own this property per se. Like all governments, they hold it in trust for us. We paid for it, we own it and we don't want to sell it. Unless Ms. Gardner and the rest of the trustees want one hell of a fight they had better back off this ill conceived plan.

I wish I knew how to cool off the animosity between the government and the teachers. We are being prepared by both sides for a turbulent fall. The Tories aren't doing much to calm the waters with the Premier sug-

gesting he's going to legislate the teachers into extra-curricular activities. What a silly suggestion. What's next? Will he legislate the Ministry of Transport workers to join the Rotary? I know, I know, it's not the same, but teachers have always worked with the kids after school. It's been an understood part of the job. Draconian measures are not needed. Nor are public musings by the Premier going to solve the problem in Durham. There's no need to swat a fly with a sledgehammer.

The unions are going to war over hours of work and teacher testing. I'm not going to get into hours of work. Like most people I realize that teaching is not a soft touch and that most teachers spend long hours on their jobs.

I don't understand why the government is insisting a written test for teachers? What would that prove? The real problem, that I have seen over the years, is how do you get rid of a bad teacher? I think the principal and parent councils should be given much more authority in this area. As with any employee, the administration should have to build a file, the employee is given an opportunity to improve and, if they can't meet expectation, they should be released.

Teacher testing isn't going to solve the problem of children graduating with less than acceptable English and math skills. Real change has to be made to curriculum now that's an issue I would support the teachers striking over.

Having suffered through the last strike I hope both sides will back away from the abyss. Perhaps a mediator needs to be appointed so the personalities involved can stop butting head. The endless bickering and posturing will solve nothing. Another strike will only exacerbate an already bad situation.

Both the government and the union must be told to act like adults and find a common ground. The children deserve nothing less.

# A Lenten Reflection

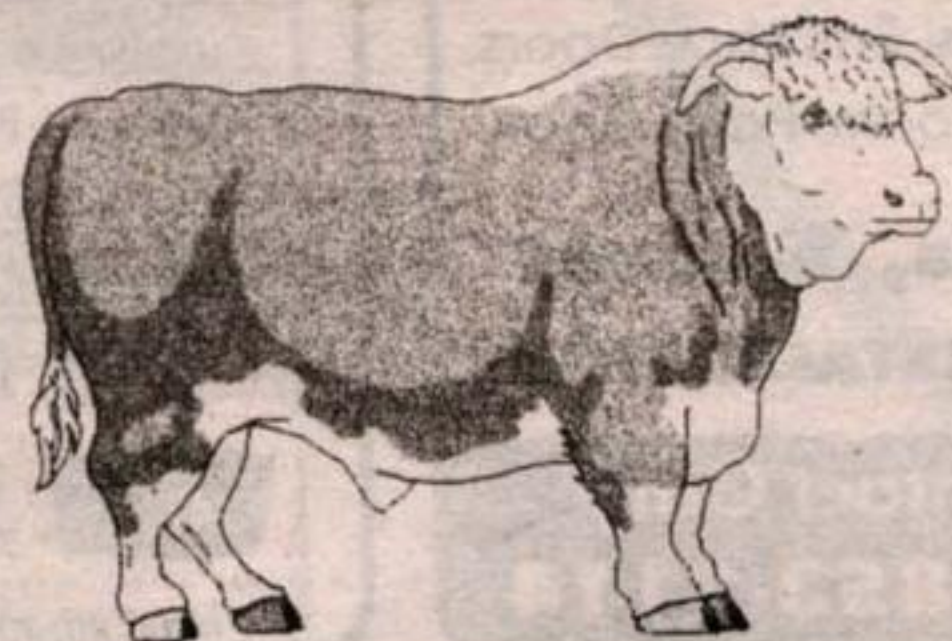
In a radio interview to which I was listening, personal ads were being discussed. Some of the jargon used was incredible and one would have to be a regular reader to keep up with the vernacular. The one that caught my interest was 'SWJM non-religious' which translates literally 'Single-White-Jewish Male.'

I can only imagine why he tacked on 'non-religious'. Was it fair warning that a suitor would be expected to attend family functions rooted in Judaism or could they expect other baggage in the relationship.

To me it seemed like a good example of an oxymoron. How could one say they are of a religious sect and non-religious in the same breath? But sadly enough we see it in every denomination. People who are raised in a home where godliness is a way of life that moulds and shapes their ethics and outlook on life and have no personal relationship with God.

So at this season of Lent I pray that as I raise my children their personal ad could read 'SWM/FDPC' Single-White-Male (or female in my daughter's case) Devout Practising Christian.

Ian Pasmore



## WHAT'S YOUR BEEF?

Put it in a letter to the Editor!

Deadline is Tuesday at noon.