

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Ambulance service

Acton will continue to have a land ambulance service thanks to an agreement between Halton Hills Fire Department and Halton Region Land Ambulance Service. Officials from both services officially announced that the ambulance service will be able to use space at the Acton fire station.

It's good news because Halton Region has been searching for a suitable permanent location for the ambulance station without much success and the possibility existed the service could be centralized in you know where, unless one was found soon. The original location at the side of Becker's plaza was no longer suitable. Besides being too small it had been flooded out two or three times this year with the unusual amount of heavy rain.

Councillor Rick Bonnette said they had also detected mould in the old premises so a move was necessary. Bonnette and others give a lot of credit to Region CEO Brent Marshall for the deal that allows the ambulance service to use the fire hall. Mr. Marshall is a member of the Acton brigade and in his position as the CEO for Halton, he was able to help broker an agreement.

A few years ago when it was proposed that the fire department and the ambulance service be housed in the new Acton fire station the proposal was turned down. Councillor Bonnette said he got little support for the proposal at the council able and there wasn't much enthusiasm from the fire department at the time.

However, time and personalities change and the climate for a mutual agreement to share facilities on a temporary basis was greeted much more enthusiastically this time around. The Region's director of land ambulance services, Jim King was also pleased to announce that Advanced Care Paramedics were introduced into the three north Halton ambulance services on the same day - August 16 - as the Region officially assumed responsibility for land ambulance services from the province. Mr. King did not discount the possibility of enlarging the Acton fire hall to accommodate ambulance services permanently.

In any event ambulance service has come a long way in the past couple of years, thanks to region officials, elected and selected. It has certainly been a boon to Acton and area and one well appreciated.

Arthritis Society needs our help

Although some of the more deadly diseases get more ink, the scourge of arthritis, a crippling disease which afflicts an estimated 1500 men, women and children in Acton and area alone, gets scant mention. And yet four million Canadians have arthritis in some form or other, many of them in a form which seriously affects their lifestyle.

The subject comes up because we are on the threshold of September which has been dubbed Arthritis Month for decades. And local arthritis campaign organizer Jos Bosboom says he is desperately in need of volunteers to canvass homes in Acton and area during September.

He has been struggling to find door to door canvassers for the annual campaign and unless there is a better response many of the areas will not be canvassed. that, in turn, is going to affect the effectiveness of the arthritis Society in providing services and research into the disease which afflicts so many.

Great strides have been made in treating and managing many of the 100 different conditions that parade under the umbrella of arthritis, but there's still a long way to go. Our contributions can go a long way to not only help ease the pain and suffering but towards finding a cure.

If you have a few spare hours then give Mr. Bosboom a call at 853-0738 after 6 p.m. or the Arthritis Society at 1-905-712-2281 during the day.



CHAMPS PRAISED: Ontario Lieutenant Governor Hilary Weston praised local volunteers for their hard work at a reception at the Civic Centre last Thursday. Among those for making the community a nicer place to live were Acton Community Champion program organizers, from left, Sharon Every, pastor Jamie Shepherd and Halton public health nurse Shirley McKay. - Pam Shepherd photo

Measuring the quality of life

Headlines on the front pages of some Canadian newspapers recently trumpeted an Industry Canada report claiming that Canadians' standard of living has fallen far below that of Americans - even below the standards of poor southern US states.

Some economic analysts immediately jumped on the report as proof that Canada needs to lower taxes, privatize health care, decrease government spending and take other measures to make Canada more "competitive". Others tried to find concrete examples that would clearly show how much our standard of living has dropped.

One analyst, for example, noted that while the best-selling car in the US is the Toyota Camry, Canadians "have been downgraded to the Corolla." Well, actually it's not just Canadians. Corollas are the best-selling cars in the world - of all time, in fact, recently even overtaking the ubiquitous VW Beetle.

But since when does making the thoughtful decision to buy a practical, fuel-efficient vehicle make people less well-off? Canadians buy fewer and smaller vehicles than do Americans. That means less traffic, fewer freeways, fewer road accidents and less air pollution. It seems to me that these are things that actually improve our standard of living.

One reason why Americans buy larger and more vehicles may be because they drive more often than do Canadians and for greater distances.

Science Matters

- by David Suzuki



low, why does the United Nations keep saying that Canada is the most livable country in the world? Even an analyst from the pro American-style governance Fraser Institute has questioned Industry Canada's blanket statements about living standards, point out that other measures of standard of living show a far smaller difference between the two countries.

Furthermore, a recent paper in the British Medical Journal reported that Canada's method of redistributing wealth through the provinces reduces income inequality, which in turn reduces mortality and improves public health. In other words, Canadians live longer, healthier lives than do Americans, at least in part because of the more equal distribution of wealth in our country. Indeed, Canadian men born today can expect to live three years longer on average than their American counterparts, while women will live two years longer on average.

This is not to say that Canadians should be smug. In fact, the article in the British Medical Journal points out that income disparity in Canada is on the increase. The question is, do we want to follow the American path to greater monetary wealth for some, but greater disparity between the rich and the poor? Or should we work towards improving our own system, to the benefit of all Canadians? As a society, this is what we have to decide.



THE NEW TANNER

59 Willow Street North
Acton, Ontario
L7J 1Z8
(519) 853-0051 Fax: 853-0052

Publisher
Ted Tyler

Editorial
Hartley Coles
Frances Niblock Mike O'Leary Ellen Piehl
Maggie Petrushevsky Angela Tyler

Advertising and Circulation
Marie Shadbolt

Composing
Karen Coleman Penny Zurbrigg

Distributed to every home in Acton and area as well as adjoining communities.

ADVERTISING POLICY
Every effort will be made to see advertising copy, neatly presented, is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors or omissions in advertising, but will gladly reprint without charge that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur provided a claim is made within five days of publication.