

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Underserviced

Good news from the Province last week that Halton Hills has been designated as an "underserviced" area for physicians serving local needs.

The Underserviced Area program identifies a need for nine general or family practitioners in Halton Hills. According to Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh the designation will help recruiting efforts for doctors by covering the costs of travel and accommodation of physicians interested in locating in the Town.

Halton Hills representatives will be invited on the annual recruitment tour visiting the province's five medical schools and if this isn't successful in procuring new physicians after one year the Province will provide a grant of \$15,000 payable to a new physician over four years.

It's the first step in recruiting new doctors for Halton Hills but it is no guarantee they will be attracted to Acton, or Halton Hills for that matter. We'd like to be positive about this but Acton has no hospital and general practitioners seem to prefer locating in a hospital community, although Georgetown has had difficulty in procuring doctors in spite of the hospital's presence and burgeoning population. Guelph has had similar problems.

The situation in Acton merits special attention because the three doctors practising here are up to their degrees in patients. Once there were as many as eight doctors practising in Acton, serving a much smaller community. When one goes on a much needed vacation it leaves two to cover the hundreds of patients. At least one is considering imminent retirement, so the prognosis is not good.

Efforts at the Acton Medical Centre to attract even one physician have so far met with minimum response. Perhaps the underserviced designation will help but we have to realize there are many small communities in Ontario that have no doctors. New families moving to Acton, for instance, have difficulty in getting the traditional family doctor.

Who or what's to blame for the doctor shortage in small towns? A number of reasons are given, including the doctor drain to the U.S., cutbacks in the number of recruits in medical schools, a preference by physicians for the larger cities as well as an inclination to specialize instead of working as a general practitioner. All three major political parties blame each other for the shortage.

In the United States where they face an entirely different problem—the delivery of health care—humorist Dave Barry suggested, tongue in cheek, that they should get a time machine and go back to 1957. "In those days," he says, "we had a great health care system." Every family had a doctor with an aquarium in his waiting room.

There were plenty of doctors here then, too, but the tinkering and cutbacks with health care in this country have created the problems the same governments are now trying to solve. Doctors are the key to the health system, as well as nurses, etc.

Obviously, as Mr. Chudleigh points out, the underserviced designation is not going to solve the shortage of physicians. There has to be some work done to attract physicians here. It must be an attractive alternative to the large cities. The stage is all set for a crisis unless we do.

Briefly . . .

Thanksgiving weekend provided a weather cornucopia that included snow, hail (ice pellets, if you prefer), rain and brilliant bursts of sunlight that penetrated the angry black clouds that scudded across the sky. Tuesday, of course, after the festivities were over, the sun showed its face again and it became warmer, a much fitter time for a holiday.

* * *

Believe it or not, it was 30 years ago on Tuesday (October 10, 1970) that Pierre Laporte was kidnapped by the FLQ, a Quebec terrorist group. The federal government subsequently invoked the War Measures Act and controversy still revolves around the prime minister's part in it, the late Pierre Elliott Trudeau, of course. In hindsight, the action probably erased any further groups defying the law with terrorist tactics but some civil libertarians will never be convinced it was necessary.

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Trees should be in full autumn dress this coming weekend before they shed their leaves for the inevitable winter to follow. The countryside is a blaze of colour and a walk in the leaves is bound to lift your spirits and prepare you for the blasts to come.



SECOND ANNUAL: Acton High School principal Greg MacPherson and physical education teacher Ann Andrews joined students for a breather at the end of the school's second annual Terry Fox Run October 5. Run organizer Marlene Bogart said approximately 60 students participated in the run, raising just over \$700 in donations and pledges. - Maggie Petrushevsky photo

How a Trunk Sale evolves

BY ANGELA TYLER
The New Tanner

This Saturday was week 21. For me and three other particular people in town, there is no better feeling than week 21.

Last Saturday was the last Trunk Sale of this year. Twenty weeks doesn't really sound like a long time, but somewhere around week 15, number 20 can't come soon enough. This past Saturday marked the first Saturday I was able to sleep in since May. However being able to and actually doing so are two different things.

Last summer, I sort of helped out at the Trunk Sale. I was the anonymous Trunk Sale person. This year though, there was no escaping. It started innocently enough with lunchtime meeting at Andy's Restaurant last spring with Jake, George, Jack, Ted and a few special guests.

It's pretty amazing how much was actually accomplished in about an hour. The checklist was reviewed. Price; all agreed, same as last year. Permission for the land; I was in charge of the fax request to the Mayor. Treasurer's report: nothing fancy here, a one sheet photocopy of the bank book for all from Jake with a few miscellaneous notes on the side. Advertising and contacting last year's vendors: agreed. Portable toilet: Jake (would make the call). By the time the bill came, the Trunk Sale was ready to roll as soon as we had permission from the Town for use of the land. Everybody seemed eager for another season.

It started off pretty good this year. We were a little delayed with getting approval from the Town for use of the land, but we also had a back-up plan, just in case. It seemed pretty simple. Vendors shows up, pay \$5 for each spot, park where we tell them, then sell their goods. It was a simple plan.

Jake was in charge of marking the spots with ball diamond chalk. He usually chalked them on a Friday night or early Saturday morning.

Sometimes the centre line wasn't very straight, but each booth was the same size.

We would show up around 7:45 a.m., just prior to the 8 a.m. opening. Regular vendors would come over and make their presence known. Although there is a general rule of first come, first served, there are a few 'Trunk Sale elders' that have been coming out since the beginning and they line up just like everyone else, but we sort of bend the rules and let them have the same spot each week. Nick and George have been parked in the first two spots at the south side of the entrance for, well, it seems like eternity. It wouldn't be the Trunk Sale without them.

Then around 7:55 a.m., we have an official meeting. It usually goes something like this...four guys in white hats and me standing at the gate. First, a quick catch-up on our personal events and any pertinent information around town. Jack...going golfing? Jake...is that Tim Hortons coffee or Trunk Sale coffee? Hey, did you hear about (fill in anybody who is in hospital or has passed away). Who is in line today? George, Nick, the guy from Toronto, Roland, Klaus, the flower lady, Saunders and Celine? Answers...yes, yes, yes 6 spots today, yes and his son, yeah in the back row, no, holidays, not yet. Time check, 8:01 a.m.; Jake yells out, start your engines.

It used to take 10-15 minutes to park 60-65 vehicles. This year, we were lucky if we could do it in 20-30 minutes. Remember the theory, pay your money (a mere \$5), park where you're told.

Then near the beginning of July a person with pale complexion, white hair and dressed in white came up to me and asked to be parked in the non-smoking section. I was shocked. This was an outdoor market. George, was at the front gate standing beside Jake, with a cigarette in his hand. I told them we didn't have one. I then received a lecture about how second hand smoke can be just as harmful. Ten minutes later there were three of

us arguing about why we didn't have a non-smoking section. By the end of the discussion I was trying to get George to go down to the person's booth and smoke the whole pack of cigarettes in front of them. For two weeks after that we had to make sure we didn't park them beside anyone who smoked. For about four weeks after that, a handful of regular vendors took great pleasure in jokingly asking for the non-smoking section, just to get a rise from us.

However, my favourites, although sometimes frustrating, are the ones who don't understand what happens when you turn your steering wheel to the left or the right. I think it was the day we had about 90 vendors. We were going nuts trying to park everyone. One lady who we never saw before was parking in the centre aisle. She really couldn't get the hang of which was to turn the wheel. Ted was instructing her, left, right, etc. After about 5 minutes he had it. He was so frustrated, he reached in her driver's window and started steering the car himself.

Sometimes it can be aggravating to park 60 plus vendors each Saturday. However, we often got a laugh or two out of the mornings escapades.

On a more personal note, I have seen enough corn for this year. I have helped my dad sell corn every Saturday since the end of June. I estimate over the past three years 20,000 cobs of corn have passed by my eyes. In this time I have learned a few things about corn. The most important being if a customer says they can't eat corn, never ask why. The answer usually has something to do with digestion and usually ends with something to do with a toilet.

The odd thing is, about February, my sister will probably say, "I miss the Trunk Sale." Although I won't admit it to her, I will probably think it too. And next year, if there is a Trunk Sale, I'll probably be over there every Saturday morning for 20 weeks, helping park vendors and...selling corn.

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