

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles



## 2001 looking good

Here we are again - on the threshold of another new year. The year 2000 AD is ready to ship out, leaving behind few surprises but considerable anxiety about its successor.

Air Canada set the tone by announcing just before Christmas that 3,500 employees would be cut, fares would increase and losses this year would be larger than anticipated. The airline's CEO, Robert Milton, blamed the problems on fuel prices, severe weather and the suggestion that the economy was softening which would be bad for business.

It was a cruel blow coming just before Christmas but surprising because only a fortnight before the same CEO was trumpeting a success story. This airline, he said, had met its 180-day commitment to improve service two months early, suggesting the integration of Canadian Airlines with Air Canada was a gratifying success.

Now Mr. Milton says the benefits conferred by combining the two airlines had been offset by high fuel prices. He seemed surprised that winters in Canada were sometimes severe and worries about the economy ongoing.

It suggests that Air Canada bit off more than it could chew when it absorbed Canadian Airlines. And that's bad news for travellers who have no choice but to rely on Air Canada for travel. They've already endured a year of chaos under restructuring and how they face fare hikes and the spectre of poorer service with fewer employees tiling for the airline.

Fortunately, news at the local level was notably more cheerful. The news that Magna International wants to purchase 70 acres in the north end of Acton for a car parts plant was the best local economic news this community has experienced in decades. The promise of 500 new jobs here after two decades of plant closings is bound to create a better economic climate here.

There have been rumours for some months that an auto parts manufacturer was interested in locating in Acton. Much of the speculation was that it involved the former Beardmore property owned by Maple Leaf Foods. Instead, Magna chose to buy land off Regional Road 25 (Hwy. 25) across from ABT Building Products. The land must be rezoned for industrial purposes but it is actually just across the road from the Acton Industrial Parkland behind Leathertown Lumber.

Halton Hills Chief Administrative Officer Steve Andrews describes Magna's proposal as a "tremendous opportunity for the Town and particularly Acton." It would add needed industrial assessment and have an impact on the proposed 401 industrial corridor, as well as "tremendous spin-offs" as Councillor Rick Bonnette predicts.

All of this, of course, hinges on the smooth transition of rezoning and the absence of serious objections. Hopefully the deal can go through and give Acton the positive news we've long awaited.



The serenity of winter.

## Angela picks her best 12

BY ANGELA TYLER  
The New Tanner

For many people, this year started with a panic. The Y2K panic. Society went crazy with electronic cautiousness. We stocked up on water, canned goods and even bought generators just in case. Yet, when it came right down to it Y2K became as simple as its name...nothing too big.

Now, society is closing the year with the annual lists. You know them. The top 10 songs, the top 10 grossing movies, the lists are endless.

This past week when I was reading the People Magazine list of the 25 most intriguing people of 2000, it got me thinking. Acton has a list just like theirs.

This is my list of the 12 people that have made Acton a little more interesting place this past year. Why 12 you ask? Well, there is not rhyme or reason, it just matched the number of months in a year. This list is in no particular order.

**Dr. Stephen Hess**, owner of the Acton Vet Clinic. Dr. Hess always takes an interest in his patients and their owners. He remembers your name and isn't scared off that your pet might bite. Over the years he has continued to volunteer his time for two rabies clinics each year. This year while many vets no longer participate, Dr. Hess still does. In a few hours he and his helpers vaccinate hundreds of animals from Acton, Orangeville, Oakville, Georgetown and other ar-

cas.

**The Acton Citizens' Band**, marching and concert band. Hundreds, perhaps thousands of people have learned to play a musical instrument (free of charge) and have in turn entertained as many people all over the province. This year, in my opinion, they sounded even better than in years before. Their only funding comes from performances and their tenants, the Acton Parent and Child Resource Centre. These unpaid musicians play for the love of the music. They have performed at numerous parades, the Trunk Sale, the Fall Fair and have even had a junior band perform a Christmas concert this year.

**Judy McDonald**, the always smiling owner of Country Reflections. This woman is fabulous. Even if she doesn't know you she makes you feel like you were her best friend and she has a gift for any occasion. She has proven that you can run a successful business in Acton and be a female entrepreneur! Not only did she purchase the building where her store is but, when she ran out of space inside, she opened a garden centre in the back parking area.

**James Bursa**, two-year-old Acton resident. I don't know how he did it, but two-year-old James made the voters' list. Maybe somebody is trying to tell him he has a future in politics?

**The Robert Little Christmas Parade Float Volunteers**, first place winners in the annual Santa Claus Parade. Thank you for reminding us

all that a parade float is more than a few dozen kids sitting on some benches stuck on a trailer whipping candies at the bystanders. What a great float!

**Mike O'Leary**, *The New Tanner* columnist. You may love him or you may hate him, but I guarantee you will at least look at his column. The always opinionated O'Leary touched all topics from federal to local. When he was 'muzzled' prior to the federal election this year many in our newspaper family had a chuckle when he changed how he referred to the publisher. Gone is Publisher Tyler. He is now known as Chief Pooh-bah.

**The late Fred Archibald**, long time curler and a patron of Mohawk Raceway. Fred caught the attention of a few people when the tales of his Mohawk Raceway winnings spread around town. The winning didn't change him. A week or so after his first big \$20,000 win, he and Wendy were at Andy's Family Restaurant having a quiet dinner and a glass of wine. His secret? He always took a shot at the slot machines on the 13<sup>th</sup> of the month (his father's birthday) on the 13<sup>th</sup> hour (1 p.m.).

**Stephen Grasby**, former ward one candidate. While bringing attention to himself and his campaign he also brought attention back to local politics and Acton issues. He was the first to declare his candidacy and was determined to keep his name in your view whether in the newspaper,

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