

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Water for profit?

According to news reports, Premier Mike Harris has acknowledged that the Ontario government is seriously considering privatizing all or part of the province's water and sewer systems.

In view of the Walkerton tragedy and a recent report, which maintains that 63% of private Halton wells are contaminated with bacteria, it seems there should be more government controls on water and sewers rather than leaving it in private hands. We would suggest it would also increase the price of water and sewers when the profit motive is also there.

The government surely found this out recently when they broke up Ontario Hydro into three parts. Municipalities eager to cash in were seeking 5-10% increases to consumers. The Minister had to step in and lecture them on the intention to save consumers money, not increase the costs. It still hasn't been resolved after months of negotiating.

At this point the government is only marshalling information with a view to establish public-private partnerships. Super Build Corp is entertaining suggestions which range from buying existing facilities to building its own. Super Build Corp is a government agency created to establish private-public partnerships.

Liberal critic Jim Bradley maintains the government has a master plan fueled by right wing ideologues to turn the potentially lucrative business over to their friends in the private sector. He says it has been a "pattern" in the Harris government to discredit public institutions and services, hoping people will accept radical change as a solution by creating the impression there is a crisis.

However, Super Build president David Lindsay has said the government has never suggested public oversight of water and sewage treatment would be removed. It is just a matter of how you pay and finance your water, he says.

Since the motive is profit, there is no doubt who will benefit most.

We're having a birthday!

We're having a birthday - the third - and we'd be remiss indeed if we let the occasion pass without acknowledging the support and encouragement we've received over the past three years.

The first issue of The New Tanner was published on January 29, 1998 after several months of planning, following on the coat tails of The Acton Tanner which ceased publication in the Spring of 1997.

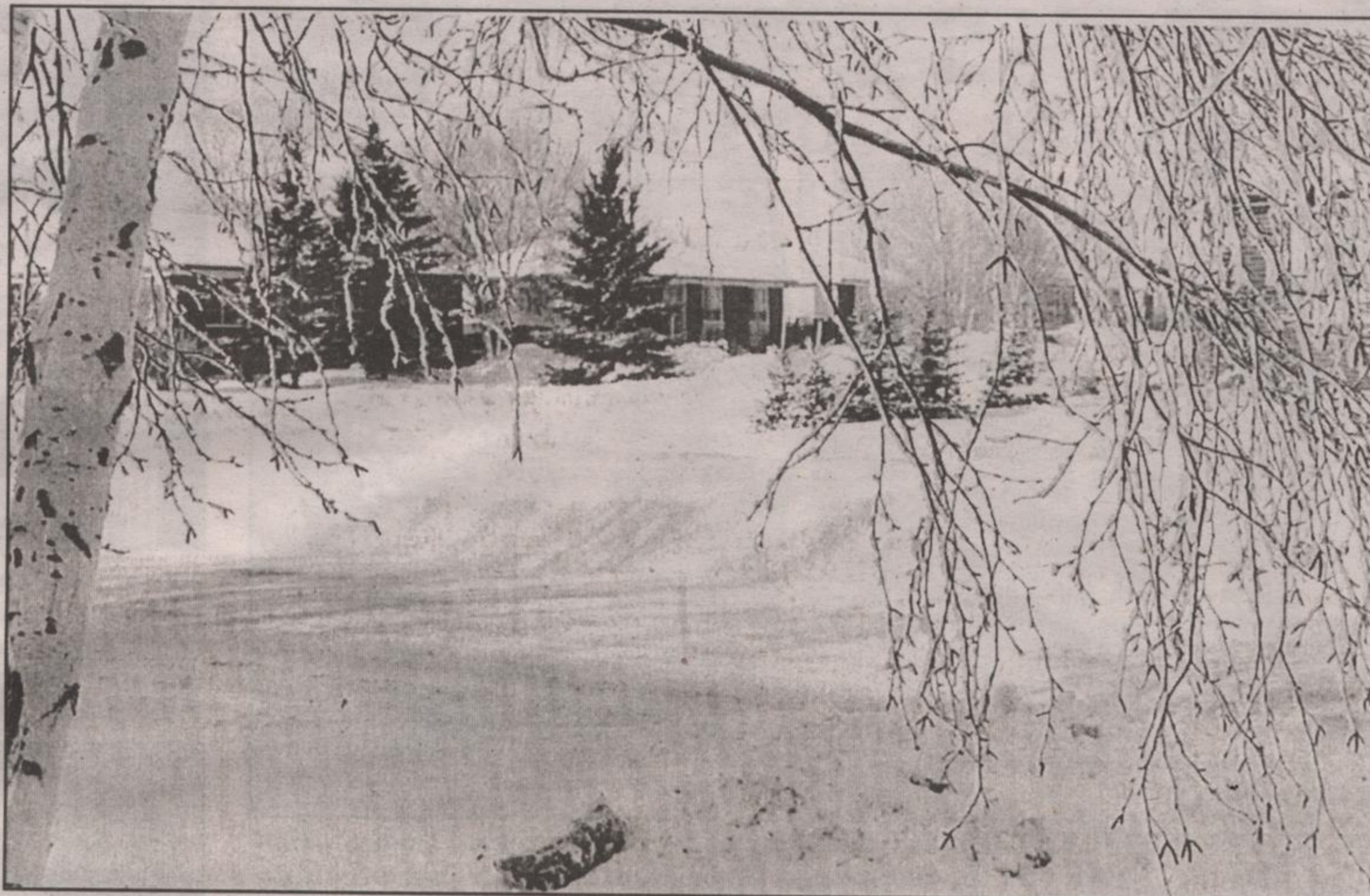
With this issue we enter the fourth year of publication with a much larger circulation. Publisher Ted Tyler has increased the original circulation of 5,000 to 7,400. Now The New Tanner reaches into Rockwood, Eden Mills and the rural areas as well as Acton and district and its influence spreads.

There have been many highs and lows over the last three years, long hours on publication day, technical glitches, circulation problems and lots of bouquets and brickbats. They've all been incentives to improve the paper so it can serve the circulation area better.

There has been splendid support from advertisers, appreciative of a newspaper committed to their interests and well being. Advertising, of course, is the engine which drives the newspaper. Without it there just couldn't be one.

People from all walks of life have expressed their appreciation for The New Tanner and have been eager to support it in many ways. We appreciate the loyalty and will do our best to merit it.

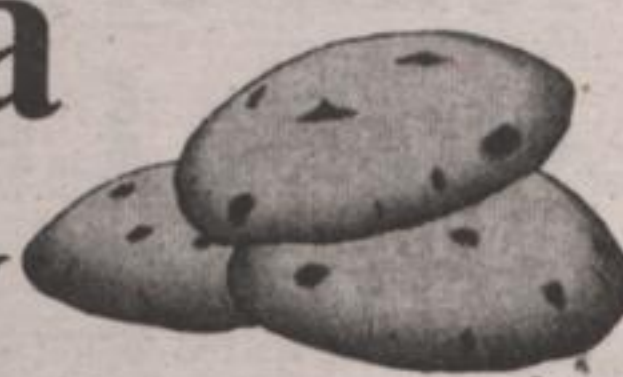
The goal of The New Tanner is to continue the positive things the newspaper has brought to the communities and try to build on them so the paper is an accurate reflection of life here, now and in the future.



Canadian birch weaves an icy curtain.



We're becoming a junk food society



By: ANGELA TYLER

When you are in a grocery store, do you ever look in the cart for the person in front of you? I am nosy and I do look.

Maybe it's because of my inability to cook almost anything that is remotely edible, but lately I've been a little more interested in groceries and grocery shopping which is probably normal.

This year, my Christmas presents started to have a food theme. It started out innocently enough with the seasonal box of chocolates. However it soon developed into a microwave pressure cooker gadget with cookbook and a CD with 5,000 'kitchen tested favourites'. I think in a way I created my own dilemma. Following a November family dinner at my place (the third one in eight years) my family thought I should play hostess more often. I reminded them that two out of the three times they were guests, they were fed a simple Italian feast which included my only company dish (other than take-out), hearty lasagna.

I like buying cook books, reading magazines with recipes and I

even get the Kraft kitchen to e-mail me dinner ideas, none of which I have used yet. The CD was pretty interesting and the pressure cooker, well, let's say I have never seen a recipe for fake wild boar anywhere else. When it comes down to it, my cooking genes I might have inherited stopped abruptly with my sister.

Now, instead of trying to do that cooking thing, I just look in other people's grocery carts. It can actually be pretty interesting. After months of being inquisitive and noticing the vast amount of convenience and junk food in people's carts, I have come to one simple conclusion. We (including myself) are becoming a lazy, junk food seduced society.

I think it was most obvious for me when I was in Florida a few weeks ago. On a routine necessity trip to the local Winn Dixie Marketplace, in the land of citrus and fresh fruits and vegetables, the smallest section of the grocery store was this section. Even the beer and wine section was bigger. What amazed me was here where oranges are everywhere you had two choices of them...individual

or the 5-pound bag.

Walking up and down the aisles it was hard not to notice the huge amounts of convenience foods. I used to think we had a lot in Canada, but this was nothing in comparison. After the shopping trip while I was grumbling about the lazy people that had to buy frozen microwavable scrambled eggs, my sister quickly reminded me that I was the one who bought microwavable bacon. Okay, I admit I do, but I don't do it for the convenience, I do it because I hate my home smelling of greasy bacon. My logic didn't sit right with my family.

Back at the condo, while we unpacking the goods, I pulled out a box of breakfast cereal. But this wasn't your normal box of cereal. It was real cereal but pressed together into a bar with white stuff that was supposed to be milk in the middle. I was the only one who saw a problem with this. How long does it take to eat a bowl of cereal? They thought these were a great idea.

So my grumbling continued on and off throughout the week. On the

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