

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Fish Tales

Here we go again.

The Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) is concerned that emergency use of back-up well pumps at the Prospect Park pumping station could hurt Fairy Lake and Black Creek fish habitats. Their "concern" has again postponed long delayed development plans in Acton.

Halton Region Council recently agreed to accelerate the \$7.2 million in upgrades at the Region's Churchill Rd. S. wastewater treatment plant. It's needed before Acton can grow to the 10,000 people which the province currently allows.

The main developers were ready to sign agreements this week to prepay their share of development costs for plant upgrades. However, a water analysis has indicated a back-up pump could have an impact on water levels in Fairy Lake, another fabrication.

The delay could mean that development in Acton East, long looked forward to by residents, could be delayed another year. Developer Fred Dawkins, whose company has 309 draft approved units in Acton, said they hoped to be building in 2002 but if agencies keep interfering it could be 2003 before construction begins.

Halton Region officials are going to meet with the DFO to deal with the issues but it could take another month. Halton's director of current planning, Andrew Hope, said the Region is talking about increasing pump capacity, not the amount of water being pumped for Acton's use. It's just a safeguard in case the other pump at Prospect Park breaks down.

In any event the concern about water levels in Fairy Lake are probably over exaggerated. After all, when Beardmore and Co. owned the lake they took out as much as 500,000 gallons a day for their operation. Believe it or not, there were plenty of fish in the lake and the Black Creek. Water levels stayed about the same as they are now, except in drought conditions.

The fact that the pump would only be used in the event the other one breaks down is surely an indication the bureaucracy is looking for some reason to justify their existence rather than a "concern" over another pump.



CZECH CHEQUE: Helping the Kinsmen Club of Acton at their Christmas tree lot earned the Acton Minor Bantam Tanner hockey team a cheque for \$1,000 to help pay for the teams' upcoming Czech hockey tour. Kinsmen Bernie Buttivant (left) and Claude Nadon presented the cheque to team officials Bill Manes and Kelly McArthur at a Kinsmen meeting last Wednesday. - Frances Niblock photo.

Nothing like a change of attitude

By: ANGELA TYLER
The New Tanner

I remember when I was in grade 12 and my guidance counsellor at Acton High School, Dave Jones, was chatting with me about my future. Decisions had to be made. Was there to be college or university in my future? Where was I headed with my post secondary education?

I have to give him credit, he tried, but I was a little too stubborn. I told him I wanted to work with my dad in my family's business. I was determined from an early age my future was there ... me, my family, some transport trucks, and a bunch of yellow school buses. It seemed perfect.

Last Thursday, I thought about Mr. Jones and by the end of the week, I was thinking maybe he had something with that broadening my horizons thing.

When I was in school, I like most other children loved snow days. You know those days when the buses don't run because of the weather and road conditions and you get to stay at home. Now, I despise them.

Snow days mean only one thing to me...exhaustion. Most people stay at home until the roads are clear. I'm at work answering literally hundreds of phone calls that all start the same way. "Are the buses running?"

Needless to say by 9 a.m. I am completely drained. By Friday, I was exhausted. It had been another day of awful weather that affected other aspects of our business.

Sometimes it's hard not to think, what on earth was I thinking getting involved with all this. The business has changed so much since my grandfather's day. Sometimes it seems to me that the kids have absolutely no respect or any concept of consequences. My dad always told me in this business, you either know the really good kids or the really bad ones. It was true. With over 45 years of busing, there has been a lot of students, but when it comes down to it, we really do only get to know the really good or the really bad and there never seems to be a shortage of the latter.

About two years ago, I got to know one of these students. At the time he had fit into the bad one category. When I first met him, he had this tough guy attitude. It was pretty good considering he was barely 14. He kept to himself, he didn't need anybody's help, had an huge 'I can look after myself' sort of thing going on. On top of all this he also had a learning disability.

For almost a year, it seemed like every week there was a report to his school about his inappropriate behaviour. More than one of the other

drivers had also been irritated by his attitude, but there was something about him. He had a spark for knowledge and I just knew he was a smart boy. I had this feeling that if he could just get on the right track he could go to university.

Over the first year, he started talking to me quite a bit. He told me about his family, unfortunately a broken home. He had three brothers, one whom had a slight physical disability. He helped care for him. His home life was nothing like I had experienced when I was younger. It could have made for a movie of the week, a complete tearjerker.

During the next year, something clicked for this young man. He realized that the program he was in was there to help him with his learning challenge and improve his life.

Soon he was taking part in drama classes, had lots of friends and teachers who cared about him and he cared about them. He had two part-time jobs and his beginner's driver's licence. He was learning all what life had to offer and was asking to read some of the newspapers that I carried with me, such as the Globe and Mail. Two years prior to that he would look at the pictures or the comics. Now he wanted to learn. He was asking if he spelled words correctly and was proudly showing

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READY FOR THE SUN: This snowman was ready for some spring weather with its sunglasses and straw hat. - Angela Tyler photo.



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