

EDITORIAL

Too little, too late

The fast-tracked installation of gate arms at the Fourth Line level rail crossing last week must be cold comfort to the families of four people killed in crashes with trains there in the past three years.

The \$200,000 in safety upgrades – sensors to monitor train traffic and six new lights – might not have saved those lives, but would have been better than what was there.

What a harsh lesson in the power of politics. According to Federal transport officials that crossing didn't warrant gate arms in late 1999 when a gravel truck driver was killed. It took the tragic deaths of three Acton teens a year later, for the project to become a priority.

Late last week, Halton MP Julian Reed said all level crossings in Halton may be eligible for upgrades if municipalities apply for the 80 per cent Federal funding and pick up 8.5 per cent of the cost with the railway paying the remaining 14.5 per cent.

There are 14 level railway crossing in Halton Hills – 10 on Town-owned roads and four Regional roads – and nine crossings don't have safety gates.

Making them safe must be a priority.

CHUM's last song

It's a secret and only two people know the answer. The very last song played on 1050 CHUM will be heard just before 3 p.m. on Monday, May 7. That's the date and time the music stops on air. Toronto's legendary radio station, the first rock n' roll station in Canada and one of the world's true rock radio pioneers will end 44 years of broadcasting history.

It is the end of an era and the beginning of a new one as THE TEAM – Canada's Sports Radio Network is born and 1050 CHUM becomes TEAM 1050.

The song CHUM decides to play as the final farewell to its long music era will be the answer to trivia questions for years to come and only Duff Roman and Bob Laine know what it will be.

Bob and Duff, now CHUM vice-presidents, are two of the original 1050 jocks and will co-host the last program on the station from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 7th. They're choosing their own songs, telling their own stories along with those of dozens of on air guests and they are playing the last song.

This last radio show on 1050 CHUM will live forever in the hearts and memories of all of us who grew up listening to the magic of the radio station that was such an important part of our lives. It will be a collector's item around the world. The 150 staff members at the famed CHUM building, 1331 Yonge St, will gather together to toast farewell and to welcome TEAM1050.

Toronto Mayor, Mel Lastman, has proclaimed April 30 – May 7, 2001 as "1050 CHUM Week" in the City of Toronto in appreciation of the unique contributions made by the station.



ONE STEP CLOSER: The Acton Rotary recently held a presentation for a \$5,000 donation to Heritage Acton. Presenting on behalf of the Rotary Club was President Bonnie Ross (left), Jake Kuiken and Bill Beaton. Accepting the generous donation was Reverend Emrys Jenkins and Kathy Sanford from Heritage Acton. - Ted Tyler photo

Sign your card, give the gift

By ANGELA TYLER
The New Tanner

Last week in Ontario was National karaoke week. It was also Organ Donation Week. You may have sung along to your favourite tune, but did you sign your organ donor card?

In December of 1980, I remember my dad telling me, "We got the call from the hospital. Your mom has to be there before supper." It was a terrifying moment for me. My mom had been awaiting a donor for 10 months. She needed a cornea transplant.

The winter before that December, I remember my mom and dad discussing with my sister and me about how they had been to see the eye specialist. My mom's vision in her one eye was minimal and an option for her was to have a cornea transplant. She would be put on a waiting list for a donor. When we received a call, she would have to go to Toronto immediately for her operation. It was a pretty scary thought for a 12-year-old.

The whole hospital time is a bit of a blur in my memory. I remember my mom being in hospital with a patch protecting her eye. I also remember my dad telling me how they did the operation. He compared it to coring an apple. They took my mom's cornea out and replaced it with the donor's. It sounded disgusting to me at the time.

Soon my mom was up and about

and walking the hospital halls with another cornea recipient. Her walking partner was a man who previously had two transplants, both had been failures. He had hoped this one would be the one that worked.

When she came home, there were strict rules. Most importantly she was not allowed to bend over. It was essential that the eye have time to heal. My dad took on the role of nurse and was in charge of administering her salve to her eye. The first time he did this it was something I'm sure he wasn't expecting. He told us it looked as if someone had taken a baseball bat to her eye. Swollen, multi-colored with no eyelashes or eyebrows her eye was definitely a sight.

By spring, my mom was not back to her old self. Instead, she was better with her improved vision. My mom was lucky, the operation was a success and her body accepted to new cornea. As a souvenir of the whole thing (along with her vision) the doctor wrapped the tiny stitches from her eyeball into a tissue and gave them to her to keep. I think she still has them.

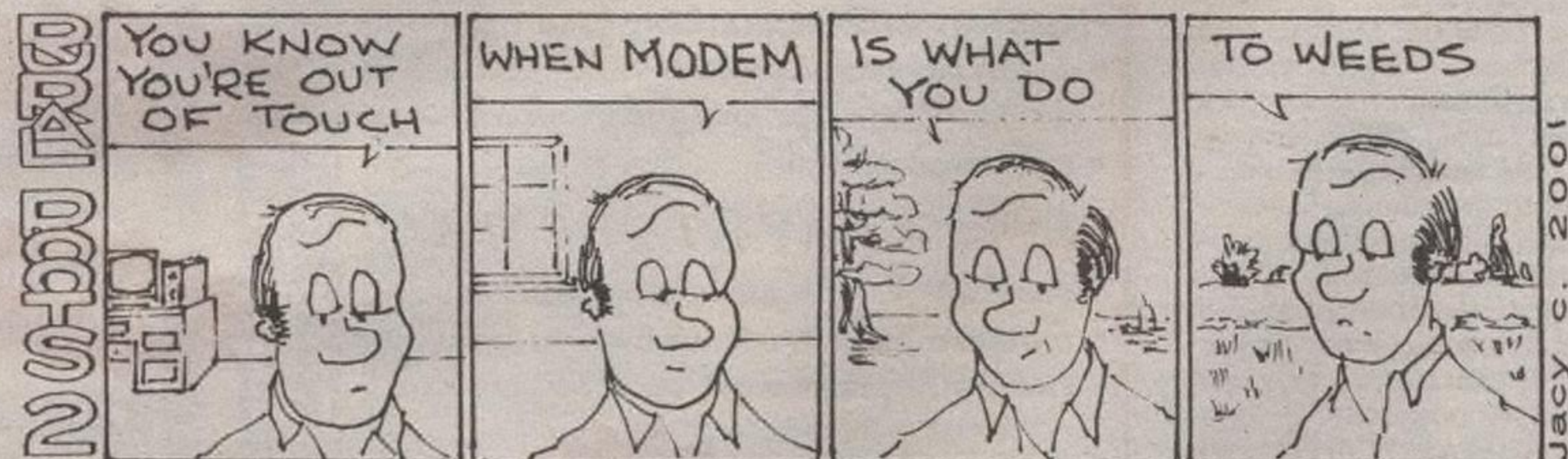
A few years after that, I had a cousin who died after he was beaten up. It was a terrible thing for his immediate family to go through. He was young, good looking and healthy. However, they decided to donate his organs. As result of this

there were three or four people who were recipients. In the years to follow, his family held a golf tournament to raise money for this worthy cause.

Last year in Ontario, 702 people received organ donations from 406 people. The number of people on the waiting list for organs has more than doubled in the last 10 years. There are currently 1619 people on waiting lists for organ donations. Ontario is expecting that organ donation will increase 40% this year. If organ donations increase a mere 10%, it would save \$1.2 million in health care.

When I was 16 and got my drivers licence, the first thing I did was sign my organ donor card. The second thing was, I told my family what I did. This way in case anything ever happened to me, they knew my wishes. I keep thinking if someone hadn't signed their organ donor card, my mom may not be able to see out of one eye today.

If you haven't signed your organ donor card yet, think about signing it today, not tomorrow. Tomorrow may be too late. If you need an organ donor card, you can pick one up at the Police Station or the Vehicle Licence Office. For more information on organ donations you can call 1-800-263-2833 or check out their website at www.OrganDonationOntario.org.



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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 Elaine Petkoff

Composing

Karen Coleman Erika Ford

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