

GRAPEVINE



Count him out

Not that Councillor Rick Bonnette ever had to sweat out a close vote count... but, he raised concerns about a Town plan to use an automated balloting system.

Citing the huge headaches that automated balloting brought Florida and Toronto; Bonnette questioned why the Town would even consider it for the 2003 municipal election.

He was told the clerk's department wants to give the automated counters a try-out at the advance polls in the next election, and will be back at budget time next year asking for \$15,000 to cover leasing the machines.

Squirrel wars

Bell Canada may get tough on Acton squirrels after their razor-sharp teeth caused service problems for several Queen Street residents.

After repeated complaints about service interruptions, a Bell repairman found a line running beside the Glenlea plaza had been repeatedly chewed. Squirrels are the suspected culprits and Bell officials are trying to talk tough.

While customer service rep Andrew Cole could hardly stop laughing long enough to explain exactly what a "squirrel guard" is, being without phone service is no laughing matter, according to one affected Bell subscriber who was glad to have a cell phone.

(For the record, a squirrel guard is a V-shaped strip of metal that is placed over the phone wire to protect it from vermin.)

Cole didn't know how much squirrel guards cost or when a decision on installation in Acton would be made.

Hey, bosses

There's still time for you to honour your top employee with a nomination for the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce Employee of the Year award.

It's one of four annual honours

bestowed by the Chamber on local businesses, but employers aren't taking advantage of the chance to say thanks in a big way to a top staffer.

"Sadly, very, very sadly, there's not usually a lot of names to go through," according to Chamber spokesperson Sue Walker.

She says they often get only two or three names for each of the four categories that include Entrepreneur of the Year, Civic Pride, Employee of the Year and Business of the Year.

"Employee of the Year - you would think that with 1,200 businesses in Halton Hills, every business should have at least have one stellar employee, but if we get four in that category, we are lucky."

Nominations must be in before noon on January 18. Call the Chamber for details.

Bah, humbug?

While we couldn't substantiate Scrouge-like rumours that complaints forced a Georgetown Mountainview Road resident to dim his overly bright Christmas lights, Grapevine's relentless search for the truth (all the truth that fits) led to praise for eagle-eyed Tanner correspondent (and pay master) Angela Tyler.

The Town's traffic co-ordinator, Bob Butrym picks up the story.

"Angela phoned to say that green filters put on flood lights on the mural at Main and Mill Streets was causing confusion for northbound drivers who couldn't tell if the light was green," Butrym said, adding the filters, installed by a former Acton hydro commissioner, were removed.

"That's the only time we've done recently with a Christmas thing," Butrym said, suggesting Halton might be able to shed some light of the Mountainview story, but no such luck.

Seniors' Euchre

Come out for an evening of euchre at the Acton Seniors' Centre, Wednesday, January 2, 2002 at 7:30. Cost is \$2.00 per person.

Best, worse of 2001

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Magna, Acton residents were on a rollercoaster ride whether the mega Magna was going to build here.

And finally
**HM-M-MCOINCIDENCE?
YOU BE THE JUDGE:**

After reviewing the year's newspapers I found it odd that Clark Somerville shaved his head (noted

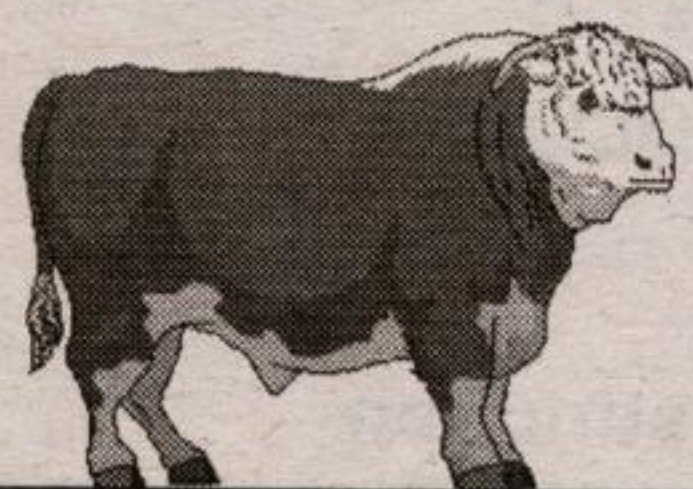
for a worthy cause) therefore saving money on haircuts for a while before local council granted themselves a 46.3% wage increase. Just following the increase long time bachelor Rick Bonnette married Acton BIA co-ordinator Josey Murray.

I wish all of you a healthy and prosperous New Year.



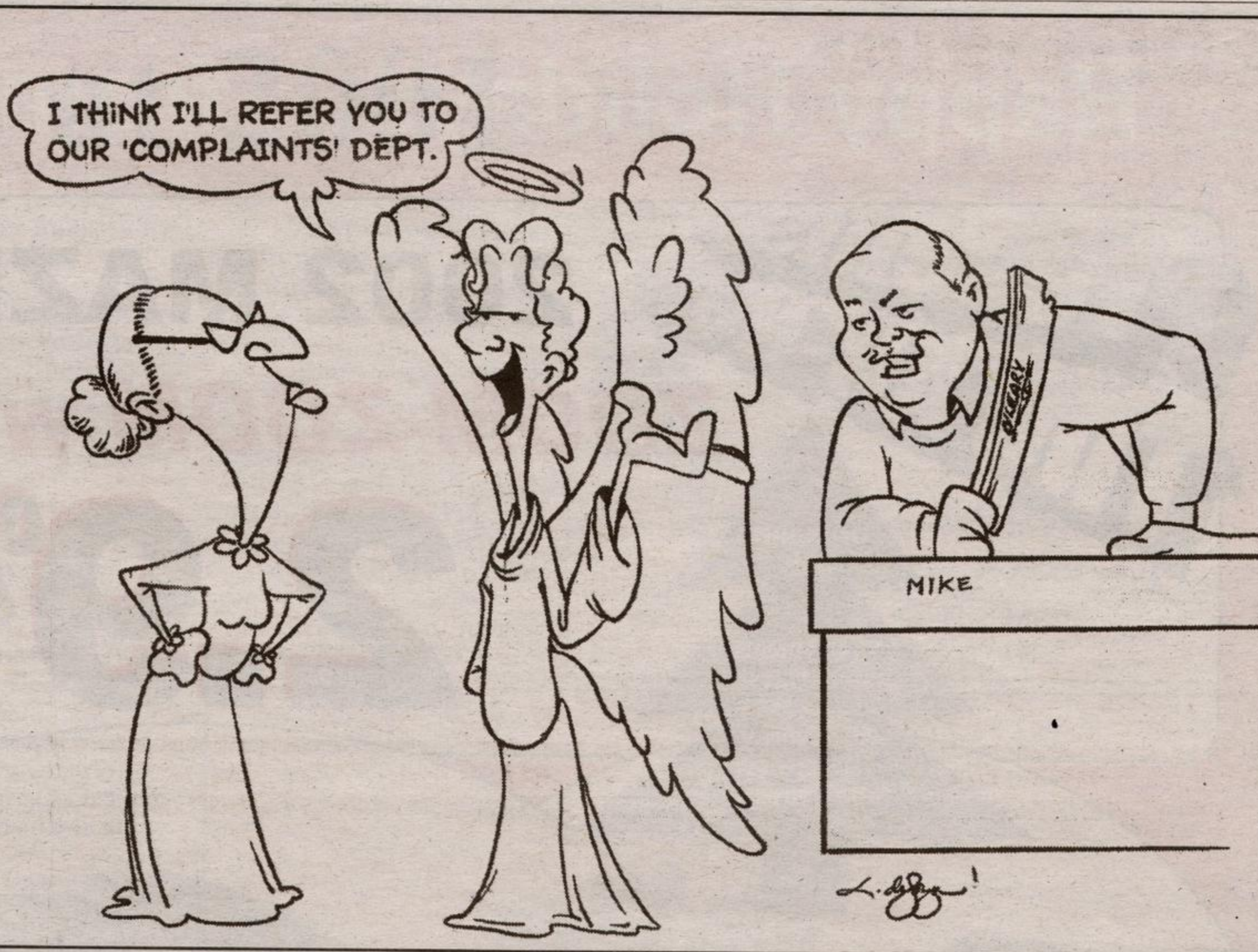
HORN BLOWERS: These cornetists from Acton Citizen's Band were among members of the band playing carols at Birchway Place on the Wednesday before Christmas. - Angela Tyler Photo

What's Your Beef?



Put it in a letter to the Editor!

Deadline is Tuesday at noon.



I've seen the light

My Webster's defines "Catharsis" as a cleansing. Popular English would extend that definition to mean a changing or purification of one's thought process. Over the Holidays I had the opportunity to look back on and reconsider what I wrote this year. I also spent time with the more left-leaning members of my family. In the process, I think I had one of them there 'cathartic' experiences.

As an example of how I've changed, I'm prepared to publish a list of my New Year's resolutions. I've never done that before. I wasn't comfortable doing that. But, like Saul (St. Paul) on the road to Damascus, I've gone through a conversion that promises to change my life substantially. For example:

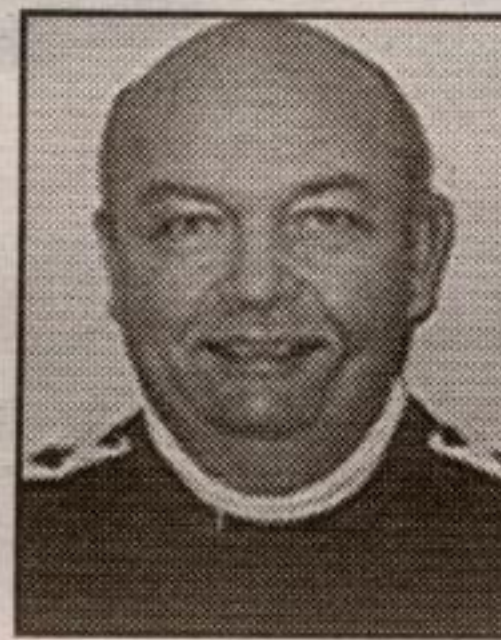
- I resolve to lay off the unions and the N.D.P. I know, I know; it's hard for me to believe, too. I'm coming around to accepting the fact that my money isn't really mine. It's only on loan until some higher power (government, usually) decides someone else should have my pittance. I have been re-reading my old economics textbooks. John Maynard Keynes had the right idea. Keynesian even sounds kinder than supply side economics, doesn't it?

- I resolve to be more supportive of our regional and town governments. The needle exchange is a good thing. Why should the town support Scouts and Guides when they can be distributing condoms? This is a perfect example of how shortsighted I've been in the past. The foreword planning experts at the region realize that programs like the needle exchange are necessary to administer to the needs of those Scouts and Guides who may end up on the street, if those silly after-hours meetings fold. I'm embarrassed that I missed such an obvious point. It's a basic law of marketing. Create the demand.

- I resolve to stop writing columns in support of Mike Harris as Premier. This will be tough for me since I still have a lingering admiration for the man. I am determined to persevere, however, and I make you this pledge. In three months or so, I will force myself to get over my infatuation with Premier Harris. By April, at the latest, I assure you, you will never hear the words "Premier Mike Harris" from me again. I only hope his feelings aren't hurt but I'm going to be vicious in this effort.
- I resolve to have more respect

The Way I See It

with
Mike O'Leary



for our Governor General. Specifically, I will refrain from calling her "Yoda." It's the office that should demand our respect. I must stop dwelling on the person in the position and pay more attention to her many important duties. Any help you can give me as to what she does, will be much appreciated.

- I resolve to cease and desist carping about our, National Gun Registration Program. I think it's very responsible of them to mail out two identical registration certificates 10 days after mailing a reminder to gun owners to be sure and register. Obviously the registration was in the system but who cares how much money it costs. You can't be too careful when dealing with a bunch of crazies who insist on holding onto Grandpa's .22. I am now convinced that when the scum, like the kid who shot a Toronto cop last week, realize that all the honest folks are registering their guns, there'll be a stampede as they rush to register their illegal handguns and sawed-off shotguns. They'll be too embarrassed to do otherwise. As usual, the liberals have developed a psychologically sound program. Cunning, very cunning.

- And speaking of the Liberals, I must resolve to view their governance in a more positive light. People just don't believe that all they're interested in is staying in power. They keep getting elected on the strength of their leader and their programs. If Jean Chretien were Catholic, I'll bet the Pope would have him on the short list to sainthood. Sheila Copps will make a fine Prime Minister. Paul Martin - Well, what can I say that hasn't already been said? The man is a financial genius. And Alan Rock? Well, Alan rock is still a jerk. There's one in every crowd.

- I resolve to write more positive stories about our school boards. There is absolutely no empire building going on in those organizations. What we are blessed with, at the board level, is a group of dedicated underpaid public servants whose sole ambition in life is to ensure a

proper education for your child, no matter what cost or sacrifice must be made. I think we should turn the power to tax back over to the boards. In the past, they always spent every dime and dollar responsibly. How could I have ever thought that the citizens who paid for schools to be built and operated should have the right to use these facilities? Silly me! School boards good: Outraged columnists bad! Words to live by my friends; words to live by.

- I resolve to be more politically correct in the future. I'm designing a line of "Happy Festive" cards. And if you don't celebrate "Festive" or "Bunnyday" that's just fine with me. I won't rest until we stamp out every manhole cover, man door, maniac (vexed individual - please!) in this great province. In the future my favourite colour will be plaid, my favourite food - plain yogurt, my favourite saying; right - and left on. I want to be part of the mainstream, inoffensive, unnoticed in the melieu, I want to conform. I want Svend Robinson to like me.

- And lastly, dear friends, I resolve never to mislead or lie to you again. Therefore, a load of horse hooey, like the above, will never be seen in this space again. My only 2002 resolution is to be just as skeptical, just as demanding and just as proud to be a resident of this town and this country as I have been in the past. I intend to ask Editor Coles to change my title from Columnist to Curmudgeon - in - residence. And to my N.D.P. reader; sorry - I was just funnin'?

★★★★★

Here's a resolution for us all, suggested to me by a customer over Christmas. Some years ago Ann Landers (I think) was promoting the "Random Act of Kindness." With all the violence and hatred today, what better time to be kind to neighbours. So smile at a senior, help a Mom with the door, give someone a hand. Say Hello to folks and mean it when you say "Have a nice day."

Good will always overcome evil. We should all strive to goodness, your only payment will be a smile, but you'll never receive anything more precious.

A Happy and Prosperous New Year to all!