



**WINTER WONDERLAND:** Residents who've been wishing for snow that stays got their wish on Monday when big flakes of wet white stuff enveloped the area and created a fairyland. Snow shovels and snow blowers were out to clean it up before it finished falling and Town plows had the roads mainly cleaned by early afternoon Tuesday.

## Town's development officer faces daunting challenge

He says he's no miracle worker, but Allan O'Neill, the Town's economic development officer would be a homeowner's hero if he can attract more business and industry to Halton Hills.

Property taxpayers in Acton and Georgetown pay 86.6 per cent, "considerably more," O'Neill said, of the total tax pie than other Halton residents, while the percentage of the total coming from industrial/commercial taxes is "very much lower."

"That makes the long-term, and I guess even the short-term, economic situation, in terms of the ability to be able to raise funds to operate the municipality through the taxes base, extremely difficult," O'Neill said last week as he briefed councillors on economic development initiatives.

Working as a team to create the image that Halton Hills is "in business to encourage business," O'Neill said customer service is the key, and detailed a program of personal visits, marketing, promotion and working with realtors to attract new businesses and keeping the existing ones happy.

In a business where potential investors want and expect the personal touch, but also immediate answers, economic development is a balancing of demands, blending high-tech tools and old-fashioned smoozing.

And it's a lot of smoozing based on the so-called "Ten

percent Rule," which O'Neill suggested was slightly exaggerated.

That theory says it takes 1,000 economic development inquiries to generate 100 clients, leading to 10 prospects and one competed project. Because its so tough to lure new business and industry, and because existing businesses account for as much as 90 per cent of economic growth, O'Neill said they make companies feel like they belong and are wanted.

O'Neill said some plant and business closings are inevitable, but pointed to four Acton situations where replacement companies took over empty facilities, including Purity Life on Commerce Crescent, a printing plant and Halton Flour Milling that both leased empty space in a McDonald Boulevard industrial building and Total Vision marketing, an Erin firm that relocated to a vacant building on the Fourth Line and Highway 7.

O'Neill said he's actively marketing vacant land in Acton including lots on Commerce Crescent, land at 340 Main St., North, the property that Magna was considering as a possible location for a car plant.

"The owner of that (property) is now thinking about dividing it into smaller lots and putting them into the market place and providing two, four, 10 or perhaps 20-acre lots..." O'Neill said, adding it's important to get land into

the market place that already has water services and sewer capacity.

O'Neill would only hint about a potential industry that has a "very serious interest" in Acton, a prospect that's "not dead yet" O'Neill said, adding there are also new plans for a six-lot industrial subdivision on Highway 25 at Campbellville Side Road.

He said providing serviced land in the 401-Steeles Avenue corridor is central to attracting business and industry, adding "build it and they will come," and noting there's a ready market, but a lack of serviced industrial land in Georgetown.

Noting that Acton was "quite popular" during and after the Magna interest, Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette asked if that's died down.

O'Neill reported he's had seven or eight "legitimate" inquiries about Acton in the past six months and with an economy rebounding faster than expected, O'Neill said he's looking forward to a "pretty good year."

## Rural Acton man behind bars over woman's dog trespass

### Death threat arrest

A 38-year-old rural Acton man who threatened to kill his next door neighbour when her dog trespassed on his property remained behind bars at presstime after being peacefully arrested by the Halton tactical rescue team on Friday afternoon.

Police said the 44-year-old victim was walking her dogs before 1 p.m. when one of them wandered onto the suspect's property on the Sixth Line, north of Highway 7.

The suspect, driving an ATV (all-terrain vehicle) "brushed by" one of the dogs and "angry words" were exchanged. Police said the suspect then "brushed by" the complainant, threatened her and went into his house.

The woman, who was not injured, called police, who because of the death threat and other comments made to the woman, called in the TRU team which surrounded the house and arrested with man without incident.

He was charged with threatening death and dangerous operation of a motor vehicle and held for a bail hearing.

### Milton accident

Acton firefighters were called to the Sixth Line at 25 Side Road in Nassagaweya at 7:55 p.m. on Sunday when the driver of a van that flipped over thought his vehicle had caught fire.

There was no fire and the driver was not injured although a hydro police had to be repaired.

Police provided no other details.

### No fire

Powder from an airbag was mistaken for smoke prompting a call for firefighters following an accident on

### POLICE BEAT

Wallace Street, north of McDonald Boulevard at 8:30 last Wednesday morning.

Police said four people, the occupants of two vehicles that crashed on a slippery downhill curve, were taken to Georgetown hospital, three with minor and one with minimal injuries.

All were treated and released and police said no charges will be laid.

### Tire slashed

The right rear tire of a van used by Halton Hills Community Support and Information to drive clients to hospitals and doctor appointments was

slashed overnight last Tuesday/Wednesday.

The 2000 Dodge Caravan was parked at the rear of the agency's Mill Street offices when the vandalism occurred.

A new tire will cost \$150.

### Fraud charge

A 45-year-old Vimy Street man who received both workman's compensation and social assistance benefits from Halton Region has been charged with fraud over \$5,000 by Halton police.

Police said between October 1, 1999 and February 28, 2001, the man received \$15,000 in fraudulent assistance payments.

He was summonsed to appear in a Milton court on February 28.

*We are pleased to announce that*

**Dr. Nather Alshakarji**

*will be practising in Acton four half days a week.*

He will continue to accept new patients.

For appointments please phone

**1-519-853-9997**

or

**1-519-853-4449**

## Acton Unity Service

*The ninth annual Acton service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*

*will be held at the Acton Legion*

*on Sunday January 20th at 10:30 am*

*All the churches of Acton will be worshipping together.*

Rev. Jamie Shepherd of Central Pentecostal Church in Fergus will be our guest speaker. He was the Pastor of the Evangel Tabernacle Pentecostal Church in Acton.



The Acton Band, the joint choirs from the churches as well as members of the Acton Ministerial will be taking part. **A unique worship experience.**

*Please note that children, toddlers, and infants can be dropped off at St. Joseph Catholic School for the Kids' Unity Event beginning at 10:15 am.*

## Acton Kids' Unity Event

Sunday January 20th, 2002 at 10:15 am

St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School

*Worshipping with Colleen Reindeers and Grace Moes*

*And enjoy puppetry with Rick Chapman and "Wally"!*

**Come dressed for fun and action!**

*Toddlers' Program and Nursery also available.*



## FIT TO BE TRIED

Personal Fitness Training

Work out in the comfort and convenience of your own home with a

**CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINER**

(Senior, Group and Corporate Rates, too)

Margaret Iutzi  
(519) 831 3221

Rockwood

Gift Certificates make a great gift for your Valentine



## Why Diet?

*Satisfy your cravings with our great selection of cookies.*

## GARDEN MARKET IGA

*Fresh, Fast & Friendly!*

Acton Market Place Plaza

372 Queen St. E. ~ 853-1960

Open 24 Hrs. ~ 7 Days (except Holidays)

