

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Blowing the Retreat

The fact that 160 principals and vice-principals of the Halton District School Board spent \$48,000 of board money to attend a two-day retreat at the Talisman Mountain Resort in the Beaver Valley has angered many residents of Halton, especially since the Board has been complaining of being short-changed by the Province and having to cut 63 new educational assistants.

Few people would disagree that the Talisman resort is a great place for a two-day sanctuary. It's far away from worldly distractions such as schools and traffic. However, most are also aware that the resort has amenities such as a golf course, swimming pools and other forms of recreation that make it very attractive as well.

Many taxpayers only wish they could even afford a couple of days of such seclusion.

The fact that the director of education, Dusty Papke, chose Talisman for two days of professional development was his call since he apparently has been given control of all options. The expense, only \$48,000 from a \$285.6 million budget, may seem minuscule but coming at this time when boards are struggling to balance their budgets, it's a poor exercise in public relations.

Mr. Papke has said that interest in the retreat has been created by the news media. He felt the public did not harbour the same concerns about it as the media.

Indeed, residents who are in the similar salary situation as the director and used to such perks in the private business sector may not seem surprised. However, when some residents have a struggle to pay taxes each year and there appears to be a case of profligate spending, there's a good case for public concern.

Paper chaste

Halton Region's decision to move away from the use of clear plastic bags by making it mandatory to use open reusable containers or large Kraft paper bags for leaves, clippings and other yard waste, is going to cost residents considerably more.

The New Tanner checked the price of the paper bags at a local business and found that, with tax, they cost about 75 cents per bag. Meanwhile, the price of the clear plastic bags ran around 22 cents a bag, a significant increase of 53 cents a bag.

People with a lot of yard waste are going to find the increase considerable when the leaves start to fall. They'll have to have a lot of reusable containers to avoid using the Kraft paper bags.

The Region is moving to the "more environmentally friendly yard waste collection" to improve the quality of the compost it is able to offer at their twice annual compost give aways, says Halton's Director of Waste Management, Bob Rivers. He also says that Halton residents received a starter kit in the mail, which included a yard waste container label and a coupon for a sample paper yard waste bag, earlier in the summer. However, several Acton residents told The New Tanner they have never received one or they may have tossed it out.

In any event the switch to paper bags and reusable containers is an harbinger of things to come. If we want things to be more environmentally friendly we'll have to pay more, for everything from organic foods to collecting yard waste.



EDUCATION GIANTS: These teachers from the past, who taught in the old Acton Public School would be surprised at the present turmoil in education. They worked when the annual wage was only a few hundred dollars. Here they meet at the home of Miss Minnie Bennett to celebrate their years of teaching. Left to right, as identified by former students, are Miss Odbert, Isabel Anderson, Daisy Folster, Miss Bennett (Principal), Martha Orr, Maggie Young and the last person everyone recognized but couldn't positively identify.

TV viewing going to the dogs

As I am "maturing," I've noticed my television viewing is not only diminishing, but I am also becoming more selective in my choices.

I grew up on family friendly television; Saturday morning cartoons, Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys, Happy Days and Carol Burnett. I can remember my sister being hooked on shows like M*A*S*H when she was a teenager.

When I was in my teens, the nighttime soap operas were being shown more and more. So were dramas like Magnum P.I. I was hooked on a night-time soap called Falcon Crest and was in love with Thomas Magnum. I even named my dog Falcon after the show. As for Thomas Magnum, A&E were showing reruns of the show and it just didn't seem the same anymore.

Lately, I find myself having the television on for no apparent reason other than background noise and habit. My viewing is becoming less and less and maybe it's a result of what choices we have now.

Sure there are some shows I enjoy watching. I can watch hours of Law and Order, which I recently discovered through reruns. I used to watch decorating shows like Trading Spaces. Now, I'm getting smarter. My friend's husband observed that those shows don't really teach you much as they are more of



With
Angela
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a reality show. Now, if I want to watch it, I will sometimes videotape the last 15 minutes or so and just look at the before and after.

In high school, all the girls would watch The Young and The Restless. Even when I first started working, it was 'the' soap opera to watch. Now, if I want to see a soap opera I can see one almost every weekend unfolding in my driveway. This past weekend, I saw the teenage drama of my neighbour's grade nine son.

When I returned Saturday night, three teenage girls were huddled beside my driveway. Two were consoling, one was crying. The boys were up the street. I assume there was a break-up or a fight. When I went to turn the living room lights out and go to bed, the couple had decided to kiss and makeup.

The prior Saturday night I was at my friend's house in Fergus. In the summer we would sit on her front porch and watch the neighbourhood happenings while her children played carefree in the yard. In the

winter, we couch potatoed it and watched countless shows on Home and Garden or TLC.

However, this Saturday as we chatted, she told me how she saw the show "The Osbournes" the night before, which was also showing that night. As CTV has been plugging it for their fall line-up, and with all the press surrounding the family and their show, I was more than tempted. I perked up and almost begged if we could go watch it. For one half hour I sat on the couch with my jaw dropping.

Here was ageing rock star Ozzy Osbourne and as his son so appropriately put it, their "dysfunctional family." I have never watched a show that had, probably, half the words bleeped. Parents would swear to the kids and the kids would use the same words back. When I was growing up my mom yelled at me if I said the word "God." My mother never cursed. We knew when she was really, really mad because her line would be "cripes, I'm browned off." On those words I would clear the room.

Every other scene had Ozzy yelling for his wife Sharon or at least that's what I think he was saying. The years of partying have seemed to caught up with him. Between his old man shuffle and his slurred

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THE NEW TANNER
PUBLISHING LTD.

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Distributed to every home
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