

# Mayor - elect Bonnette ready for office

By **FRANCES NIBLOCK**  
The New Tanner

"Overwhelming," "very humbling," and "very busy." That's life for Halton Hills Mayor-elect Rick Bonnette as he savors his municipal election win and prepares to take office next month. After running in the municipal election race

as the underdog, Bonnette said he woke up the morning after the vote and thought, "Wow. What have I done?"

After several days at his cottage, Bonnette said his win and its awesome responsibility, sunk in, and he quietly began preparing to assume office.

Earlier this week, Bonnette met with the new Regional Councillors, Clark Somerville and Jane Fogal, both who were local councillors before running

successfully for the Wards One and Two and Wards Three and Four Regional seats, respectively.

"They'll be going down to the Region and there won't be any Regional experience, so I want to let them know what to expect after the inauguration when they get down to business," Bonnette said.

He also met with the two new Acton local councillors, Mike O'Leary and Jon Hurst, and was planning to meet with the

Georgetown councillors and top staff.

Bonnette said he's had several conversations with outgoing mayor Kathy Gastle, who reportedly cleared out her office on the weekend.

He said Gastle has been "cool" and "gracious" about the transition of power, and indicated she will not stay, and represent the Town at events, until the bitter end on November 30.

"I respect her for trying to make it a smooth and seamless transition," Bonnette said, adding he was unsure if Gastle would be in their chair at the existing council's final meeting on November 24.

Bonnette said once he has been sworn in, his main task will be to fight a possible double-digit tax increase.

"The budget is going to be the major thing. I'll be meeting with department heads next week," he said, adding another job, after the new council gets a few meetings under its belt, will be to begin the search for a new CAO.

Bonnette said a closer look at the voting patterns show he easily won Acton, polling 2,018 votes compared with 290 for Gastle and 170 for Councillor John Day.

Bonnette also had a 256 vote margin over Day in Ward two, which includes Esquesing, and he said he did "okay" in Georgetown, where he trailed Day by less than 1,000 votes. Gastle, who represented Ward Two for nine years, ran third.

"I made inroads in Georgetown where I won

a couple of polls and had a lot of wonderful support," Bonnette said, adding, "I have to be the mayor of everybody," but won't forget that Acton is his home town.

"I am so appreciative of the overwhelming support from Acton and how great the people of Acton have been with cards and calls and flowers," he said.

Last week, Bonnette ended his teaching career — or at least put it on hold — as he packed up his office at Humber College, where he taught travel and tourism for 13 years.

"I'm going to miss teaching, but I'm excited about all of the new challenges I face," Bonnette said.

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## Home tour for United Way

A great way to kick-start your Christmas spirit is to take part in the "Home for the Holidays" house tour next weekend. This, the second annual house tour, is a fundraiser for the United Way of Halton Hills and it's proving so popular that organizers already have a line-up of homeowners interested in participating next year!

Not only do visitors get to see inside an eclectic selection of six homes, they'll also experience the artistic creations of a team of decorators and florists who traditionally pull out all the stops to showcase their

talents and the home to the best advantage. The decorator and florist assigned to each home, in combination with the homeowner, create a magical Christmas fantasy. Acton's Blue Springs Flower Shop is among the florists who are participating.

The tour, which runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 22, features two new homes in Glen Williams, a Norval home built in 1912, and a new home in Georgetown South. The Acton homes are Moorecroft, a designated historical home (note the brass designation plaque on

the front of the house) built in 1896 by H.P. Moore, the editor and owner of the Acton Free Press. The home, located on a stately property in the heart of town on Church St., features natural oak and cherry woodwork, carved mantels and several exquisite hand painted and stained glass windows.

The other Acton home, Idlewood, is a rural property surrounded by aromatic old growth cedars on 25 Sideroad. Built in the style of an early French Canadian style stone farmhouse, the home features massive post and beam construction with the warmth of working fireplaces at each end of the home and a 12 foot Christmas tree!

On this self-guided tour, visitors will be asked to remove and carry their footwear in each home, as a courtesy to the homeowners. Tickets (adults only — no children please) are \$20 and available through the United Way Office (905) 877-3066 or in Acton at Blue Springs Flower and Gift Shop and Wetherby's.

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