

GRAPEVINE

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

The public is invited to a candlelight service of lessons and carols on the family tree of Jesus at a community Advent service, on Sunday, November 30.

Hosted by the Acton Ministerial Association at Trinity United Church on Mill Street, the service – "From Mary to Eve" – will draw together members of all Acton churches, and include a combined mass choir and instrumental music.

The service begins at 7:30 p.m.

SENIORS' BAZAAR

Still searching for stocking stuffers, or possibly haven't started your Christmas shopping yet? If so, check out the annual Christmas tea and bazaar hosted by the Acton Seniors' Centre on Saturday (November 22) at the arena.

The event includes a tearoom, featuring a sandwich lunch for \$4, a country store, penny table, craft sale and bake table and Granny's attic, featuring gently used treasures and books.

There will be a 50/50 draw and a raffle for a gift basket, along with sales of tickets on a donated watercolour print.

The tea and bazaar runs from 11 to 2 p.m. and proceeds will benefit the centre.

ROTARY RESCUE

Thanks to the Rotary Club of Acton, the Acton Scouting movement's dire financial condition has improved considerably.

Recently, following a request for assistance from the Scouts, Rotary members agreed to donate \$1,500 to the Scouts to help pay for day-to-day operations.

"We decided we want to play a more active role in the Acton Scouting movement," said Rotarian Rob Brunst, adding now the money generated by Beavers, Cubs and Scouts through their fundraisers, can be used for special events for the kids, and not operating expenses.

The Rotary Club of Acton's involvement with Acton Scouting began in 1948 when Rotary became the Scouting movement's community sponsor.

"We want to help them on their way and make sure that Scouting in Acton is going to be viable in the future," Brunst said, adding there are a lot of new Rotary members who didn't know the extent of Rotary's involvement in Acton Scouting.

OPEN HOUSE

Yourway Auto Repair is celebrating its recent move to new digs at 262 Main St., North, with an open house on Saturday, (November 22) featuring draws, give-aways and a barbecue, run by Acton Kinsmen.

The festivities begin at 12 p.m., and the official ribbon cut-

ting – featuring Mayor-elect Rick Bonnette and councillors-elect Jon Hurst and Mike O'Leary – at 1 p.m.

Yourway owner Jason Ash said the new location (in the former Carquest location beside Leathertown Lumber) is a better location, larger and has better parking.

HAMPER PROGRAM

Christmas will be warmer and happier for many Acton and Georgetown children this holiday season, thanks to the Christmas needs program run by Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI).

Children from low income families are eligible to receive a hamper – 51 are handed out to families with 115 children last year – that is packed with the essentials, like a blanket, underwear, socks, pajamas and a track suit.

Applications are now being accepted at the HHCSI office at 47 Mill Street for the program.

Program coordinator Cathy Gerrow will provide a family profile to those who wish to make up their own hampers. Local service groups and churches donated almost two-thirds of the hampers last year. Gerrow said people could donate items to be placed in the hamper, or cash to buy appropriate items.

Applications are also being accepted for the annual Christmas Hamper program that provides a complete Christmas dinner with all the trimmings to needy local families.

Applications for the Christmas assistance program are being accepted at the Salvation Army's Family Services office on Mill Street until December 6.

People must apply in person, with identification, at the Salvation Army's Family Service office on Mill Street on November 25 and 27, and December 2 and 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Final applications will be accepted on December 6, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The program is a joint effort by the Acton Christmas Hamper Committee which includes the Salvation Army, Rotary Club of Acton, Lakeside Chapter of the IODE and the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

THAT DOG WON'T HUNT

The Red Dog closed suddenly last week, without any public comment from owner Lauri Parker, who purchased the Mill Street watering hole over three years ago after working there as a waitress. The business and building are for sale.

One group very unhappy to see the doors locked is A.S.A.P. – the Acton Sports Action Park committee – which had been impatiently waiting for a pledged \$1,600 donation from Red Dog, promised proceeds from a June golf tourney.



These houses weren't here a week ago.

Farewells and Welcomes

Last weekend was certainly a busy one in town. Long time town employee, and Acton Citizen of the Year in 1981, Ron McKnight was honoured by a sold out crowd of family and friends. A new business, Blue Springs Spa, opened downtown in the former Tomas' Fitness Centre and lastly, but certainly not least, Santa Claus came to town.

Last Friday night at the Legion was a special evening. Lifetime Acton resident Ron McKnight's 35 years of public service as a town employee was formally recognized. While his dedication to our town is appreciated, the evening was much more than that. It was a celebration of a life well lived and recognition for his years of community service.

Ron has had cerebral palsy since birth and while he has used a crutch, he never let his difficulty become a crutch. He has always been there to assist people and organizations in time of need. Need a ticket seller? Call Ron. Want a time-keeper for minor hockey or lacrosse? Ron's your man. We could fill this paper just listing the various volunteer activities he has contributed his time and talents to.

Ron has been an active Rotarian for 22 years, including two terms as president of the Acton Rotary Club. In 1989 his service to Rotary was recognized when he was named a Paul Harris Fellowship, a high and deserved honour.

My first encounter, and that's the right word, with Ron was shortly after we moved here. I was outside working on what would become a garden, when a booming voice echoed through the neighbourhood. "Put down that shovel, the parade starts in 15 minutes." I went into the house and told "The Bride" we had to get the kids ready for the parade. "What parade?" she asked. "I don't know," I answered. "But I don't want the guy with the microphone pissed-off with me if we miss it." And I don't think I've missed a town parade since.

People who know Ron realize what a special person he is. For those who don't, let me give you an example. There were about 230 people attending Ron's celebration. When the M.C. asked those attending to raise their hands if they had received regular calls on birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, etc., almost three-quarters of the crowd raised their hands. One speaker said it best: many towns have a volunteer like

The Way I See It

with
Mike O'Leary



Ron McKnight, only Acton is blessed to have Ron McKnight.

Longtime teacher, and childhood friend, Peggy Graham brought the house down with her roast. Recalling growing up in "the wartime housing," she had the audience in tears with her recollections. It seems Ron used his crutch quite often to "aggressively encourage" the other kids to see things his way. Ron denies all this, claiming to be a gentle soul who never resorted to violence. His friends have learned to overlook his tendency to preach revisionist history. We've also learned to keep well out of range of that damned crutch.

Ron's health has been poor lately so everyone was delighted he managed to get sprung from hospital for the evening. The formal plaque and certificates presented to him were impressive. But it was the love and affection that filled the room that made the evening so special. For those hours, all the caring Ron McKnight has shown for others was returned en masse. You do reap what you sow.

Ron's speech was filled with remembrances of what all his activities gave to him. He was passionate in his recalling the dedication of his fellow employees in the Public Works Department. His words for family were gentle and tender. He thanked all present for letting him be part of our lives when the opposite is the reality.

Ron McKnight has been a positive influence on everyone he has ever met. He has been an inspiration to generations of Acton's children. But he's not perfect.

He's still a die-hard Montreal Canadiens fan. Sigh!

From the "you've come a long way baby" file, I was honoured to be asked to participate in the grand opening of the Blue Springs Spa. I'll confess, I was a little nervous.

I grew up in a time when beauty parlours (as they were known) were off-limits to mere males. My mother made it clear that what went on in those environs was none of my con-

cern. On the few occasions I was called-on to deliver something to mother, the looks I got from other patrons left no doubt I was an interloper.

Understand then, it was with some trepidation that, after the formalities were concluded, I accepted owners Kristine and Jorg's invitation to sample their various services.

I have been in that store through its many incarnations since it was a Foodland grocery store. The renovation work to convert the space to a spa is incredible. There's even a "men's room" complete with blackjack table for manicure sessions.

I had my first manicure, and, my first hand massage. (That's my story – I'm sticking to it.) Both were most enjoyable. I would have had a sample back massage but Clark Somerville was hogging the masseuse. The highlight for me was my first ever hair styling (stop laughing!) An added treat was discovering that my stylist, Mandy, hailed from Dublin, Ireland. All was proceeding wonderfully until Mandy asked if I wanted my eyebrows thinned? Obviously, some of Mandy's education has been neglected. Those of us with receding hairlines jealously guard the hair we have left. I bolted from the chair before the subject of waxing of any type came up.

I notice many businesses in town now offering much more to Acton's ladies than a cut and blow dry. So gentleman, there's no excuse not to pamper the ladies, or yourselves for that matter, to your heart's content. It's a sure sign our town is growing up.

Thank you to Kristine, Jorg and staff for a wonderful evening. I encourage everyone to drop in for a mini-tour of the new facility. I wish them the best of luck in their new venture.

Congratulations to Bill Spielvogel and our firefighters for another great Santa Claus parade. It seemed to me the parade was bigger this year. For sure, I haven't seen that much candy since Hallowe'en.

The kids, young and old, had a great time. The weather couldn't have been better. The B.I.A. has the town decked-out with Christmas lights and decorations. Time to check-out our local stores for that perfect Christmas gift.

I'm starting to feel that Christmas spirit. Perhaps it's time for my annual rant.