

# GRAPEVINE



## ELECTRICAL EXPANSION

A major expansion of the workshop at Halton Hills Electrical Contracting is well underway with owner, Lyle Prueter hoping the work will be complete by the end of March.

A small building adjoining the firm's quonset hut has been torn down, and in its place a new 12,080-square-foot building is being constructed, complete with a gas-fired, in-floor, hot water heating system.

Prueter and his wife opened the business in 1975, and have been joined by sons, Trevor and Ryan. He plans to show off the new building on January 1, 2005, when he celebrates 30 years in business in Acton.

## SOCCER SIGN UP

Acton's Time Out Sports is making it easier for the Acton Soccer Club to sign up members by accepting registration forms at its Mill Street store during regular business hours.

The club is gearing up for another season by offering a \$25 early bird discount for those who register before the end of February. With the discount, players five-and-under would pay \$85 for the season.

The club has registrations scheduled for January 24 and February 21, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the Acton arena. For details call Ian Watson at 853-3265.

## RINK READY

Less than 48 hours after Town staff began to prepare the outdoor skating rink on Churchill Road, skaters and hockey players flocked to the site on the grounds of McKenzie-Smith Bennett School for some fun.

The recent amalgamation of the Town's parks and public works department has staff now responsible for clearing snow - work that was contracted out last year - so the rink have "dropped down in priority," according to public works supervisor Susan Wilson, who said when they have time they will work on the outdoor rinks, including one in the Georgetown fairground.

The Town also helps community volunteers maintain outdoors rinks - including one in Sir Donald Mann Park - where no work has been done yet.

The Town's budget for outdoor rinks is \$13,900, \$7,500 of that for the MSB rink.

## LAUGHING OUT LOUD

Mark February 6 on your calendar if you want to banish the February blahs and have a good laugh.

Back by popular demand, Laughing Out Loud, a night of comedy skits, improv, physical and situational comedy, is slated for the Acton Legion as a fundraiser for Acton's Off The Wall youth centre - last year it raised \$1,400.

Organizer David Burland said they are also taking age-appropriate comedy presentations to Robert Little School, Acton High School and St. Joseph Catholic School on February 5 and 6, as part of the Laughing Out Loud event.

Tickets for the Legion event are \$18, and available at various locations in Acton, including Blue Springs Flower Shop, Home Hardware and at the Halton Hills Community Support and Information office on Mill Street.

## EARLY OUT

Halton public and separate school students enjoyed the second of four early dismissal days this school year on Tuesday as their boards take time to refine teaching the new curriculum with staff.

"We determined we needed time with our teachers to refine the instruction and improve student achievement..." said public board spokesman Barry Findlay, adding each school would zero in on where they think they can make the greatest achievement in student learning.

On early dismissal days - including February 25 and April 29 - the student day ends around noon, depending on the bus schedule.

## ROTARY POLIO FIGHTERS

Two members of the Rotary Club of Acton and two "civilians" will travel to India on February 19 for a two-week trip to deliver polio vaccine to Indian citizens.

Rob Charette, the Acton Rotary Club's international director, his son, Rotary member Emrys Jenkins and Amy Yateman, owner of Starlight Café on Mill Street, will be among 85 people with ties to Rotary who will be trained to dispense oral doses of the vaccine. Yateman and Jason Charette 19, will pay their own way, while Rotary will help Charette and Jenkins with part of the cost of their trips.

While Acton Rotarians have financially supported the Polio Plus program for more than a decade, this is the first time members will travel to a third world country to personally deliver the vaccine.

"In some of the towns, we'll go door-to-door to dispense the vaccine with eye droppers and in some areas we'll set up clinics - a couple of tables under a shade tree," Charette said, adding polio has been eradicated in 98 per cent of the world.

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Closer to home, the Rotary Club of Acton is looking for nominations from the public for its 2003 Citizen of the Year award.

The award honours an individual or group who made Acton a nicer place to live. Last year's recipient was the Acton Citizens' Band.

Nominations, listing your name and phone number and the name of the nominee and reasons for their nomination, can be mailed to the Rotary Club of Acton, P.O. Box 22, L9T 2M2.

## DOG UPDATE

HH-DOG - Halton Hills Dog Owners Group, is inviting current and new members to a meeting on January 19, to discuss items and issues relating to the Town's first off-leash dog park in Acton.

Since its opening, the park has been busy with romping dogs and their grateful owners. Membership has increased to the point that the group has the first \$1,000 of the \$2,200 it promised to the Town for the park.

Also on the agenda, plans for the grand opening - tentatively scheduled for May 15 - fundraising activities and an update on operations at the leash-free zone in Prospect Park.

The meeting is at 26A Market Street in Georgetown, at 7 p.m. Call Kathy at 905-702-1603 for details.



**STOPPING SHOTS:** Now Mayor Rick Bonnette may not have know in 1967 he'd be parrying political shots but this photo of the Acton Four Town Tournament PeeWee Champions shows he was already practicing stopping shots back then., He's the goalie, of course. Can you name the rest o the team members? Coach and manager in back are Bill Knight and Ken Marshall.-Photo loaned by Marjorie Louttet.

## Views of the news!

### The Way I See It

with Mike O'Leary



It's been nice to get life somewhat back to normal after the busy Christmas season. We had a quiet new year's and just stayed home. "The Bride" even made it to 12:15 a.m. which was a major accomplishment. Now it's time to clean out the clipping file of news items that caught my eye over the past few weeks.

The tragic death of Raymond Getty on New Year's Eve day shocked our town. We don't know how it happened, we just ask ourselves why? Sadly, we will never be able to satisfactorily answer that question. Our hearts go out in sympathy to the parents of this fine young man. We also remember everyone else involved in this sad, sad incident. So many families' lives changed forever, by one, needless act.

I echo mayor Bonnette's plea for financial assistance for Raymond's family. We realize it's a financially difficult time of year. The Christmas bills arrive almost every day. We pride ourselves, and rightly so, as being a caring little town. If we all kicked-in \$5 each at least we could lift some of the financial burden the family is shouldering, in addition to their unbearable loss. Donations can be made at any Scotiabank to Raymond Getty's Trust - account number 0188522 - transit number 70102. The friendly tellers at Acton's Scotiabank stand ready to process your donation. If you are able to help - thank you. Above all, remember everyone affected in your prayers that they might have the strength to endure the pain this tragedy has wrought.

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Last month I noticed an article on how Woodstock, Ont. Hydro seems to have discovered a novel way to encourage their customers to conserve power.

Simply put, those customers with a Smart Meter purchase their power in advance, much as you do with pay-as-you-go phone cards. The customer has a display unit which plugs into any inside wall unit and allows you to see how much hydro you have remaining. What amount, in dollars, was used that day and/or the previous month and what is being

used currently (no pun intended) in real time dollars and cents.

Waterloo Hydro reports their customers develop a new attitude towards conservation when they are able to see the cents tick away as they use hydro. No kidding! If we go to that system here I'll be working hard to convince "the Bride" and "the girls" that they look so much younger in candlelight.

I see a few problems with this system. I wonder if there is an overdraft provision so no-one runs out of hydro during a frigid winter night. Surely the hydro doesn't click-off if the pre-paid amount runs out?

Can you purchase more hydro over the phone or the Internet? You have to be able to purchase more power 24 hours a day without leaving home. Also, how do you pay for your hydro? It would be disastrous for many people to suggest it go on a credit card and I certainly am not giving Hydro direct access to my meager bank account.

The blackout of last summer proved we all have to become more aware of energy conservation. The Waterloo program reportedly resulted in a 15-20 per cent reduction in energy used. Such thinking beyond the box is going to be necessary unless we are prepared to build more power plants. That's not liable to happen in to-day's economic climate.

Beginning April 01 this year (a fitting date) the Liberals will raise our electricity rates based on consumption. Our hydro bills will spiral out of control unless we all smarten up.

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I see a group of parents are threatening to sue the province because their children have been unable to pass the Grade 10 literacy test. As I understand it, these students are in Grade 12 but can't graduate because they haven't passed the Grade 10 test.

Okay, question one is: Why are these students in Grade 12 if they

haven't passed a Grade 10 test? Question two is: Why are they suing the government when they should be suing their parents? The ultimate responsibility for the education of our children rests with the parents. If they haven't been monitoring the progress of their children and intervening when necessary why blame the government?

The group's lawyer warns that one in five students may face a life of poverty or crime because they can't pass the Grade 10 literacy test. He's further quoted as saying "In other words, 20 per cent of the students who would otherwise have been graduating ... will not graduate this year and are going to be condemned to a life of flipping burgers as a result of this test." That's just plain silly. Jobs flipping burgers are often filled by people with Masters degrees. Everyone knows that.

Actually, I suggest we let this group graduate. Let them go on to college where they can blow 20 grand a year to fail because they can't understand the material.

But for God's sake, don't anyone try to fix the system where, as this lawyer claims, one in five Grade 12 students can't pass a Grade 10 literacy test. Personally, I'm not concerned that this group will face a life of poverty and crime. My concern is that they'll get out of Grade 12 and go on to be lawyers. They already have the right attitude.

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Canada Customs and Revenue report that drugs and guns are being smuggled into Canada by mail. The obvious answer would be to increase inspections and install more x-ray machines but it seems there's no money for that. Hmmmm. Perhaps our MP Reed could duly consider this problem and look around for, oh - say a billion or so, currently being wasted on useless gun registration and redirect it towards an actual solution to the problem. Naaaaaww!! That would make too much sense. Plus, it might actually reduce gun crime.

The danger there is that Canadians might focus on all the other ways the Feds blow money. That would never do. This is an election year.