

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## Jaywalking danger

Students from east end Acton schools are playing with serious injury or worse when they cross three lanes of busy Highway 7 on Queen St., E., without using the intersections at Churchill Rd. and Acton Blvd.

It's frightening for motorists to have children dart out in front of them and cross three lanes of traffic especially in front of the new Acton Market Plaza where there's a conjunction with plaza entrances and exits. It's especially dangerous during rush hour when highway traffic is often still moving at highway speeds coming into Acton.

There are two regulated intersections, at Churchill Rd. and where Acton Blvd. joins Meadvale where it is not only legal but safe to cross. Everyone who values their lives should be using them.

Students from McKenzie-Smith Bennett School and Acton High School often try to save time by taking a short cut from Churchill Rd. through the Bethel Reformed Church property, especially at noon hour, when they have less time. Rather than walk back to the intersection they run across the highway (Queen St., E.) although it is only a short stretch of the legs.

Motorists have to be extra cautious when they are either coming into, leaving Acton or heading for the plaza under these conditions. Children should also be cautioned about jaywalking. With today's heavy volume of traffic it's extremely dangerous.

## Passport queues

Horror stories about long lineups and endless months of waiting for Canadian birth certificates and passports were tested last Friday when this editor and spouse discovered our passports had expired.

Since the longest waiting times and line-ups seemed to emanate from the Brampton passport offices, we decided to visit the Kitchener offices to apply for a new passport. Downtown Kitchener and the Brampton offices were about equidistant apart albeit in opposite directions.

It was the right choice.

We arrived at the passport office in Kitchener in the old Eaton Centre at the corner of King and Frederick Sts. About 10:30 a.m. At 12:10 we were back in the parking garage on our way home, the paperwork done and assurances from a friendly competent clerk with a slight Scottish burr that the passports would be delivered to our home in two weeks.

When we arrived, the waiting room at the passport office was crowded with people from all directions taking a number. We were delegated No. 131 just as No. 78 was flashed on the screen. That meant we had to wait for 51 applications to be processed before it was our turn to approach one of the 11 numbered wickets, nine of which were open.

We were able to sit down and wait our turn as more and more people crowded into the waiting room. However, courteous clerks, unperturbed by the constant movement, steadily processed applicants so we were at the counter a few minutes before 12 noon and briskly and competently whisked through. Total time spent in the passport offices on a busy Friday morning – one hour and 45 minutes.

It showed a government office could be run efficiently and congenially under pressure. The Kitchener office certainly gets this corner's seal of approval



**BRUNCH BUNCH:** Kinettes and Scouts – with their leaders and parent volunteers – helped cook and serve brunch for approximately 200 people on Sunday at Acton arena. For their help at the Kinette Club of Acton's monthly Community Brunch, the 1st Acton Scouts received a portion of the proceeds. – Frances Niblock photo

## Angela's obsessed with 'thrones'

My fascination, according to my mom, started as a toddler. Washrooms, bathrooms, water closets, the loo, lavatories, or toilets... I had fondness for all and had to explore each one. I have a love for the loo.

Maybe that's why I e-mailed my sister a news story from MSNBC about a new toilet in London, England. Although completely functional, it is also an art exhibit. It is a public toilet on a sidewalk that was a cubical made from one-way glass. On the outside it looked like a mirror. On the inside, the user could see everything, including all of the passerbys'. Tracey was curious if I would ever use one. I think I would be the one trying to startle or make a funny face at the user.

This past weekend I read an article in the National Post where they ranked Toronto's top five public washrooms. I was curious and started doing my own research which I originally thought was odd on the Internet.

Sure we can focus on technological advances in computers, cell phones or items that make cars safer, yet what about that place that we all use



By  
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and rarely think about unless we're picking out a paint colour?

Over the next hour, I discovered that there are literally hundreds of sites dedicated to the "throne". I read that the average person spends one hour a day there, which then translates into two weeks a year. That is the same length of time the average person gets for holidays. By the time you're 80, you could spend up to three years sitting in privacy. But is it really private? 33% of people admit to talking on the phone when they're supposed to be having 'private' time.

Let's face it, most of us don't really think about advances in toilet technology. The Matsusita Electric Industrial Company has. They expect to have a toilet that will measure a person's temperature, blood pressure and blood sugar level by 2006.

For me, I think I got a 'royal flush' when I found one website. I couldn't help but laugh, after

the initial shock. I had to share it with Tracey and the Dude. Both of whom had identical responses... "how do you find these things?" I took it as a compliment when we entered the website toiletmuseum.com (complete with flushing sound effects) and they laughed in disbelief. It had more information on toilets than even a plumber could use.

None of us really like talking about this topic, but on the same token, don't you always find yourself laughing at the guy in the hot tub in the Immodium commercial? The lavatory is becoming something people think about more often than when it is necessary.

Perhaps this is why there are now statistics such as 47% of people contemplate their future in the washroom. Or more information like 45% of women say the seat up/down controversy causes a regular commotion in their home.

Then there is Jack Kresimen, who has really thought about this topic and founded National Bathroom Reading Week, which coincidentally occurs in June... along with Father's Day.



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