

GRAPEVINE



MANES PARIS BOUND

Former Acton IGA owner Mike Manes knows he is going to like the hardware business.

"If it doesn't sell, you don't have to throw it out," Manes joked on Friday as he talked about his new life as owner of the Home Hardware store in Paris.

Manes, wife Monica and their 12-year-old son will move to Paris at the end of the month, and the deal with the current store owner, who is retiring, closes mid-August.

Manes said the five-year-old Paris store looks like the Acton store, owned by his cousin Bill Manes, but is larger.

Mike Manes' brother John owns the Home Hardware store in Harriston, and their cousin Brad Manes owns the Palmerston store.

"I figure selling a can of paint will be the same as selling a can of pork and beans... and I wanted to get back into retail," Manes said of the move. He misses the Acton food business, "we did that all our life," but after taking it easy for the last five or six months, he said it is time to get back to work.

SWANK SOIREE

The Gambrel Barn at the Farm Museum in Milton was transformed into an Evening in Paradise last Thursday at the Acton High School formal.

The supervised, school-sanctioned event drew 155 people to the traditional end-of-year party that featured an evening of dining and dancing.

Retiring principal Greg MacPherson praised the student lead organizing committee for its party planning skills and allowed that he "danced a little" to a great DJ.

BOARDER FUN

Thanks to downtown Acton merchants a mobile skateboard park will be featured at the Leathertown Festival on August 8.

The Acton BIA has offered to rent a skatepark and with help from ASAP - Acton Sports Action Committee - members will offer boarders some fun and challenges.

ASAP members - gearing up for a major fundraising campaign for the proposed park - are also grateful to Sobey's, which generously donated proceeds from its barbecue yesterday (Wednesday) to the skateboard project.

CANINE SIGN

Thanks to Leathertown Lumber's donation of wood and the skills of Acton High School woodworking students, the Town's first off-leash zone in Prospect Park will soon be officially signed.

The sign will include plaques to thank donors who helped make the leash-free zone a reality and space for announcements, notices and park rules.

The \$15,000 leash-free zone has been a hit with dogs and their owners since it unofficially opened last fall with the help of HH-DOG - Halton Hills Dog Owners Group.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Tuitman's Garden Centre on the 25th anniversary of being in business in Acton.

Elly and Len Tuitman will mark the

special occasion (July 3) with an art exhibit called Art in the Garden, featuring sculptures and plants and the public is invited to join the Tuitmans for refreshments between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

WEDDED BLISS

Many congratulations to Acton's Marie and Ross Jeffries who celebrated their 65th anniversary yesterday (Wednesday).

The celebration for the couple, who moved to the Legion building on Birchway Place six years ago, will continue on Sunday with a small family gathering at the home of their son, Bob Jeffries.

NEW MINISTER

At a barbecue after church on Sunday, the congregation of Trinity United Church said fond good byes to student supply minister Edward Bellsmith, who had tended the local flock for almost two years.

Bellsmith will attend Emmanuel College at the U of T full-time in September, saying his theological career is being guided by a United Church Presbytery committee and "I don't have a lot of say in the process."

What will he miss most about Trinity?

"The people are absolutely wonderful. The love, the support they've shown and the sense of unity - it's just an incredible group of people," Bellsmith said on Sunday.

Student supply minister Deborah McKellar, currently serving at a Scarborough church, will take over the pulpit at Trinity on a one-year appointment.

DRAGON MAGIC

The Acton library will host a magical dragon on Saturday with a special show featuring Owen Anderson and his Magical Dragon Quest Show.

Along with kings and queens, the world's skinniest dragon will visit the River Street branch at 2 p.m.

There are a limited number of tickets.

The Acton library is offering prizes for reading this summer in its "Fire Up Your Imagination" summer reading club.

If you read for 30 minutes a day - or have someone read to you for 15 minutes a day - and keep track of the books, you will be eligible for prizes.

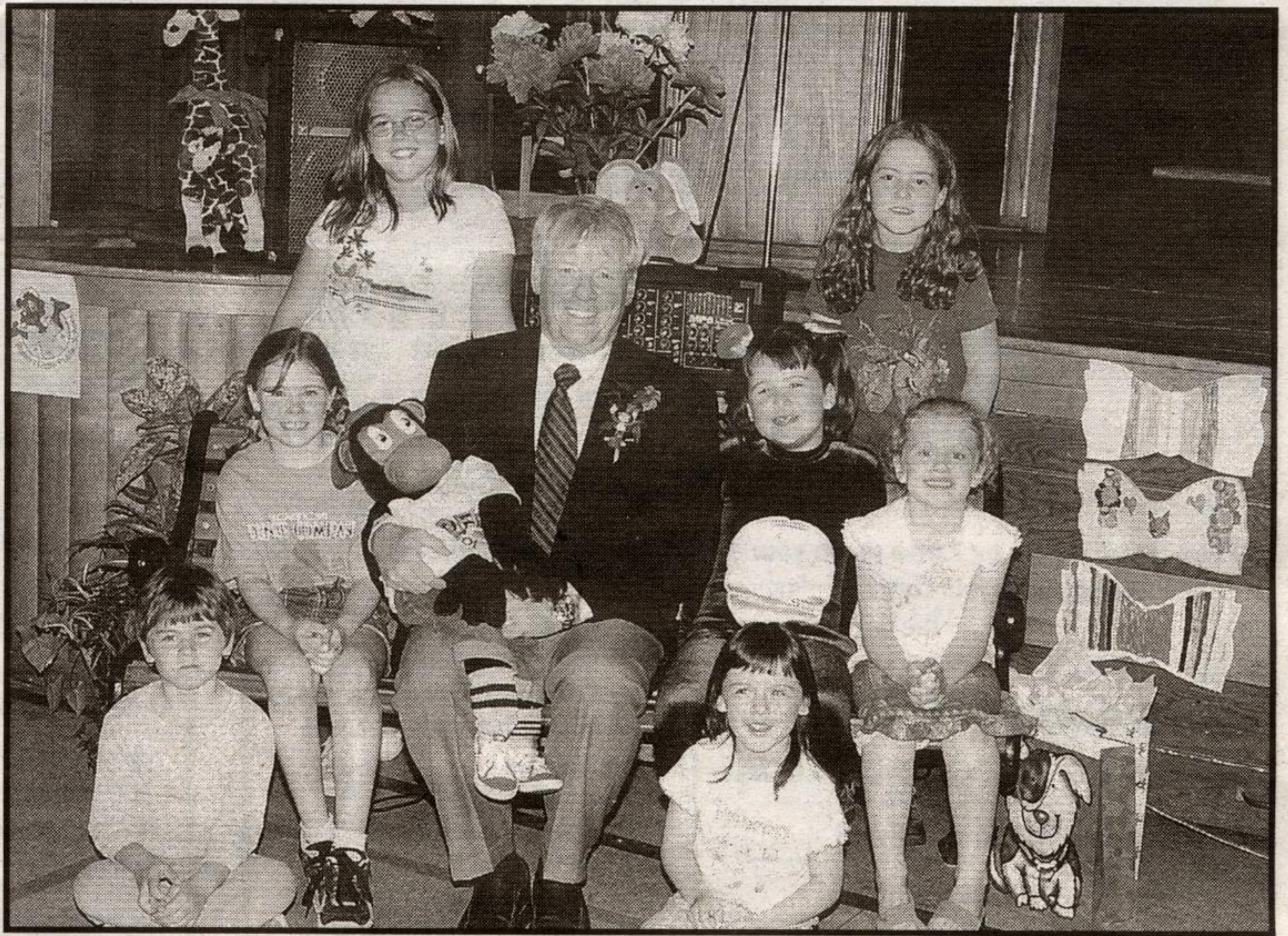
Reading club members receive a booklet, poster and sticker.

The library is also offering free programs for kids including book parties, imagination station, craftnoons and family story time. For details, call 853-0301.

CAMP DAY SUCCESS

More than 9,000 children will make camp memories to last a lifetime this summer, thanks to those who donated more than \$6-million - \$4,614 in Acton - to the Tim Hortons Children's Foundation on Camp Day on June 9.

Deserving kids aged nine to 12 will be able to attend one of six Tim Hortons camps this summer - all expenses paid - by the Camp Day donations and proceeds from every cup of coffee sold that day.



HAPPY RETIREMENT: Retiring Robert Little School principal Don Warren was surrounded by students, well-wishing colleagues and friends at the school recently at a party in his honour. - Frances Niblock photo

Minority rules!

The Way I See It



with Mike O'Leary

Although the federal election produced the expected minority government the results were not as expected. Paul Martin's Liberals surged ahead in the last few days and picked up about 15 seats more than I expected.

The traitors' party, initially believed to be on the ropes, captured most of the seats outside Montreal. The reason given was that Quebecers were furious with the feds over the sponsorship scandal. I wonder why? Almost all of the money, even the millions that disappeared, went to Quebec. One would think Quebecers would be upset that the money is being dried up.

Generally, Stephen Harper ran a good campaign. At the end, though, he managed to snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory. Many claim it was the intemperate remarks of a few Tory candidates that cost Harper his victory. I disagree. I think it was three little words that he didn't say. When some staffer spun a press release about child pornography and headlined it to say Paul Martin was soft on child porn Harper fumbled the ball. Instead of being prime ministerial and immediately saying three little words, namely "I am sorry," he reverted to his penchant to be a policy wonk.

A case can be made that the Liberals did not use the "notwithstanding" provision in the charter to overturn the B. C. court decision on kiddie porn. In essence, the B.C. court decreed that possessing child porn is a right but distributing or sharing it with others is illegal. Instead of acting decisively to overturn this decision the Liberals dithered.

The issue came up when the scum who murdered Holly Jones blamed child porn for triggering his impulses. A staffer seeing an opportunity to hammer the Liberals issued the offensive release. It offended Canadians when it was seen to portray the P.M. himself as being soft on porn. That's a ludicrous and dumb proposition. I'm often surprised at the obvious mistakes senior political staff make. You'd

think, at this level, polished professionalism would be the norm. But it isn't. Then Harper compounded the problem by not apologizing and trying to explain the unexplainable.

With about two weeks left in the race Harper started to muse about a majority government. Harper is still an unknown quantity. While Canadians, especially Ontarians, might have been content to see a Conservative minority a majority was a horse of a different colour. The angry Liberal vote started to shift back.

Harper, in my opinion, drove the final nail in his coffin last weekend. Home in Alberta and playing to friendly crowds, he talked about how "The West wants in" and that he would ensure that western Canadian influence would be paramount in the corridors of power. Why he would trot out old Reform slogans is beyond me. It was unnecessary. He knew the Tories would clean up in Alberta. Why introduce an unknown influence like western power? I watched him ramble on basking in the adulation of his crowd. My immediate reaction was that watching the guy shoot himself in both feet wasn't fun. Back here in Ontario, where the Tories needed a big breakthrough, you could almost feel the shifting tide.

I was surprised that Belinda Stronach only squeaked into office by 702 votes. I figured her profile and deep pockets would sweep her to power. Why, oh why, did the voters in Mississauga return Carolyn Parrish (she of the "damn Americans... I hate those bastards" comment) to office? St. Paul's riding in Toronto maintained its record of never electing an opposition M.P. when it went Liberal.

Here in Acton and environs I think we are fortunate to have elected Mike

Chong. Mike is an impressive young man who I believe will represent us well in Ottawa. The race here was also close with Chong besting Liberal Bruce Hood by about 10 per cent. The Wellington-Halton Hills race, while very competitive, was thoughtful and respectful as opposed to the national race which was, as I saw it, disgusting. So congratulations to Mike Chong and I encourage you to get to know him during the various events he will be attending in our town. Don't hesitate to contact him if you need his assistance. I'm positive he'll work hard on your behalf no matter what your political persuasion.

As I said, I thought the national campaign was disgusting. Why have we allowed our national political scene to dumb-down into negative advertising and fear mongering? If the feds are wondering why only 61 percent of eligible voters went to the polls perhaps they should look at the election campaign strategies. After he has had a chance to go to Ottawa and find the washrooms, I intend to ask Mike Chong to explore the possibility of all parties adopting a code of conduct for future election campaigns. My God, can't we at least be civil during these things?

This is our first minority government since 1979. I am encouraged that the N.D.P. doesn't hold the absolute balance of power. A Liberal/NDP coalition would give my wallet nightmares. As it is, we can't expect much more than tinkering with the useless gun registry boondoggle. More billions will be wasted. We are probably on the way to a national child care program, Cha-ching. The thieves who stole our money through the sponsorship program will never see the inside of a jail cell. Chretien and his cronies will get a free pass. Health care will continue to deteriorate. Paul Martin and Stephen Harper will have another go at it.

But lighten-up, it's not all bad news. We'll get to do this all over again in two years or so. Hopefully, by then, my Liberal friends will be speaking to me again.

E-e-e-ek - it's a rat...

continued from page 6

further problems from Ralph.

That evening, I circled Ralph's final resting-place about every half-hour. I wanted to make sure that he didn't escape or that the wind blew the top off. Friday, my dad asked me if Ralph was gone (in the permanent sense). I was too afraid to look because either Ralph or the ghost of Ralph would make a noise

every once in a while. Either way, there was no way I was looking. By Sunday, the Dude checked on Ralph pronounced him officially dead at 1:58 p.m.

Now, I am Ralph free, however, I am haunted by the words of Doctor Doolittle/dad... "You know what the problem will be? There is never just one... there's always two." Maybe I'll be lucky and the second one will be Ralph's ghost.