

GRAPEVINE



BUCKETS OF BALLS

Even bad weather didn't stop golfers who braved drizzle and rain to hit buckets of balls when Acton's new driving range - Acton Golf Centre - opened on Thursday at the corner of Highway 7 and Fourth Line.

Acton's Shawn Richard was the first customer - and he then filled out an application for employment at the range that has permission for temporary use for three years.

Manager Jason Molinaro, a relative of the owner, says he warns customers that the range is a "work in progress" and predicts in two or three years it will "look like a park."

"We plan to build a mini-putt, putting greens and sand traps and make it more of a practice facility, not just a driving range," Molinaro said on Friday, adding they would have been open months ago if it weren't for the wet spring.

HAND/FOOT/MOUTH

Anecdotally, it seemed like there was an epidemic of hand, foot and mouth disease in Acton recently, but neither of the two Acton doctors seeing patients report an increase of cases of the disease, caused by the coxsackie virus group A, that causes lesions/open sores on the cheeks, mouth, gums, tongue, palms, fingers, and soles of feet.

It usually hits kids under 10, and can be tough on adults - one Acton man was off work for over a week.

One doctor at the Georgetown Medical Centre reported an increase in cases of the virus, most commonly spread by sneezing. People are contagious for three-to-five days until the sores are healed.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is not a reportable disease, so Halton's Health Department had no information on numbers of cases, and has not had an increase in calls about the virus.

There is no treatment, but precautions include handwashing, proper disposal of contaminated tissue and disinfection of all articles contaminated with stool, nose and throat secretions.

DRAGOON PICNIC

Pepper, the borrowed horse, got quite the workout at the Royal Canadian Dragoons Association annual picnic at the Legion on Saturday - standing still for photos of Dragoons in historical uniforms, walking quietly with guests aboard and galloping wildly along the lakefront with his owner, a former Mountie from Brantford.

The Dragoons love the Fairy Lake setting at the Legion and come every year for an afternoon of fun, food and music - this year supplied by the Acton Citizens' Band with some guest musicians from a York high school band that was having its reunion in Acton.

ACTON CONNECTION

There is an unfortunate Acton connection to the house fire death of Linda Amos of Georgetown last week.

Former Acton, and now Georgetown resident Shirley McKeown, wife of the last postmaster Gordon McKeown - is the deceased woman's aunt.

CAR CRAZY

The sixth annual Show'N'Shine - a fundraiser for the Acton Agricultural Society - will draw vehicles of all makes, models, years and types to Prospect Park on Saturday.

The event, which includes viewer's choice awards, sound competition, prizes, trophies and displays by fire and police officials, runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FOR SALE

The real estate agent with the listing for 16-18 Mill Street - now home to the Acton BIA, a nail salon and two storey apartment - has had several inquiries since the building was put on the market in May.

For sale signs went up on the building, listed at \$249,000, last week. It is currently owned by two investors who intended to keep it when they purchased it last summer from Acton's John Wong, but they now want to sell it to take advantage of another local investment opportunity.



REMEMBER WHEN: It's Memory Gardens now and looked after by Marg and John Creasey of the Acton Horticultural Society but when this historical plaque was unveiled in front of Acton Public Library back in the 1970s the old stone Acton High School could still be seen in the background. At the unveiling, left, are former MPP George Kerr, Councillor G.W. (Pat) McKenzie, Rev. Andrew McKenzie, Laura Dietrich and first Halton Hills Mayor Tom Hill. On the right are Dr. Frank Oakes, former Acton Reeve, Councillor Joe Hurst, Acton's last Mayor and Councillor Les Duby and a rep. from the Ontario Government. See page 16 for the scene now. - Photo loaned by Max MacSween of the Horticultural Society.

The evil is among us!

We've all heard the old adage, "The law is an ass." Lately, our cockeyed justice system seems hell bent on proving that's an understatement. Consider the following:

Martin Ferrier has spent the last 15 of 17 years in jail for more than 63 convictions ranging from rape to forcible confinement and assault. He has expressed his serious goals of being like Paul Bernardo and aspiring to be Canada's most prolific killer.

His mother is afraid of him and hoped he would re-offend so he can be put "back where he belongs" because "that's the only way people will be safe."

Prison doctors have labelled him an incurable psychopath. During his years in prison he refused all treatment.

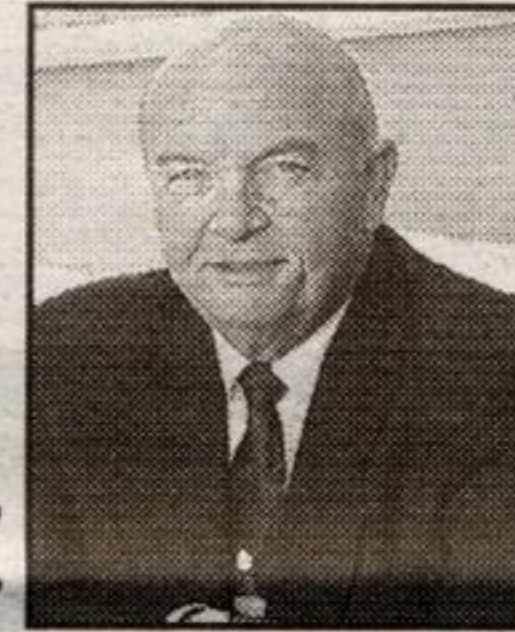
This psycho was recently released in Brampton. "How so?" you may ask. Why hasn't he been classified as a dangerous offender? Given his history? Why can't we lock him up and throw away the key? Well, friends, this is where our lack of justice system comes in. Ferrier, you see, has never been sentenced to a 10 year term for any one offence. Therefore, he can't be considered for a dangerous offender designation and be sentenced to an indefinite term.

The kind-hearted or soft-headed, your choice, might try to point out his crimes couldn't have been that serious. His sentences were short. Not so-oh muddle headed ones. Many of his crimes could have resulted in sentences ranging from 10 years to life.

In addition, on two occasions, this monster asked for longer sentences. In one case he asked the judge to sentence him to 15 years. But no, he always got less than 10. So he ended up on the streets of Brampton, an easy half-hour drive from where you are reading this. The good folks in Brampton were not impressed.

After being thrown out of a couple of motels, he threatened a reporter in front of police. This, he knew, violated his parole. Martin

The Way I See It



with Mike O'Leary

Ferrier knew he belonged in prison and was immediately sent back there. I'm sure Ferrier's victims appreciate that Judge Minoo Khoorshed was upset at sending this poor misunderstood individual back to jail. By the way, the compassionate judge sent him back for two years. So the dangerous offender application is still off the table.

Methinks it's time we started electing judges or, at least, holding those we do elect responsible for appointing cementheads to the bench.

In another recent example of stuff-for-brains on the bench, a couple who beat, starved, caged and degraded their two adopted boys for 13 years were sentenced to nine months. I'm sure you heard the sickening details of this case. Even the dope-er-judge said the abuse "bordered on torture."

The judge must have accepted the parents' defence that the boys were "difficult"; they both suffered from fetal alcohol syndrome. Granted the two adults were such a mess personally I am shocked they could have been even considered as adoptive parents. But that's another story.

The two parents will be eligible for day parole by October and full parole by next January. That's the penalty for 13 years of the vilest child abuse we've heard of in many years.

These two cases happened in one week. There are similar miscarriages of justice committed every week across this province and country. Why do we allow it?

Need more proof? Next July 6th that pond scum who killed Kristen French, Leslie Mahaffy and her own sister will be released from jail.

This cold blooded murderer has been refused early release three

times by the National Parole Board. The Board's most recent review concludes that she could still commit a crime involving the death or serious harm to another person. She still refuses to accept full responsibility for her actions. But, the time specified in her deal with the devil is up so out she will come.

Pictures released over the years show she's had a pretty good time at Club Fed: parties, Christmas celebrations, nice dresses and lingerie; tough punishment, eh?

In a final insult, Corrections Canada has arranged for her to be released on July 5, 2005. Remember that date, because it should be Leslie Mahaffy's 29th birthday. That's right, our justice system has scheduled this killer's release for what should have been her victim's birthday. Makes you proud to be Canadian, doesn't it? Perhaps this is a project our new MPP Mike Chong might take on. Somehow, that date has to be changed even if it means letting that b___ out early.

The problem with our (in)justice system, as I see it, is that our entire focus is on rehabilitation. Somewhere, someone has to have the courage to fight those who have contaminated our justice department with the attitude that people are not responsible for their actions. There's always some Freudian excuse. While I agree that rehabilitation has a role in the justice system it should not over-ride the penalty for actions consideration or the public safety component.

Some people are just evil. We must have sentencing provisions that can take this into consideration. Things like Leslie Mahaffy's murderer should never be free.

Winston Churchill is quoted observing "there is always evil in this world and it is only a matter of recognizing it. Evil is one of the absolutes of our existence, yet, the twentieth century has convinced itself that it does not exist. What fools?"

Have we learned nothing in 60 years? Evidently, not.

Prospect Park...

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dated band shell and unsafe beaches; the only ones who seemed to be using the park were the dogs.

The word "Prospect" means hope, future, anticipation and vision. In its current state, our park doesn't seem to fit its name... Prospect park. It's unfortunate as it is one of our greatest features; something unique to Acton.

I think the time has come that we start investing in our park. We can all invest. It can be as simple as having your own little field trip. Why not catch a ball game or have a Sunday afternoon picnic in the park, or just escape all the world's troubles and take a stroll through it even recapture your youth and try out one of the swings. You might even be able to reach the clouds.