

GRAPEVINE



HABITAT DEDICATION

The keys to the new Habitat for Humanity house on Crescent Street in Acton will be handed over to the grateful new homeowners on February 20 at a special ceremony at the newly constructed residence.

Local dignitaries, Habitat officials and many of the people who donated cash, time and talent to the project will be on hand as Habitat partner family members Stephanie Parker and husband Ken Hepburn, see their dream of home ownership become a reality.

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, independent organization that builds houses in partnership with communities for families that don't qualify for traditional mortgages.

LIBRARY LOVE-IN

Volunteer members of Friends of the Library will be feted by the Halton Hills public library at a "We Love Our Friends" appreciation tea on Sunday, (February 13) in the gallery at the Georgetown library.

The Friends play an important role in the library – running library book sales, selling library book bags and staging fundraisers – to help pay for programs, displays and library materials. The tea runs from 2 to 3 p.m.

BOOK BATTLE

Parents – is your child's school participating in the library's annual Battle of the Books?

It is a fun, free program designed for kids in grades three to eight, and includes schools competing against each other in team trivia contests with questions about children's literature.

For more details, call the Acton library branch at 853-0301.

SAFETY GUIDE

A new community safety guide is one of the fire department's latest education and prevention measures.

The guide is an easy-to-read, one-stop source for fire safety topics and tips.

In Acton, copies of the new guide are available at the Churchill Road fire station, the Seniors' Centre, insurance and real estate offices, and the BIA office.

PANCAKE LOVE

Panicked Acton teens who just don't know what to get their sweetie for Valentine's Day can say it with flapjacks.

For \$1.50, senior youth (12 to 17) can create two heart-shaped pancakes tomorrow (Friday) at the Off The Wall youth centre on Mill Street.

The youth centres in Acton and Georgetown will benefit from the fifth annual Champions for Youth Gala on February 19 at the North Halton Golf and Country Club.

The night includes dinner, a silent auction and entertainment from classical guitarist Brent Cooper and rock and roll from Rolly Rocker and the Hemi Heads.

For details, call 853-3310.

GARDEN TALK

Rejuvenating old gardens and creating new ones is the topic Jennifer Moore will discuss at the Acton Horticultural Society's next meeting on February 15.

The meeting is at 7:30 p.m., at Knox Church.

For details call Sandy at 853-3912.

RECRUITMENT NIGHT

Interested in being a Halton Police constable?

The police service is holding two recruitment information nights for anyone interested in pursuing a career as a Halton police officer.

The meetings are February 16, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Oakville Holiday Inn, and February 23 in Milton at the Country Heritage Park.

Reservations are not required. Applications will be given to candidates who have a valid OACP certificate of results.

FESTIVAL PLANS

Organizers of Acton's 14th annual Leathertown Festival are looking for new volunteers with fresh ideas as they meet on February 17 at the Legion to begin planning for this year's event.

All are welcome to the 7:30 p.m. meeting in the Legion boardroom.

MILK CAN BENEFIT

Friends and family of former Acton resident Bob Coles, 24, who lost his barn and milking cattle in a \$1.25-million fire at his Beaton farm recently, are staging a "Fill the Milk Can" benefit for him on February 25.

The benefit dance and auction is being organized by members of the Limehouse Presbyterian Church and Erin Junior Farmers, and will be held at the Ballinafad Community Hall.

GROCER GONE

A bunch of dead Christmas trees, disconnected phones and unpaid bills are all that is left of the Acton Country Market, a business owned and operated by Nassagaweya resident Theresa Marek for approximately six weeks until just before Christmas at a rented Main Street South store.

No word what happened to Marek or her fledgling business, both her home and business phones are no longer in service.

Her former landlords – a Rockwood couple that did not want to be named – said they changed the locks after Marek disappeared, and the store is available to rent.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Parents of kids who will be four or five before the end of this year can now register for Junior and Senior Kindergarten at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School.

Almost 40 students-to-be have been registered so far.

Call the school at 853-3800, for details.

BLOOD CLINIC

The next blood donor clinic in Acton is February 17, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Legion.

Canadian Blood Service officials are hopeful for a good turnout.

TICKET NOTE

If you haven't already got your ticket for Saturday's Women's Breakfast at Bethel Christian Reformed Church – too bad, organizers report the event is sold out.



SPRING FLOWERS:Acton Rotary Club president Herb Dodds delivers crocuses, purchased from the CNIB, to Dorothy Allen and other residents of Lakeview Villa and Legion Terrace as part of the Rotary's centennial celebration. –Submitted photo

Give me a break from...

This is my least favourite month. Despite the warmer weather last week, the bite of winter is beginning to wear on us. The sun is teasing – with longer days and the beginning of warmth. But, the reality is that notwithstanding the Warton rodents' forecast we are looking at two more months of winter.

There's not a lot going on to capture our attention, so nerves are wearing a little short. They don't call it the "February blahs" for nothing. Following are a few things that are getting on my nerves these days. Feel free to add your own pet peeves.

I really miss hockey, but am tired of listening to the argument. There is no right side as far as I am concerned. Few of us have little pity for the owners. If they hadn't spent like drunken sailors during the past 20 years, the N.H.L. wouldn't be in this mess. The irresponsible expansion to many southern American cities brought short-term gain by way of franchise fees.

Long-term however, it is diluted the level of play to the point that many games are less enjoyable than a decent pond shinny game. Owner's greed has seriously wounded our game.

Conversely, there are a few tears available for the players. These guys, in fact the majority of professional athletes, have been idolized to the point where they've lost all touch with reality.

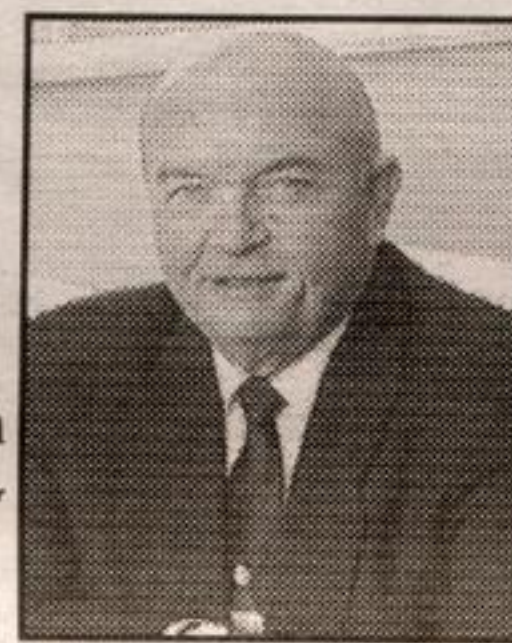
They lead a life of privilege the rest of us an only dream of. The argument that they only have a limited number of years to earn big money, an therefore have to make the most of the time is such a crock one wonders why they keep trying to sell it.

Too many elbows to the head I suspect. Average entry-level N.H.L. salaries are higher than most of us will make in 20 years or more. Don't cry poormouth to me.

The players keep talking about their union. That's another crock. They're about as much a union as the Toronto Board of trade is. Many players have shown their loyalty to the N.H.L. by running off to Europe, chasing more francs, rubles or whatever. The big earners know many of their mates will be out of a

The Way I See It

with
Mike O'Leary



job when some of the weaker teams fold. No union solidarity there.

There mere fact discussions were held last weekend about a possible 25 game schedule and some kind of jerrymantered playoffs is a perfect indication of the contempt both sides have for the game. A pox on both their houses.

But, fear not hockey fans. There will be good hockey this coming weekend. In Acton on Saturday, out Rep Peewees start playoff action at 5:30 p.m. Following that game, at 7:30 p.m., our Midget team sees action.

On Sunday, the Tri-County Novices take to the ice and, if needed, the Peewees take on Saugeen Shores again.

A call to the arena at 853-0020, will tell you when rep and house league games are scheduled.

High calibre play will also entertain this weekend at the Mold-master Sportsplex in Georgetown as the raiders begin heir playoff hunt against either Streetsville of Mississauga.

You can see excellent hockey and you can take your kids without taking out a second mortgage. Come out and see hockey as it was meant to be played. By kids who play for the love of the game. Not by pampered dilettantes who care only for their over-inflated egos and bankbooks.

You know, parking at our arenas is free. You could take your family to see an exciting hockey for what you'd save in the cost of gas and parking alone from going to Toronto. Come out on and support the home teams. It is a big part of small town life.

I'm tired of reading about the Sponsorgate mess. Has millions and millions of dollars been wasted? Yeah – so what? Will either P.M. Cretien or P.M. the P.M. ever be brought to account? Don't be silly. Ever try nailing mercury to a wall?

The best we can hope for is some low level bureaucrat will be thrown to the wolves.

We deserve this – we really do. I can remember, more than 30 years ago, Canadian politicians buying our votes with our own money. They all claim to be pure as the driven snow. Once elected, they shove their snouts in the trough so far they won't be bothered by constitutional objections.

It is pretty well the Liberals and Conservatives who've conducted this raid on the public purse. Thankfully, Canadian voters have never given the NDP the Federal checkbook. Ontario only made the mistake once. Lord save us from having Jack Layton ever get his hands on the federal cash box.

And how did we object to this generation of political skullduggery? We kept electing them. Why would we expect them to change.

I think much of the anger in the country is a result of an anti-French bias as opposed to outrage over misappropriation. Most of the money was siphoned off to Quebec firms. I doubt there would be the same hue and cry if the bucks were parked in Ontario, Alberta or B.C.

May of us have lived a goodly portion of our adult lives under threat of referendums from Quebec. How long must be endure? Is it a best one out of 46 contest?

This hullabaloo may well be a sign that the rest of Canada saying "enough!"

The "Warton Rat" had one good idea. Immediately following his stage show, he (she?) went back into hibernation.

Six weeks from now, spring will be upon us and, hopefully, there will be some interesting news happenings.

One last hockey note. The Ladies Team playoffs start tomorrow (Friday) at Acton arena at 10 p.m.

I mention this so I don't become the next major local news item. We don't want to see the headline "Local columnist crucified for ignoring women's hockey." Because six weeks from now is Easter weekend and I've learned, from living all these years with five females, one unbreakable rule: Don't tempt fate.