

Was this the proverbial vacation from hell?

I've noticed since vacationing with the Dude, whether for a weekend or a week, it never seems to start off without a "hitch." This vacation was starting off to be no different.



By Angela Tyler

For weeks before our escape, the Dude had been giving me the official countdown. "Do you realize in two more weeks we'll be on the beach?" he said. I was getting excited, too, however I wasn't looking forward to that final week before vacation when something usually happens to him. I like to refer to it as the Dude turning into the equivalent of 20 PMS-ing women.

It's a whirlwind of emotions, any of which can come with no warning or reason. In that final week, everything that could go wrong for him does. Usually at about 2 p.m. on the Friday afternoon he gets swamped. Getting away becomes an obstacle course instead of a reward.

About 4:30 p.m. that Friday, I decided against my earlier thoughts that I would check the voice mail before we left for Toronto. "You have one new message..." the machine started to tell me. As I listened to the message, my heart rate

started to flutter and quickly escalate when the words continued... "Your flight has been cancelled." I didn't hear anything after that except my heart pounding.

Apparently the lone Tampa flight had been cancelled, replaced by a regional jet to Philadelphia with a connecting flight with US Airways. Friday at 4:30 p.m. was not the time to be telling the Dude about this. This was when the emotional rollercoaster really started.

Before I knew it, everything had settled down, including emotions and we were on our way to Toronto to stay at a hotel to avoid an early 3 a.m. awakening at home. Upon check-in, the Dude, turned and looked at me with an odd expression. I was weary. Could the rollercoaster be returning?

"You didn't book a king size room?" he asked. I was positive I had. But, they were apparently sold out and we were given a queen size room with a bed so hard I opted to sleep on the pull-out couch instead.

Later that evening, still perturbed about the whole room thing and since I watch far too many t.v. detective shows, I decided to be a sneak. I took my cell phone out and called the front desk. "Hi, we're stuck in Toronto tonight with flight delay. I was wondering if you had any king size rooms available?" I asked coyly. Okay, it wasn't completely sneaky, it was almost true. The attendant put me on hold while she checked. "Hi, Yes, we have a few available this evening. Would you like to reserve one?" she asked.

Ha! I knew it. I was positive I had reserved a king size room. What we ended up with was not because they were "sold out."

The next day, we sat in the little outfield terminal, the equivalent of a double-wide trailer home, awaiting our regional jet to Philly. I was getting concerned. We had one hour to connect and were already past our departure time. I was in panic mode. What else could go wrong? The flight was cancelled. Our room reservation was screwed up. Our first flight is now late. It was not a good sign.

We arrived in Philly 30 minutes late which was 10 minutes past

our original boarding call. "Come on...let's go...we have to move," I ordered the Dude like an army sergeant. There was no way I was going to miss this flight. It didn't matter that I was wearing inappropriate foot wear for travel (heels), nor did it matter that we had to go to another gate. What did matter was when I looked at the map of the airport and discovered Philly had not one, two or three terminals like Toronto, but FIVE! And, of course, our connecting flight was at Terminal A at the very last gate.

We arrived at Terminal E, which if you do the math, is five terminals away. We made our flight, but my feet could barely make the jetway to the plane. Our luck was changing. That was until we arrived in Tampa; the place where we were to have an enjoyable, relaxing seven whole days.

"You get the bags, I'll go get the car rental," the Dude instructed. I didn't care. My feet were tired. Waiting on the bags sounded great. "Where's the car rental agreement," he asked. It was in the side bag of the carry-on. I had placed it there before we left home and he even asked me as we left to make sure I had it. Somehow though,

I didn't have it. I tore the bag apart...every newspaper...every magazine...every piece of paper. It was nowhere to be found. This wasn't good. The last time we had a problem with the rate charged to that quoted. The Dude was adamant about having the contract with us this time, not just the confirmation number.

However, as I expected his emotions to expel, I was surprised to find a relaxed Dude telling me he would just go look after it...that it was "okay." It must be the Florida air. Our luck was changing. It was going to be a great week.

The bags circled the baggage carousel one by one. There were big bags and small bags and old banged up bags. There were boxes and baby strollers. However, they weren't our bags.

I knew we were in trouble when the US Airways baggage handlers started pulling the unclaimed bags off the carousel to a secured area. I figured if I stood there and stared a little longer, the carousel would start back up and bring our bags. What happened to the priority stickers that were placed on them? Didn't that count for anything?

Continued on page 7

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Good housekeeping

Sunday at 5:30p.m. there were still hundreds of people along Acton's old downtown, remnants of the thousands who enjoyed the 14th annual Leathertown Festival in traditional August weather - hot and sunny. The street contained the litter that thousands of people leave when they get together.

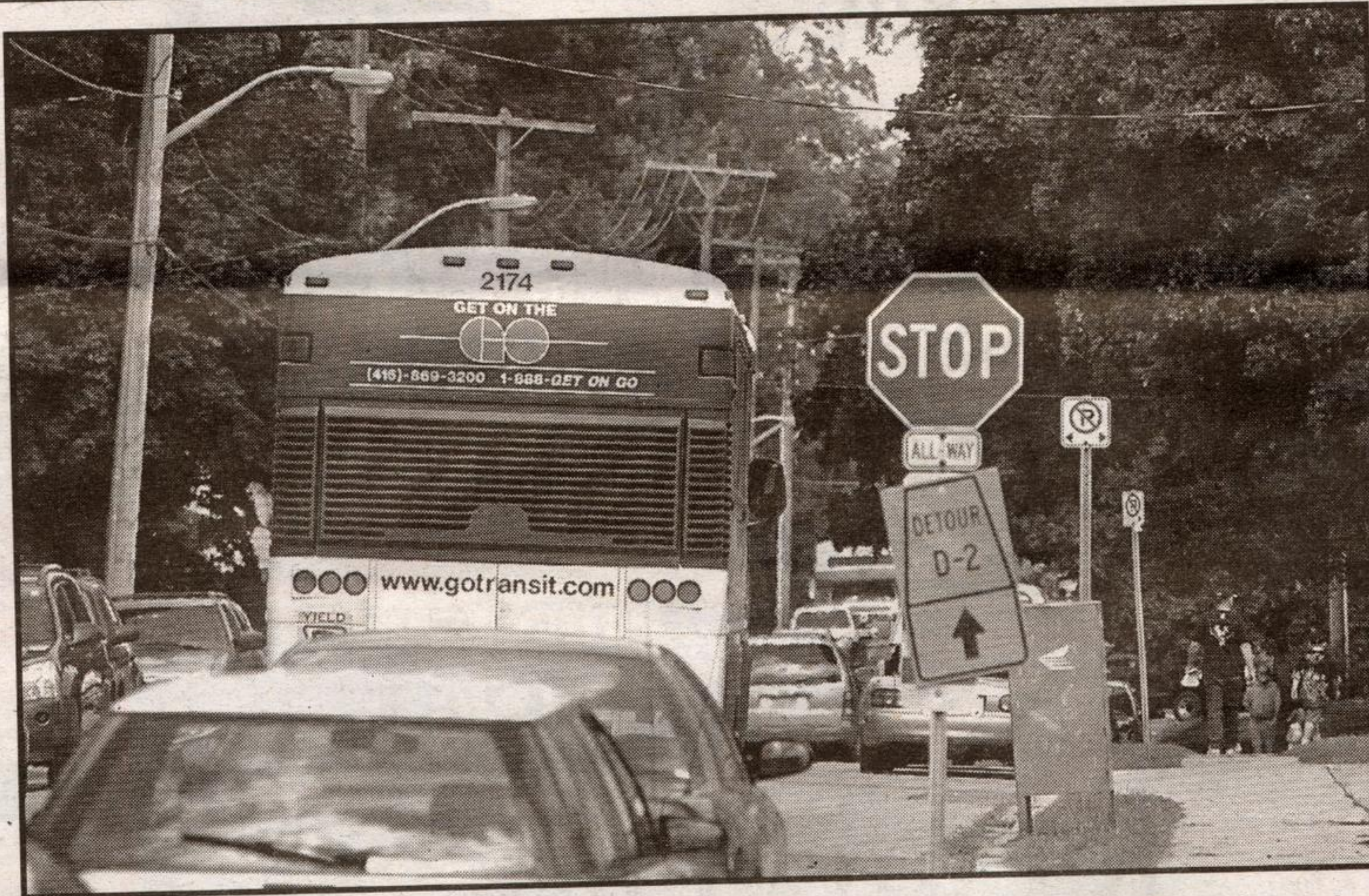
Monday morning at 9a.m. and probably much earlier, the entire length of Mill St. from Main St. to the CN tracks, was as clean and neat as the proverbial whistle. There was no sign of the festival, only the wet tracks of the street sweeper which obviously made a couple of passes down the length of Mill after the clean-up volunteers had done their job.

The festival and the subsequent clean-up is a glowing testimony to the hard work and industry that goes into making the annual festival a success. Unless one is involved it is almost impossible to fathom the hours it takes to coordinate all the activities which make up the day.

The most recent improvements - restoration of the Station Hotel and the old YMCA building - have made the downtown a much more vibrant place. After a time of neglect and shuttering of business, the new look and energy in the downtown through the Business Improvement Association (B.I.A.) is a good example of what can be accomplished when almost everyone is dedicated to improving the business climate.

Briefly...

The extreme heat has helped ease some of the bumps along Acton streets by turning asphalt into black ooze which fills in crevices and dips. However, anyone who drives along the length of Main Street after coming off Regional Road 25 knows they are in Acton by the condition of the road which is due for repaving in 2006. Three jurisdictions are involved in planning reconstruction - the Town, Region and the Province and that complicates things.



CHURCH ST. CHAOS: Sunday's Leathertown Festival filled every parking space within reach of downtown Acton, an estimated 10,000 attending the one day event. Traffic on Highway 7 was detoured along Church St. which created gridlock as GO buses, trucks and cars used the street. Residents attempting to get out of driveways were hemmed in by the continuous flow of traffic as this scene at the corner of John and Church Streets shows. - Danielle McIsaac photo



THE NEW Tanner
PUBLISHING LTD.

373 Queen Street East, Unit 1
Acton, Ontario L7J 2N2
email: thenewtanner@on.aibn.com

(519) 853-0051 Fax: 853-0052

Publisher
Ted Tyler

Editorial
Hartley Coles

Editorial Contributors

Frances Niblock Mike O'Leary Angela Tyler
Janis Fread Rebecca Ring Maggie Petrushevsky

Advertising and Circulation

Marie Shadbolt Bruce Cargill

Composing

Danielle McIsaac Janine Taylor

Distributed to every home in Acton and area as well as adjoining communities.

Every effort will be made to see advertising copy, neatly presented, is correctly printed. The publisher assumes no financial responsibility for typographical errors or omissions in advertising, but will gladly reprint without charge that part of an advertisement in which an error may occur provided a claim is made within five days of publication.

All articles, advertisements and graphic artwork appearing in The New Tanner is copyrighted. Any usage, reproduction or publication of these items, in whole or in part, without the express written consent of the publisher of The New Tanner is a copyright infringement and subject to legal action.