

# Acton Agricultural Society named top citizens

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"While working to establish a new building in Prospect Park they continue to build respect from the town residents," said the committee.

Acton Rotary Club, which runs the Citizen of the Year Program, will present the agricultural society with the award at a banquet Friday, May 12 at Blue Springs Golf Club.

Acton Agricultural Society president Dale Hewitt was surprised and pleased with the honour.

"We were pretty happy about that," said Hewitt. "I was surprised it went to a group, not to a specific person."

This is not the first time, however, that a group has been named Acton's top citizen. Previous winners include the Acton Citizens' Band, Acton Cancer Unit and Building Committee of the Legion Terrace.

Hewitt said the group consists of 50 active members, 100 on the fair board, 16 directors and three executive members- Hewitt, first vice-president Terry Foster and second vice-president Frank Hanes.

When asked how the society manages to put on such a successful fair year after year Hewitt said it comes down to "long hours and working together with everybody."



Acton Agricultural Society members were named Acton Citizens of the Year last week for the group's longtime service to the community. From left, are first vice president Terry Foster, president Dale Hewitt and second vice-president Frank Hanes.

Photo by Sabrina Byrnes

As one edition of the fair is ending Hewitt said they are already planning for the next year's fair.

"It's a year-long effort," said Hewitt.

He said year after year, organizers line up activities and events that people

want to see.

"One of the big attractions has been the Ken/Jen Petting Zoo," said Hewitt.

He said the horse and tractor pulls and the Miss Acton Pageant are also popular events.

Along with the fair, the society members take part in several other projects throughout the year including the annual clean up of the portion of Hwy. 25 the group has adopted.

Their annual compost sale is a fundraiser for the fair, which each year brings in approximately \$1,500.

The society also hosts an annual community brunch and its truck and tractor committee attends other fairs and raises money with its pull boat used in the lawn and garden tractor pulls.

Hewitt said the society is looking forward to the completion of its long-awaited new 25,000 sq. ft. building.

They hope to begin construction this spring and have the building— a multi-purpose facility— open and ready in conjunction with the fair this September.

He said the new building will replace the home craft tent currently used at the fair, and be the venue for the popular Miss Acton pageant.

At the banquet cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:15 p.m. Tickets are \$35 each, and available at Halton Hills Furniture, Alexanian Carpet & Flooring or through any Rotary Club member.

(Lisa Tallyn can be reached at [ltallyn@independentfreepress.com](mailto:ltallyn@independentfreepress.com))

## Medical condition may have played a role in train-car crash, say police

*Mayor wants staff to investigate whether other crossings in town meet criteria for barrier arms*

The medical condition of Heather Boyd, the 27-year-old Acton woman who was killed when her car was struck by a VIA train at a Dublin Line crossing north of Hwy. 7 last Wednesday, may have played a role in the crash.

"There could be medical reasons for the crash that are part of the investigation," said Sgt. Trevor Hay of the Halton Regional Traffic Bureau.

Hay would provide no further details at press time.

As a result of the crash at the crossing that was protected with lights and bells, but not safety gates, Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette is calling for Town staff to investigate whether six level railway crossings in town meet the criteria for installation of gates.

With the town's population growing and more traffic on the roads, it's time for the safety issue at the crossings to be examined, said Bonnette Monday.

Two railway lines cut through the town. One line, known as Halton Subdivision, sees

30 trains a day, and the other line, the Guelph Subdivision, where Boyd was killed sees about six trains a day, Bonnette said.

Bonnette said he's not aware of any other accidents occurring at the Dublin Line crossing, "but one fatality is enough."

Safety gates were installed at a Fourth Line Halton Hills level crossing after Acton teens Rory Dick, Travis Toth and Mark Everson were killed when their car was hit by a train there in September 2000.

That accident happened nine months after a dump truck driver was killed when his vehicle struck an Amtrak train at the same crossing, causing it to derail and injuring several passengers.

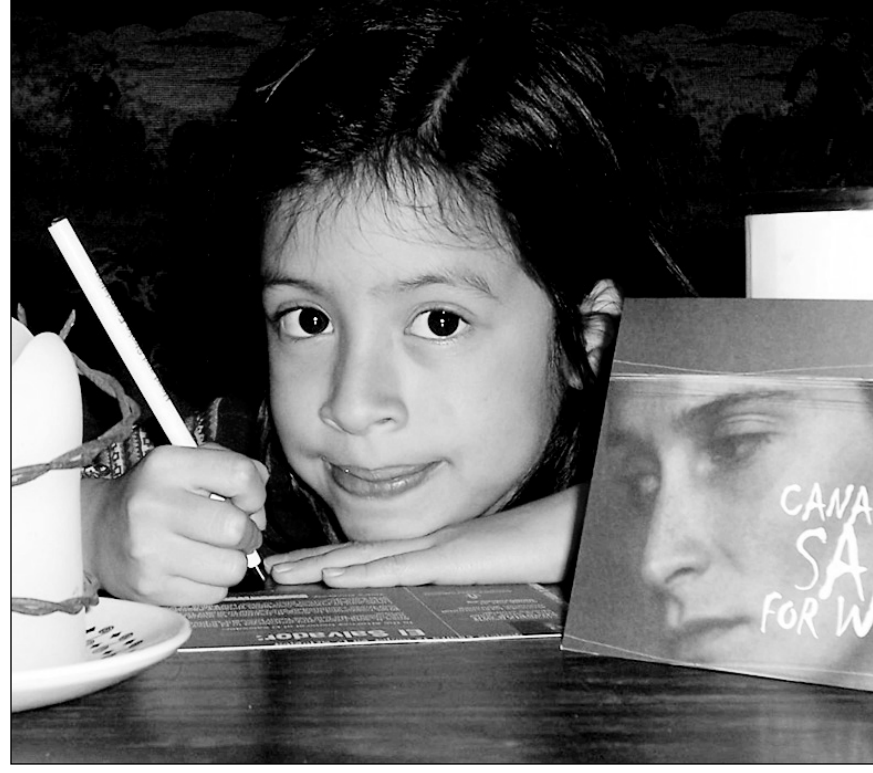
Transport Canada determines if safety gates should be installed at level crossings. It's up to municipal governments to make a formal application for funding for safety gates, then the department determines whether the crossing meets the criteria which include volume and speed of trains and vehicles, the number of tracks, sightlines, other distracting factors and history of accidents at that location.

Gates cost about \$250,000.

—With files from Torstar News Service



RICK BONNETTE



## Supporting Women's Day

Carolina Anderson signs a postcard for the International Women's Day event hosted recently at the Shepherd's Crook by Halton Hills Amnesty International, to which her dad belongs. The group collected hundreds of signatures on letters and postcard appeals on behalf of women in Afghanistan, Darfur Sudan, El Salvador, China and Canada while local female musicians played to a full house. The musicians included classical wind trio Marissa Kidd, Hayley Burgess and Hjordis Stockinger from Acton High School, Wendi Hunter and her group Second Wind, and Sarah Burton of Oakville.

Photo by Janet Duval



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