

# Little Red Rocket rides again

Thursday, I had my first real sign of spring.

You know, when it comes to signs of spring, we can talk about robins on the lawn searching for worms, we can talk about crocus bulbs breaking through the snow, or we can talk about the frogs croaking in the marshlands.

But I personally have the only for-sure, no-doubt-about-it sign that winter is gone and spring and summer are here to stay.

My 'Little Red Rocket' gets back on the road.

Yup, in this life I think everyone has at least one weakness, a 'raison d'être,' a little extravagance, that one thing that we indulge in, to make ourselves feel just a tiny bit pampered.

Mine is the 'Little Red Rocket'.

Years ago it was unofficially named by former Halton Hills CAO Bob Austin.

One morning, as I drove to work, one of my driving lights was burned out. Enroute, I met Bob, on his way to work at the Civic Centre.

When I arrived at the office, there was an e-mail waiting for me, stating very simply, "Ted, the 'Little Red Rocket' has a driving light out."

It wasn't an official decree from the Town or anything grand, but for some reason, it stuck.

For the first six years I owned it, the 'Little Red Rocket' (a.k.a. 'The LRR') was my daily driver. As time passed, I felt it was getting a bit long in the tooth to be battling snow drifts and salt. The past three winters it's been in storage.

But every year, on April 20, the LRR once again re-emerges from under its car cover, and bursts out of storage, to take to the road and supply me with more reasons to take the scenic route home than I dare to count. (Okay this year it didn't quite 'burst' out the door—it had a blown main fuse and required a little help.)

I find April 20 is a perfect time to take it to the road. By then the roads are generally dry, so I'm avoiding the mud and dirt of early spring. (It also works quite nicely for insurance coverage, as I can take it off the road October 20, six months later.)

The LRR isn't what one would call a major muscle car. It's a sports car, and performs very

## Ted Brown



nicely on the 401, or on some twisty curvy roads like on the east side of Terra Cotta.

A respectable 175 horses, but muscle it ain't.

But that's okay, cuz a friend of mine once told me the best way to measure if the car is right for you is to slide behind the wheel, and see if a smile comes across your face.

If it does, things are right with the world—hell, things are 'right' in the entire universe.

Earlier this week, as I snapped on the seat-belt and adjusted the mirror, I turned the key in the ignition and the motor sprang to life.

The sun was shining, the birds chirping in the trees and there was a light breeze in the air.

And a smile came across my face—the 'Little Red Rocket' had 'qualified' once again.

The throaty rumble of LRR's exhaust always gives me a little shot of testosterone, and in doing so, reminds me of the reason I go beyond the call of duty (and sometimes reason) to keep it on the road, in spite of the fact the odometer has surpassed the 239,000 km mark.

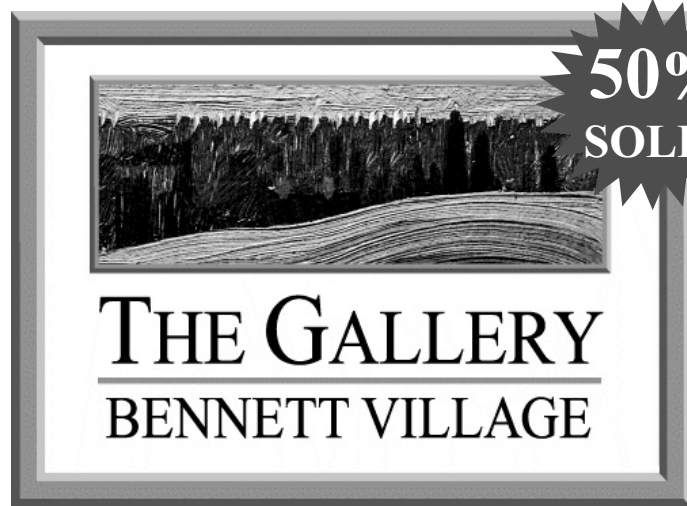
I admit, it being more than a decade old, and having close to a quarter of a million kilometres on its clock, it may well be nearing time for a motor, clutch or transmission—at that point, one never knows. And the red paint is fading too, making it a possible candidate for a fresh paint job down the road in a few years.

But one thing remains.

It's still my favorite sure-fire sign of spring.

—Ted Brown can be reached at [tbrown@independentfreepress.com](mailto:tbrown@independentfreepress.com)

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#### DIRECTIONS:

- from 401 - exit at Trafalgar Rd. & head north
- 13 kms N. of 401, off of Trafalgar Rd. N. (immediately after the Railway Crossing)
- Just south of the lights at Hwy. 7 & Trafalgar Rd.



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## Exhibit at the Halton Region Job Fair . . .

Tuesday, April 25, 2006  
Burlington Convention Centre  
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- Promote Job Opportunities
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For further information contact Bronwyn Spotton at  
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