

GRAPEVINE



AA meetings

If you want to stop drinking and you live in the Acton area Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held locally throughout the week.

Call 1-866-715-0005 for details.

Agricultural snapshot

From oxen to tractors, life on an Esquesing farm will be explored at the January 10 meeting of the Esquesing Historical Society.

Stewarttown native Rob Burnett and Acton resident Ray Denny will share their stories of agriculture in Esquesing at the free meeting at Knox Church in Georgetown.

Young readers

Space is still available in some programs for kids that begin January 9 at the Acton library on River Street.

Aimed at those from six months to five years, the programming is free, although pre-registration is required.

Call 519-853-0301 for details.

Fire stats

Nice to see a drop in the number of emergency responses by Acton and Georgetown firefighters last year.

There were 750 calls for service

in 2006, compared to 777 calls in 2005.

High school information

Parents of students entering Grade nine in September are invited to an information session at Acton High School on January 17.

The meeting will cover an overview of the Grade nine program, services available to students and diploma requirements.

The main presentation begins at 7 p.m. followed by smaller groups for question and answer sessions at 7:45 p.m. and tours at 8:30 p.m.

For Acton area parents who want more information about the public school board's French Immersion program, a meeting is scheduled for January 18 at Robert Little School.

French Immersion (FI) students can enter the bilingual program in Grade one or Grade seven, and receive half of their instruction in English and half in French.

Applications for the FI program, are available on the Halton District School Board's web site, and should be filed by January 29.

The Acton FI meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Extreme weather...

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ment. Vancouver newspapers were full of stories during both extreme weather events about how much these "natural" disasters were going to cost the city's economy.

In developing countries, severe weather events are doing more than harming the economy – they're killing people. Of course, extreme weather has always killed people. But in a recent article in the journal *Science*, Indian researchers report that extreme summer monsoon rains in India are becoming more common. Last summer, for example, more than 1,000 people died during one torrential rainstorm around Mumbai.

For the Science study, researchers analyzed data during the period 1951 to 2000 from more than 1,800 weather stations around central and eastern India. They found that while overall rainfall remained fairly consistent during the 50-year period, the number of extreme rainfall events doubled. Researchers cannot conclusively

say that human-induced global warming is the cause, but the study's findings are in line with what computer models predict will continue to happen unless we seriously curb greenhouse gas emissions.

The new research helps shed light on why, when global warming models predict more rain in places like India, rainfall there doesn't seem to have increased overall. The answer is that, although annual average rainfall hasn't necessarily increased, extreme rainfalls have. That's unfortunate because more steady rainfall could actually benefit India's agriculture. Extreme weather benefits no one, especially in a developing country like India that lacks the infrastructure to deal with it.

Keep that in mind for Canada. Canadians by and large sure wouldn't mind more pleasant weather. But global warming won't benefit anyone if more extreme weather is the result. Just ask folks in Vancouver.



GOIN' UP: Structural steel for the new Acton Agricultural Society's building in Prospect Park is all in place and Tambro CONstruction, general contractors, are starting work on the cladding and concrete block facing. Completion of the building is targeted for late spring but the fine weather this area has been enjoying may speed completion up.

I resolve not to resolve

The Way I See It



with
Mike O'Leary

It's an old custom that, along with kissing any stranger in reach at the stroke of midnight New Year's Eve, many of us still make New Year's resolutions. As adults, most involve health issues such as dieting, exercising more, stopping smoking, etc.

I don't make many New Year's resolutions. I have resolved to make more time for visits to our place up north. I haven't mentioned that to "the Bride" yet because last summer I spent almost 60 days up north and I fear she may want me to catch-up on last year's outdoor chores let alone dream up some new ones for the summer of 2007. Let's just keep that resolution between us. Thank you.

For years now I have resolved to re-grow my hair. Needless to say, my efforts have not produced the desired results. That disappointment, year after year, probably led me to resist making any further resolutions.

That doesn't mean I'm against other people making New Year's resolutions. In fact, I'm not beyond suggesting resolutions for public figures you may be familiar with.

Close to home I would like to congratulate Regional Councillor Clark Somerville and his family on the purchase of Tanners Restaurant effective New Year's day. Located across from the olde Hide House, Tanners has been a popular spot from the time it opened. I suggest an appropriate resolution for the new owners of Tanners would be to supply sharply discounted Guinness to fellow Councillors with the appropriate Irish heritage.

To newly elected Regional Chairman Gary Carr, a change of tact in handling this critical position. Forget about your past successes in hockey and provincial/federal politics. Resolve to be able to answer the question "That was then, this is now. What have you done for us lately?" There is a high level of confidence this question will be asked early in 2007.

Provincial Premier Dalton McGuinty is between a rock and a hard place. McGuinty set the election date early in his term. Now he

has to go to the people in October of 2007. Our Dalton gives new meaning to the saying, "It's a dog's life and he's wearing milk bone underwear." In addition to a train wreck of broken promises he's also saddled with the unrealistic commitment he made to close Ontario's coal-fired plants. He finished 2006 with the infamous raise for MPPs. I'd say Dalton is up a creek without a paddle. His resolution should be to get a paddle and row like hell, or, buy a barrel and go over the falls in anonymity.

Opposition leader John Tory, who was a willing accomplice in the great Christmas heist, has a significant amount of fence mending to do. He may not have planned the caper but he sure drove the getaway armoured truck. His resolution should be to avoid making promises he can't/has no intention of keeping. Failing that, see Dalton McGuinty's resolution above.

I suppose we need a resolution or two for NDP leader Howard Hampton. Don't hold a grudge over Bob Rae's book which pretty well repudiated the basic NDP philosophy and insulted your union buddies as a bonus. Polls indicated your fortunes may improve in the fall election. Resolve to fight new battles instead of dwelling on backstabbers. You've already tasted some revenge. Sweeeeeeet – isn't it?

General Rick Hillier walks the walk and talks the talk of a soldier's soldier. He should resolve to keep the heat on waffling, spineless politicians of every stripe to support the missions of our troops in the field. The lives of our soldiers, sailors and airmen are far too precious to be scarified on the altar of political expedience. Canada has suffered through devastating losses in 2006. Almost all the families reported their loved ones were committed to the

mission and were proud to serve. Who should you believe? My suggested resolution for Gen. Hillier: "Soldier on, General, soldier on."

I saw Prime Minister Harper's year-end interview on C.T.V. While I thought some of the PM's answers were thoughtful and accurate, some of the policy questions gave me pause. It's not that I doubted Mr. Harper but he was less than convincing. This was especially odd since he was on home turf and should have been relaxed. The problem seems to be that although Harper is intelligent he lacks interpersonal skills. For his resolution I suggest enrolling in professional selling skills I & II. If you master the two basics of the course namely: "What is it and what does it do for me?" you may just be able to convince Canadians to follow your lead.

Stephane Dion needs to change his public image. I think he should consider revising his environmental strategy and stop referring to the Kyoto accord. Under Dion's ministry air pollution increased almost 30%. We won't discuss the report that claims that Bovine Flatulence (cow farts for we simple folk) is responsible for much of the CO₂ emissions causing global warming. Resolve to develop a new platform Stephane.

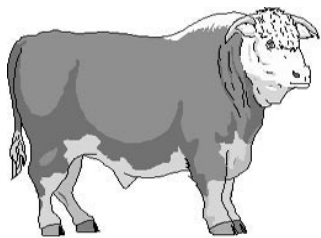
Jack Layton is, in my opinion, a lost cause. He should resolve to return to Toronto where he lacked any national stage. Not that anyone listens much to him anyway.

Gilles Duceppe gets no suggestions from me. I'll have no truck nor trade with someone I consider to be a traitor to this wonderful country.

Many of my readers will have made personal resolutions they have every intention of honouring. To them I say stay the course and I wish you success in your efforts. I hope you have a happy, healthy and prosperous 2007.

Now, the only thing to look forward to is a hopefully short and mild winter. I, for one, am marking off the calendar and looking forward to my first trip north. That's when my New Year really starts.

What's Your Beef?



Put it in a letter
to the Editor!

Deadline is Tuesday at noon.