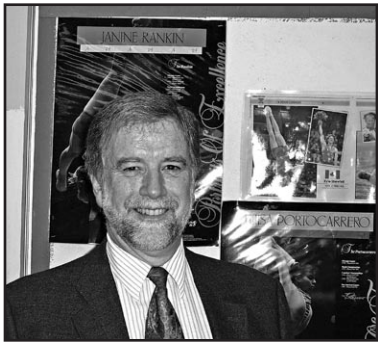


GRAPEVINE



Bill Taylor

Goodbye Mr. Taylor

Congrats to Acton High vice-principal Bill Taylor who has accepted a one-year contract with the Halton District School Board to work on a project helping teachers better know their students' learning strengths and weaknesses.

As leader of MISA – Managing Information and Student Achievement – Taylor will help standardize the way schools collect data on students to help them perform better.

Taylor spent 16 years as a teacher at Acton High and six years as an administrator – including a stint as acting-principal. His wife taught at Acton High and both of his children attended it.

Taylor is unsure if he will be back at Acton High once the one-year contract is complete.

Undertaker's Ball

Former Acton resident and rising comic Jeff McEnery is on the bill at the Undertaker's Ball – a variety show and dance, suitable for teens and adults, scheduled for February 10 at the Acton Legion.

Local charities in the Acton/Rockwood area will benefit from proceeds from the event, being organized by Ian Pasmore at Blue Springs Funeral Home.

Ticket buyers can specify which non-profit or charity they'd like a portion of the \$17 ticket price to go to, and local charities that sell tickets can also keep \$5 from each sale.

"People are blue in February, and this should be fun," said organizer Ian Pasmore.

For more information call 519-853-2399.

Grade 12

Anyone who needs to upgrade their math and English skills to get their Grade 12 diploma is invited to weekly classes being run in Georgetown by Literacy North Halton.

Classes run on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

For details call 905-873-2200.

Firefighter recognition

Veterans and rookies will be honoured by the Halton Hills Fire Protection & Prevention Services at a special ceremony on January 31 in Georgetown.

Six retiring firefighters who have 126 years of combined service will be honoured, and the graduation of 12 recent recruits will be celebrated at the awards and recognition ceremony.

A number of retired firefighters will also receive Municipal Employee service awards from Mayor Rick Bonnette.

Fair fans

While the annual success of the Acton Fall Fair is due to hard work by a large group of dedicated volunteers, a few names stood out at the Acton Agricultural Society's annual general meeting on Saturday.

Helen Dubeau: the new Fair board member almost doubled the needlecraft entries, picking up and returning work to Homecraft Division entrants. She also brought in five new exhibitors to the arts and crafts categories.

Ron's Burner Service: the firm will cover the travel costs of three Elvis impersonators booked for the 2007 fair.

Mary Walsma: by announcing countless hours of events on the track, she saved the Fair board \$1,300.

Norm Elliott: former Acton councillor who has done yeoman's duty as one of three co-chairpersons on the building fundraising committee.

Environmental awards

Applications are being accepted for two awards sponsored by Halton Region – the Youth Awards for Environmental Excellence and the Halton Environmental Scholarship Awards.

Submissions for both require an essay of between 800 and 1,000 words and are due March 2.

The Environmental Excellence award is open to all Halton elementary and secondary school students and provides a chance to win a \$500 prize. The Environmental Scholarship award is aimed at post-secondary students who are studying the environment. It offers a \$1,000 prize.

He scores!

Congrats to Acton's Sandy Chapman who scored his first lacrosse goal as a Rochester Knighthawk on Saturday in Toronto when the Hawks downed Toronto Rock 19-16 in their home opener.

Prior to last season, Chapman, who was not protected during league expansion, was drafted by Edmonton, and then traded to Rochester, where he plays with a number of former Toronto players and practises in Buffalo and Grimsby.

Chapman, a 5'9", 180-pound forward, joined the five-time National Lacrosse League championship Rock team in 2002, and played in two Champion's Cup finals.



SWEET SIXTEENS: Betty Lockerbie, Barb Sweeting, Gerry Kroezen, Tom Walker, Peggy Naughton, Joyce Erskine, Helen Paul, Doug Anderson, Jean Somerville, Ivor Bozic, Dolores Wright, Trina Noel, Jane McAllister, Walter Barlow, and Julie Conroy were 15 of the 16 people celebrating birthdays at the Acton Seniors Centre on January 19. – Photo by Marj Allen

And so it begins

The big news from south of the border last week were the announcements by both Senators Barack Obama and Hilary Clinton that they intend to run for the Democratic Presidential nomination. It seems to be a tad premature when the next presidential election is many months away.

Obama, a newly minted senator, was widely expected to run if only to establish a presence for 2012. All that changed when the situation in Iraq deteriorated over the last 18 months and President Bush's popularity dropped faster than Britney's drawers.

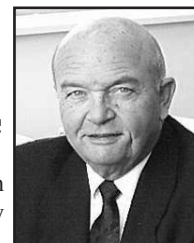
Hilary, who is said to have "star power," was forced to declare early after Obama sent a shot across her bows. I think her "star power" will begin to fade as media, Hollywood stars and big democratic donors start to shift loyalties to Obama, a movement I believe will start shortly.

Still, the spectre of having Mrs. Clinton as President suggests some interesting questions. For instance, will Bill allow President Mrs. Clinton to be alone with any male interns in the oval office?

Mrs. Clinton is reported to have said "I'm in and I'm in it to win." Phew, that's a relief. I didn't for one minute think she was running for third spot but it's always comforting to have a confirmation.

These will not be the only two Democratic contenders for the presidential nomination. There will be those who think that Americans are not ready to elect either a woman or an African-American as president. They may be right on the former but I would say there are not ready to elect "that woman." Heartland voters have long memories and

The Way I See It



with
Mike O'Leary

were not amused that Mrs. Clinton assumed the duties of being a co-president when her husband was in office.

As for Obama, I think he has a legitimate chance at the big job. I remember Colin Powell and how popular he was both as Chief of Staff and Secretary of State. His unfortunate presentation to the United Nations sunk whatever political ambitions he may have had. I think Americans, a few racial nuts excepted, wouldn't think twice about voting for a person of colour.

This may sound like I consider a Democratic victory in the next presidential election as a sure thing. Actually, I'm eagerly awaiting the Republican party's candidates. In spite of current polls I still think the right Republican candidate can rescue the party from the current morass they find themselves in.

I'm thinking now about Senator John McCain or Rudy Giuliani as two possibilities. Senator McCain has been on the talk show circuit for several years. He is a war hero and endured years as a P.O.W. Giuliani? Well he was the hero mayor who held New York and the country together in the days and months after Sept. 11, 2001. He's still collecting goodwill from those black days.

You may wonder why your faithful correspondent seems so preoccupied with American politics. After all we could well have another Canadian federal election this spring. Personally, I think we won't be going to the

polls until spring 2008; this fall at the earliest. Mr. Dion needs time to get his ducks in line. Mr. Harper needs an opportunity to sell his agenda.

I find American politics interesting not just because the American economy has such a major effect on ours. In the past U.S. campaigns have been downright vicious. I wonder if that will continue given the race and gender of the first candidates to declare. It's not the same good ol' boys duking it out this time around.

It promises to be a fascinating two years. As more people declare and the battle lines firm up, there will undoubtedly be some gaffes which will result in political aspirations being skewered. I have every confidence that our neighbours to the south will make the right decision on their next leader. It has been an improvement over the last choice.

On the local scene we learned that Bill Taylor, vice principal of Acton High School, has accepted a new assignment at the board's head office. This is indeed a loss for the school and our town.

Bill has always impressed me as a dedicated and involved administrator. Over the years, whenever I heard from him, I knew the Acton High students had achieved something special that I would be interested in. But Bill was more than just a cheerleader for the A.H.S. student body. He is dedicated to the success of all students at the school. He often takes a personal interest in order to achieve the desired results. The staff like and respect him.

We wish him well in the new challenges he has accepted. Bill will be sorely missed.