

# GRAPEVINE



## Ockendens retire

The Acton Aqua Ducks Swim Club has lost its head coach and assistant head coach with the June 24 retirements of founding member Gerry Ockenden, and his daughter Julie Matthews.

"Change is good," head coach Gerry Ockenden said as he announced their retirements, adding his schedule, as Acton trustee on the Halton District School Board was a "bit much." He said Julie, who swam competitively with the Ducks for five years and coached for 15, "needs a rest and new direction."

Gerry Ockenden was one of two parents to form the Ducks when the Swimming Stars of Acton went under in the 1980s.

Ockenden said more than the thrill of the many medals the Ducks have amassed over the years, he will "miss the kids."

Under the leadership of full-time coach and past competitor Mackenzie Kimm, the Ducks will continue to compete – they have 16 to 20 competitors – and offer swim lessons at the Acton pool.

## Tween dance

Acton tweens – nine to 14 year olds – are invited to a dance at the Acton Arena/community centre on July 13, sponsored by the Silverbullet Ladies Hockey team.

The party runs 7:30 to 11 p.m. and includes a DJ and prizes, all for \$5.

This is the second dance that the team – mainly a tournament squad although some play for the Acton Ladies Hockey Association – has staged at the arena to provide some summer youth fun.

The team has dances booked at the Acton arena/community centre in August and September.

## Meals on Ice

Can't get out to shop, but have some freezer space and a microwave or toaster oven? Meals on Ice can help.

It's a program that delivers a wide range of fully cooked, frozen entrees, soups, deserts and breakfast snacks to your door. Special diets can be accommodated.

For details call Teri at 519-853-3310.

## Angel Hair

For the last two-and-a-half

years since Acton's Kori Knox, 7, learned that children can lose their hair to cancer treatment, she grew her own hair long enough to donate to the Angle Hair Foundation that makes wigs for kids who have lost their hair.

Kori's braided ponytail reached almost 12-inches in length when she had it cut off late last month. Her mother Janet Knox boxed it up and sent it to the Foundation.

"Kori didn't show any hesitation when it came to cutting it off – we are really proud that what she did will make a difference," Janet Knox said, adding Kori, a student at St. Joseph Catholic School, loves her new, tangle-free short hair and is already planning to donate her hair again – in about three years.



Kori Knox

## SMA fundraiser

Thanks to Sobey's, the campaign to find a cure for SMA (Spinal Muscular Atrophy) is \$1,400 richer – that's how much was raised on Saturday as Sobey's staged its fourth SMA fundraiser featuring face painting, a barbecue and silent auction.

On hand for some of the festivities was Rebecca Van Fraassen of Limehouse who suffers from SMA, a muscle wasting and weakness disease, whose aunt will take part in an annual marathon to raise money to find a cure.

## Trunk Sale break

The Acton Trunk Sale is on holiday hiatus, giving everyone a chance to enjoy some vacation time.

The great deals, food and fun will all be back on August 11.

## I'm a pack rat...

Continued from page 6

actually use. And, of course, we have some things that will never be parted with.

We have the Dude's die car collection and my silly collection of stuffed animals and dolls that I have gathered from around the world in my travels. And we have our music collection.

In the chaos of moving, we

have our collection of CD's, cassette tapes and records. Amongst the records are big and small records. Of course the Dude had to give me the his "look" when I pulled out my Partridge Family Album. I may be able to give up my 1980's skirts and my old Trunk Sale collectibles, however, the Partridge Family is absolutely moving with us.



**MUSIC RECITAL:** Piano Students of Jennifer Culpeper performed a wide variety of pieces during their June recital held at St Alban's Anglican Church. Performers, as well as proud family and friends, enjoyed a summer evening of music. Students attending the recital were: Front row left to right: James Robert Morgan, Michael Chang, Sanjun Bak, Christian Norton. Middle row: Matt Hansen, Kara De Vaan, Alex Martin, Olivia Rouleau, Damon Crumplen. Back row: Emily Hansen, Jessica Stokes, Cassie Coker, Stephanie Mullin, Sangwon Bak, Kevin Hamilton, Jessica Costa, Chelsea Benham. (Performed but not in photo: Katie Allen, Victoria Miller and Jillian Mullin) - Submitted photo.

## Changing of the Guard

A major political change took place last week. British Prime Minister Tony Blair officially retired from office in favour of the new Prime Minister Gordon Brown. Dictators around the world must shudder at how peacefully democracies pass-on the powers of the government.

Blair burst on the world scene almost a decade ago. His outgoing personality, perfect teeth and engaging mannerisms shrouded the fact that he had a steel backbone and an agenda designed to bring the British Labor Party (N.D.P.) kicking and spitting into the political centre. In most cases he was successful. In hindsight I think he was a good Prime Minister for his time.

Unfortunately, like many of his predecessors, war caused him no end of problems at home. Like Churchill and Thatcher the British people tended to forget why the war was fought in the first place. It seems that once the press start questioning the war, political leaders turned from hero to zero in one giant step.

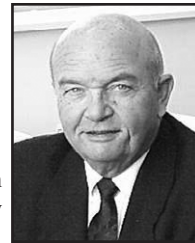
Blair survived his first conflict in the former Yugoslavia relatively unscathed. Whether that was because he was allied with Bill Clinton or because of his own personality was able to carry the day, we'll let history decide. Personally I'm afraid it was the former which leaves me concerned about the fickleness of world opinion these days.

Blair's unfortunate alliance with George Bush on incursions into Afghanistan and Iraq may have muddied his legacy for the future. It didn't seem to matter to the British people that England had been one of American's staunchest allies during World War II. As soon people started to say that Blair was a simple pawn in George Bush's war his Prime Minister-ship was doomed. Our own Prime Minister is risking the same fate.

Has everyone forgotten September 11, 2001? I haven't and I bet the survivors of the Canadian's murdered that terrible day haven't either. Don't we remember the atrocities of the Taliban? Can any of us honestly say they were sorry to see those degenerates booted out

### The Way I See It

with  
Mike O'Leary



on their collective asses?

As for Iraq under Saddam Hussein: The word atrocity doesn't begin to describe what life was like for the average Iraqi when *Saddam Insane* and his masochistic relatives were in power. Are memories that short, or is the rest of the planet just so brain washed into hating anything American they can't see past that prejudice?

Please don't give me the nonsense that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were somehow illegal because the U.S. didn't secure a United Nations sanction. Have you forgotten what happened in Rwanda? Are you satisfied with Somalia or content just to ignore it?

Rwanda was a UN sanctioned peacekeeping mission. When Canadian General Romero D'Allaire reported that men in his command, mostly Belgians, were under attack, the UN was so paralyzed with indecision that the soldiers were soon murdered.

Can you reasonably expect the President to wait until this collection of despots and tin-pot dictators give a thumbs-up to a military mission involving Canadian or American Troops?

And yet General D'Allaire continues to stump the country trying to drum up support for our troops to be sent into Darfour. Granted, the genocide going on in Darfour is enough to make all of civilization sick, but send Canadian troops into that quagmire? No way, Jose.

I keep asking the question; What happens if NATO and the American's pull out of Afghanistan and Iraq? Will the people living there have peace and a better life? Doubtful. Will the violence escalate into civil war? I fear that will be inevitable. Is that what Canadians and Americans really want? And then North Americans will wring their hands and ask, "Why doesn't

someone do something for those people?" Here's a hint: group hugs don't work.

So what has all this to do with Tony Blair? Chances are that Iraq and Afghanistan will forever taint his political career. That is profoundly unfair. But then another Englishman said it long ago, "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." Good ol' Bill Shakespeare was quite the prophet.

Just as Tony Blair left with a flourish his successor has been characterized as dour but dependable. Gordon Brown, who was Finance Minister in Blair's cabinet, claims his government sees the need for change. But I think he's wrong when he continued saying "This need for change cannot be met by the old politics."

Perhaps he should check out the history of Canada's N.D.P.. The N.D.P. have consistently presented innovative social programs. The trouble has been that they have never had a leader who could sell these programs to the people. The only exception was Ed Broadbent who was, in my opinion, the best Prime Minister we never had.

The other problem with N.D.P. programs is that they don't know how to keep their mouths shut. In life and politics, especial in politics, timing is everything. The N.D.P. blabber their ideas only to have the Liberals and Conservatives steal the essence and adopt them as their own.

For example, how many people think the Liberal Party developed our universal health care? Don't be shy, hold up your hands. Not so, my gullible friends. Universal health care was developed by Tommy Douglas, first in Saskatchewan and later in Ottawa. Paul Martin Sr. pounced on the idea and is now thought of as the father of Health Care. It will be interesting to watch the British political scene. Dull perhaps, but if you can stay awake long enough, interesting none the less.

I'm reminded of Premier Bill Davis who revelled in not being a firebrand. "Bland is good," he would say with a smirk.

And then go out and get re-elected time after time.