

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## Toronto the Good

A couple of weeks ago some organization analyzed crime statistics in this country and came away with the astonishing result that it was safer to live in large cities such as Toronto (GTA) than it small towns (cities) or rural areas. They based their findings on the fact that there were fewer crimes committed in Toronto per capita than in smaller "towns" over a period of time than in places like Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo, Windsor, North Bay, Etc.

The astonishing result came just as the GTA was experiencing another rash of shootings, murders, sexual crimes and bank heists that people in small town or rural areas seldom experience, But figures don't lie to they?

Well, for one thing many if the crimes in smaller places that the GTA were committed by criminals from the GTA, moving out of Toronto to places they figured would not have as much police protection.

Second, we seriously doubt many of the crimes committed in the GTA ever get into the statistics. This is borne out by the difficulty of getting information about crimes from witnesses or crimes police are investigating.

In smaller cities and rural towns and villages, when a crime is committed there's usually a groundswell of support for police. Few people are intimidated by thugs and thieves.

Nevertheless, shortly after the results of the statistics were released to much fanfare from the Toronto media, the Toronto Star sent a reporter to Acton, obviously with the intent to unearth the staggering crime rate in this community of 8 or 9,000 people. The reporter was able to unearth a recent case where a 14 year-old youth, walking near the downtown with two younger teens, was assaulted. Two youthful offenders were arrested. It happened in mid-day in daylight and illustrated the danger of walking in plain daylight on the streets of Acton, let alone the dark.

Acton used to have a reputation for being a "tough town" but that surely has long been cleaned up. It's considered so crime-free the town only has a sub-police station, which is soon moving from the downtown to the east end. Hardly a nest of thieves.

We would bet there are few Actonians who would trade a walk in the Jane-Finch area of Toronto, or any other crime-infested GTA area, for a walk, daytime or in the dark on any Acton street.

Statistics which portrays another Toronto the Good is obviously a public relations exercise to help alloy fears about living in the "big smoke" but it is flawed.

## Careful, it's dangerous

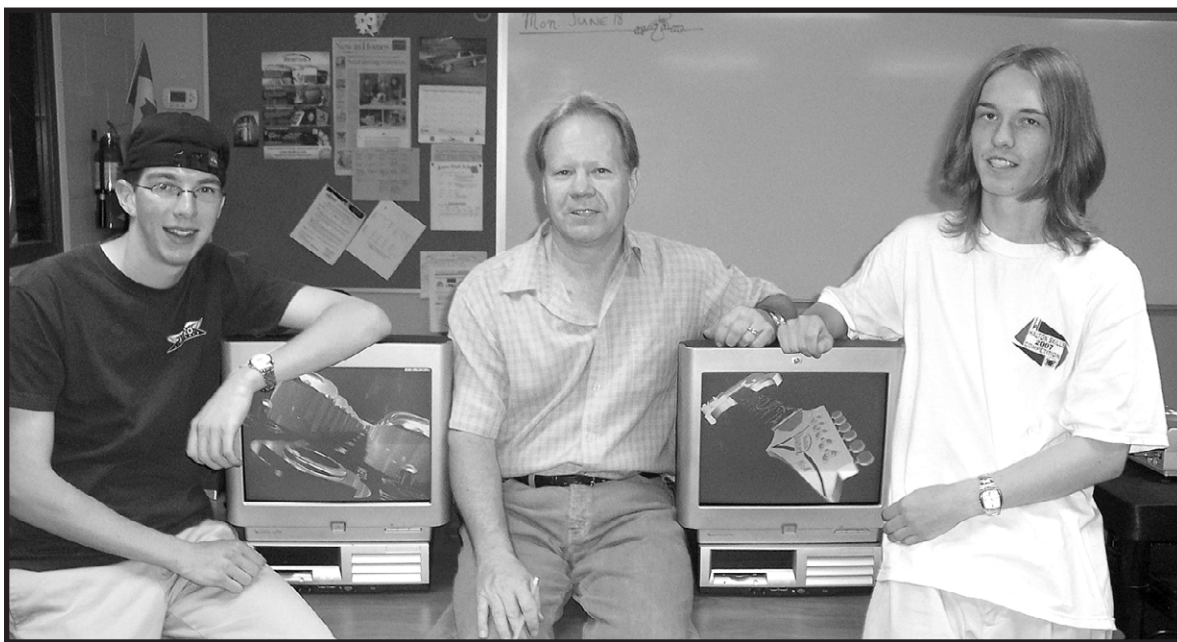
Some children, like some teens, think they are indestructible. They forget how dangerous it is on the roads and sidewalks in town. In the freedom they enjoy once school's out.

They dart out in front of vehicles from between parked cars, chase balls and other playthings, completely oblivious of the danger. They ride their bicycles on sidewalks force pedestrians to scatter, ride in tandem on roads with heavy traffic. They disdain crosswalks for jaywalking or pay no attention to the rules of lighted crosswalks.

It's nerve-wracking for drivers

Summer is always a signal for drivers to be extra careful during "those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer" but the kids have to be extra careful, too. It is especially important for both drivers and kids to exercise extra caution at dusk and dawn when visibility is reduced.

One tragic mishap can spoil a whole summer for an entire community. Let's see it doesn't happen here.



**TOP TECH:**In a field of entries from high schools across North America, 2 of Acton High School's Technological Design Students take 2 of the top 3 prizes in the *Studica Design Competition* recently. Teacher Norbert Axtmann, centre is pictured here with winning students Ryan Martin and Nils Olav-Stockinger. Submitted photo.

## Pinning hopes on garage sales

I've never been a real huge garage sale person. I have in the past gone to a few here and there and bought a few things.

A few years ago, I went to one and bought this awesome light. It had these cherubs on it. It needed some work but it was great. With the perfect lamp shade and some touch up it has become one of my prized possessions.

Last year I decided I would have my second garage sale. My first one, years ago, was a total bust. I didn't have enough stuff and what I had wasn't selling very well. So with the Dude and I moving, instead of tossing many things out, as he wanted, I had told him we were going to have a garage sale instead.

I had heard many tales of the profits from garage sales. I was inspired. We had a lot of stuff that needed a new home. With both of us married before, we had a lot of duplicates we didn't need. We had several toasters. We had wedding presents from our past that we didn't need to carry forward. There were tons of things that surely someone else could love more than we would.

With that, I placed the ad. I was optimistic. The Dude on the other hand wasn't so much. "I think we'll clear 30 bucks," he told me. I was hoping for \$300. After all, we had



By  
Angela Tyler

a LOT of stuff.

Saturday morning came, and with that our garage sale signs were posted. "Lots of cool stuff," stated one sign. We listed where we were and what our times were. All we needed now was customers.

That was when the worst happened. Actually three worst things were happening. Dairy Drive had their street-long garage sale. The Dude cruised by and informed me there were hundreds of cars lined up waiting to buy things. The next problem was a garage sale before ours on the same street, and another one not too far off.

It would have been fine if a paving company hadn't shown up in the cul-de-sac with two big dump trucks, a back hoe and a huge trailer, basically blocking access to our sale.

One hour into our sale, the paving company employees outnumbered our customers. We were dead. At that point, our sales were a whopping \$2. The Dude was discouraged

and took off for a coffee run. I wasn't that easily discouraged. Upon his return, I sent him off with more signs to post in the neighbourhood indicating to people where we were. "**BIG GARAGE SALE... LOTS OF STUFF...KEEP GOING STRAIGHT,**" our signs said.

Customers soon appeared, but I was even more disheartened. "How much for this?" a lady asked. It was an inexpensive crystal vase from marriage #1. Ten bucks I told her. She pondered it some more. "If I take all three, will you take \$15?" she asked. I told her no. They were worth more and what I was asking was not unreasonable. She soon left.

Then another guy came and asked how much for a wooden bird sculpture the Dude had. He told me he got in trouble when he was young for breaking part of it. "How much?" the guy asked. I offered \$2. In the end, I sold it for a buck. I was desperate at that point. I just wanted the stuff to go.

In the end, we made more than the \$30 the Dude thought we would, and way less than what I had hoped. We got rid of some clutter and we took a lot to the dumpster. Next time though, we need to plan better and make sure the paving company isn't blocking the road.



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