

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

An amazing year

This has been an amazing year for Acton. Three major projects have been accomplished and all were the result of initiatives that began from the people of the town and area without begging for assistance from the government pork barrels.

Two of the projects – the Rotary Club's new bandshell and the Agricultural Society/indoor soccer facility – are located in Prospect Park and they would be a credit to any larger and more prosperous community – or city.

The new skateboard park – named after the three young skateboard enthusiast who died in a tragic car/train collision on the Fourth Line – officially opened last week. Kudos are already blossoming from both the kids who'll use it and those who appreciate having such a first class facility in a community of this size.

It took years of planning, fundraising and countless meetings to bring all these projects to fruition. In the early going there was much frustration, opposition and plain old sluggish support for the Rotarians, the Agricultural Society and the skateboard park committee to contend with. But they soldiered on despite the disappointments.

It's remarkable that all three Acton projects not only succeeded but were completed in the same year. It's also a testimony to the people and businesses of Acton and area who supported them with funds.

Of course, there has been assistance from the government and municipal sources. The new Ag society /soccer facility was able to pry \$100,000 for the indoor turf from the Trillium Foundation. The skateboard project was funded by \$105,000 from public subscriptions and \$103,000 from the Town of Halton Hills. Acton Rotarians, meanwhile, contributed 100% of the funds for the new bandshell with assistance of a loan from the Town.

Meanwhile the Town is also in the midst of constructing the new athletic park in Acton's east end. Work on Acton's first lit soccer field has been completed there, light standards are up and sod laid all ready for the "beautiful game." It's noteworthy that Acton Soccer Club contributed \$100,000 towards funding for the new park, another fund raising project supported by the people of the town and area.

It had indeed been an amazing year for Acton and area.

Beach woes

Poor water quality at the old beach in Prospect Park has closed it again. Tested weekly, the beach has failed to meet E-coli standards for the past four weeks.

The beach was Acton's only swimming pool for over a century. Thousands of Actonians enjoyed the beach through the depths of the Great Depression and WWII, as well as years later when home swimming pools were only for the affluent.

So what has changed that closes a feature of the park which made it a summer delight?

Halton Hills authorities attribute poor lake quality now to the runoff from several storm drains, from goose droppings and from lack of movement in the lake, aspects which didn't exist when the beach was popular in the 1900s. And it's true. Although there are a number of other safeguards which kept the water clean in that era which have since vanished.

There were few if any Canada Geese inhabiting the lake before it was dredged back in the 1960s. There may have been a few

Continued on page 7



LAZY HAZY: Sunday evening, just before dusk, three people enjoyed fishing in Fairy Lake, near the dam hoping to catch some of those elusive bass or pike. - Angela Tyler photo

Pets and animals are my passion

As a youngster I was deathly afraid of dogs. My godmother used to have to put her itty bitty dog in their bedroom when my family and I would visit. I've come along way since then.

Even though my family was animal friendly, I was a little hesitant in my youth. Since then, I have gone in a totally opposite direction. When a stray dog adopted us while I was a teenager, I became hooked. I was a pet and animal lover.

When my parents started giving the puppies away, I would hide this puppy in hopes we would keep him. In the end, I won the battle. Unfortunately, he was hit by a car on Christmas Eve and passed away. Fortunately, the mother had another litter and once again, I found a puppy that I grew attached to and again, hid from potential new parents. That was the start of my life with dogs.

The creatures didn't stop there, though. It wasn't like we had a herd of animals. Well, granted, we did have two horses my sister got for a birthday present one year. And then again, there was Patty, Maxine and Laverne. They were three cows that my dad bought at Snelgrove Flea Market one year. My sister and I thought they were pets. That was until that fall our freezer suddenly became packed with roasts, ground beef and steaks. Somehow Patty, Maxine and Laverne were no longer



By
Angela Tyler

in the field. That winter my sister and I ate very little beef.

My dad has always been a man who probably desired to have a 100 acres where he could plant fruit trees, have greenhouses and be one with all of God's creatures such as birds, squirrels and all of these little friends of nature. It was obvious from our backyard.

More than once, to delayed going on vacation by an hour or so in order to make sure his birds had enough feed to last them while we were away. Many times I had come home, or now visit, to find him in the backyard in his socked feet trying to get the squirrels to eat peanuts from his hands.

At one point he even had squirrels getting, well, tipsy from eating rose hips then trying to walk along the top of the fence. If I was talking with him on the phone and he saw this, his attention would immediately go to the squirrels and he would chuckle in delight.

He absolutely loves nature. Even when there is what I would consider scary type creatures, he still enjoys them. Once I remember talking with my parents on the phone and

they told me about how they had a 'possum at their back window. This completely creeped me out. For my dad however, it offered an opportunity to educate me how 'possums, not indigenous to this area get here.

Maybe that is why if I am out driving around and a squirrel passes in front of I hit the brake pedal. Heck, I even brake for mice.

When the Dude and I moved, I was totally thrilled with the mature lot and the mature trees. With that we finally had squirrels. We had a lot of birds. We awake every morning to the chirping of happy birds. It is such a tranquil back yard. Then the worst happened.

When you have a lot of trees, you have a lot of squirrels. On Tuesday when I was heading off to work, a squirrel ran in front of my jeep. I braked, but I thought the worst. I hoped it had stopped between the wheels and waited. I knew he hadn't but there wasn't much I could do at that point. So instead, I called the Dude who was getting ready for work and asked if he saw a dead squirrel just down the road would he call me. "I think I killed him," I said.

He didn't call me back about the squirrel. I know I killed it but I know the Dude knew I felt bad. Many might think it's only a squirrel, but, if nobody cared, who would my dad feed peanuts to?



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