

GRAPEVINE

Quilters Guild

Halton Hills Quilters Guild will meet at Halton Hills Cultural Centre, 9 Church Street (at Main), Georgetown on Monday, Nov. 26 at 7:15 p.m. (Guild library at 7 p.m.) The craft will be fabric origami. New members are always welcome. For more information contact Ann Toten, President, at 905-877-6038.

Ice warning

On Sunday, Nov. 18 at 1:18 p.m., officers of Wellington OPP responded to a report of a child falling through ice into a creek at the Elm Street playground in Drayton. The child was safely rescued by his sister. Parents in this area should remember to remind your children that ice may look solid on creeks and lakes, but could still break and send someone into the icy water.

Craft sale

Acton High School's annual craft sale will be held on Nov. 24 from 10-4 p.m. There will be 50 vendors, a bake sale, raffle items, lunch and refreshments. All proceeds go to student activities. Come and do some Christmas shopping.

Fifty plus

Canada's Association for the Fifty Plus Halton Chapter will be holding its monthly meeting on Nov. 28 at 7:30 p.m. at the Burlington Senior Centre, 2285 New St. (Central Park). Denis Scodellaro from the McLennan Group will be the guest speaker talking about Insurance at Special Rates for C.A.R.P. members. Guests are welcome, and there will be coffee and tea following the meeting. Come out and meet new friends. For more information call Hugh Cass at 905-844-2112 or email hcass@eol.ca.

Kinsmen trees

The Acton Kinsmen are getting ready to start selling Christmas trees for the 11th year. Trees go on sale on Saturday, Dec. 8 at the Olde Hide House parking-lot. Shop locally for your trees.

Tire slashing spree

Halton Police have been investigating tires slashing on motor vehicles around Sinclair Ave. in Georgetown since November. On Friday, Nov. 16, officers arrested the culprit and he has been charged with 21 counts of Mischief under \$5000 and one count of carrying a concealed weapon. Douglas James Morris, 44, of Sinclair Ave. is scheduled to appear in court on Dec. 18.

Telephone assurance

Sometimes a friendly phone call is just the day-brightener someone needs. A phone call can be as comforting as a personal visit, and sometimes fills a need even better. If you know a senior who would benefit from a regular reassurance phone call or if you would be interested in being a Telephone Assurance Volunteer please call Terri at 519-853-3310.

Holiday Hamper Program

Links2Care is currently accepting applications for our Holiday Hamper Program. Hampers of clothing and

toys are available for lower income families in Halton Hills. Applications for this program are available at 36A Armstrong Avenue in Georgetown or 47 Mill Street East in Acton. Sponsors are needed for this program so if your community group, business, church or family would like to provide the clothing and toys for a specific family we would really appreciate your support. For more information call Cathy or Lynn at 519-853-3310.

Oops!

Last week I wrote a letter to the editor re. a device that might save a significant amount of hydro for homeowners. I also said I had not been able to contact the mayor via email. I can only assume my computer was playing games, as since then I have sent emails to the mayor and in fact received very fast replies. I also want to make it plain that I was not complaining about the mayor, in point of fact I think Rick is one of the best mayor's Acton has ever had - since I've lived here anyway.

Apparently the device - according to Hydro - does not make the savings it claims.

*Sorry folks.
John Shadbolt*

Kinette Brunch

The Kinette Club of Acton will be holding its annual brunch on Sunday, Nov. 25 at the Acton Community Centre/Arena from 9:30-1p.m. All you can eat buffet of ham, sausage, pancakes, French toast, scrambled eggs, fruit cocktail, tea, coffee and fruit juices. This brunch is to promote Community Spirit and to help raise funds for Acton Service Groups.

RWTO Luncheon

The Lydia Snow Branch of RWTO will hold their annual Christmas luncheon at 11 a.m. at the Stonecroft Inn, 5331 Trafalgar Rd. N. RR#2 Erin on Thursday, Dec. 6. Everyone attending is asked to bring an unwrapped gift for a teenager which will be donated to Halton Women's Place or an item for the raffle table. Tickets must be purchased before Nov. 23 by calling 905-877-5851. All retired women teachers welcome.

Christmas Toy Drive

Halton Regional Police will be supporting the Salvation Army in their annual Christmas Toy Drive. Halton residents can drop off gifts of new, unwrapped toys and clothing at any of the police stations in Acton, Georgetown, Milton, Oakville and Burlington. Police would like to remind residents that there is a real need for gifts for teenagers. Warm coats, hats, mitts, boots and other clothing would be greatly appreciated.

Flu Clinic

Still haven't got your flu shot this year? You've still got time. There will be a free flu clinic on Wednesday, Nov. 28 at Pharma Plus in Acton. Please call to make an appointment.



30TH ANNIVERSARY: A celebration of the 30th anniversary of the North Halton Mental Health Clinic (NHMHC) on Nov. 15 included presentation of a plaque to clinic executives. Accepting the plaque from Regional Chair Gary Carr is the NHMHC manager Charlene Winger, centre. Flanking them, left to right, are Milton Mayor Gord Krantz, Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, the director of community health services Joyce See and Jackie Gordon, past chair of NHMHC's community advisory committee. - Submitted photo.

It's red and white (not blue) for me!

I am becoming more and more concerned with the recent popularity of cross-border shopping. Friends, if you think you're getting a bargain shopping State side, you are not considering the long-range impacts of your shopping excursions.

This fact was driven home to me recently in, of all places, a hospital. I was waiting for a patient to finish some tests when I overheard several nurses chatting about shuffling off to Buffalo for the weekend. They were all excited about how much they would save now that our loonie is worth pennies more than the American buck.

Here's why I thought they were shortsighted. They are public service employees and paid out of the public purse. How would they feel, what would they say, if they were laid off because there was no tax revenue to continue with public health programs? Is their saving a few bucks worth jeopardizing their jobs?

Lord knows, I think we are over-taxed. The billions in surplus the Feds and Provincial governments are sitting on are proof positive. The governments are taking (taxing) more money from us that they need to operate. But I don't think this justifies so many people heading across the border.

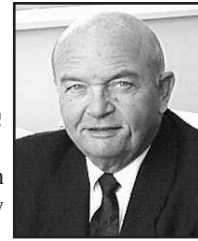
Governments do nothing to create wealth. Their income, if you want to call it that, comes in the form of taxes you and I pay. Surely that comes as no surprise. That includes not only the income and property taxes, but also sales taxes, duties paid on imports, the hated GST and more.

If we shop in great numbers, and we are, then government revenues will fall. Someone has to make up the shortfall either through program cuts and the accompanying loss of jobs or through higher taxes for all. Governments are saying pay me now or pay me later. But pay them you will!

Coming back to my original situation, while at the hospital I

The Way I See It

with
Mike O'Leary



marvelled at the millions and millions of dollars worth of machinery surrounding my friend. If the Canadian commercial economy takes a hit, perhaps there will be reduced funding for medical professionals and technicians to operate that equipment. How trivial will that \$20 savings you made on jeans be then? Especially if you are relying on that machinery to diagnose or cure you.

I have lost all patience with people who refer to our free health care service. Criticize the system or not, our medical system is anything but free. You pay for it, and you pay a premium, for every visit you make to your doctor, for every procedure you have done.

Who do people think paid for the highways and bridges that allow them to travel to the land of best prices? I know from personal experience, let there be one pothole or frost heave and all hell breaks loose.

The point I made in a column some weeks ago is, how is it fair to our local merchants for Canadian shoppers to head south, especially at this time of year? Canadian retailers rely on Christmas sales for up to 40% of their annual profits. Without that business they would have no choice other than to close their doors.

If that were to happen, where would your friends, neighbours or your kid's work? I often hear that Acton has no this or that type of store. Know what? We had them here. But people chose to shop at the major malls and perhaps save a buck or ten. The lesson is that if you refuse to patronize the retailers here then kwitchebitchin when you can't get local retailers or service convenience.

I think Canadian retailers are trying to readjust their prices to reflect the value of the soaring loonie. Last Saturday was "the Bride's" birthday. (She's still 39 - metric). I was pleasantly surprised that the card I bought was priced at the American price. I've seen ads for pre-Christmas sales all over the media. You can get good value in Canadian stores but you may have to negotiate a bit.

It will take you a bit of time but it's still better than a 3-5 hour round trip spending the night in Buffalo with all the attendant expenses, plus putting up with Canadian customs on the return trip. And you still have to pay GST on your purchases.

Don't get me wrong, I like Americans. I've enjoyed most of my trips down south. But I couldn't be bothered to go down to Buffalo to save even a hundred dollars or two. I wouldn't buy a car down there because I understand the warranties are no good up here. I wonder if it's the same situation with electronics?

Whether or not we see each other this way, we live in a socialist economy. No wonder the Americans have lower prices on some goods than we do. In addition to having 10 times the population and the resulting buying power, Americans don't have many of the social programs we do. Social programs that we, as Canadians, take great pride in.

We don't lose our houses and savings because a loved one has an illness. We have Medicare. Canadian women get up to a year's paid maternity leave. New American mothers are lucky to get a month without pay. Would you take a job at \$6/hr? Millions of Americans do, many for less.

The Americans pay for their social programs out of their own pockets. We pay for our way of taxes collected. I think our system is superior to theirs.

That's why I think Canadians should shop in Canada. Preferably, in Acton.