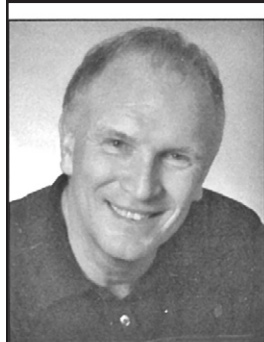




**ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS:** Santa Claus came to Rockwood for REBA's Third Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Events Coordinator Cathy Kelly says, "It ended too quickly. Santa shared gifts with the children and there was a surprise visit from the Snow Queen to close out the evening. Kelly is shown here with Santa and baby Celina Prterfield. - Submitted photo



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## Eden Mills jazz artist releases his eighth album

By Rebecca Ring

Eden Mills' own jazz great Dave McMurdo released his orchestra's eighth album last week: The Dave McMurdo Jazz Orchestra – nimmons' n' more. It was recorded live by CBC Radio Music, for Onstage at Glenn Gould Studio last December.

"The impetus for this recording was and is the fire and imagination of a certain 84 year old. He has been and continues to be a great spiritual force and support behind so many Canadian jazz artists of all ages – Phil Nimmons," says McMurdo, an internationally acclaimed jazz composer, arranger, trombone player and teacher.

Nimmons, a Canadian jazz icon, composed his original "Conversations (Aural Communication)" especially for the DMJO, which is over a half hour in length and features ten soloists from the 19 member orchestra with special guest Karen Rotenberg on English Horn. Nimmons received the inaugural SO-CAN/IAJE Phil Nimmons Established Composer Award at the annual conference, of the International Association for Jazz Education in New York. It will continue to be awarded annually to Canadian jazz composers for new works for jazz ensemble.

McMurdo's relationship with Nimmons began in the early 1970s, shortly after he moved to Toronto from Vancou-

ver. McMurdo studied music throughout school, including at UBC. In Vancouver in the 1960s, he began playing the "downtown scene." He was simultaneously offered a spot with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and a job playing nightclub shows. He jumped at the latter and never looked back, playing in shows featuring mega-stars such as Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett, and Richard Pryor to name a few. He also performed at numerous live CBC Radio shows and formed his first orchestra (17 piece).

In Vancouver, McMurdo met his wife Donna and the couple decided to head to Toronto so he could expand his career. They put the word out to friends in Hogtown's music scene, and he got work immediately with a 50 or 60 piece orchestra. He went on to perform jingles, TV show themes, industrial shows, radio shows, and club concerts, and formed his first quintet.

One of the first big bands McMurdo played with in Toronto was that of Phil Nimmons. He became a permanent member in 1974. At the same time, he joined Rob McConnell's Grammy Award winning Boss Brass playing with both bands for almost 20 years.

"In the '80s, the scene changed with the advent of synthesizers. It was the end of an era," says McMurdo, "Work dwindled and so I started teaching and found I really loved it." He took a full time position in Mohawk College's

Jazz Studies.

In 1987, McMurdo received a Canada Council grant to study in New York with the great jazz writer Bob Brookmeyer who urged McMurdo to start a band back home. The Dave McMurdo Jazz Orchestra (DMJO) was formed in 1988. One of their highlights was touring the USSR (now Russia) in 1991.

"This was in the days of Gorbachev and Glasnost," he says, "It was fascinating to be there in such a time of great change. Russian values didn't change though. They really value family – you see people with their families in the parks playing chess – and culture. Shows were always sold out."

They did have one harrowing moment when in Sverdlosk, a munitions city. It was supposed to be closed to foreigners but they were booked to play at the opera house. They were ordered to forfeit their passports but manager Donna McMurdo refused. She stood her ground and it was eventually sorted out. Other international tours include Mexico, Europe, USA and Malaysia. They are planning a huge tour of Asia.

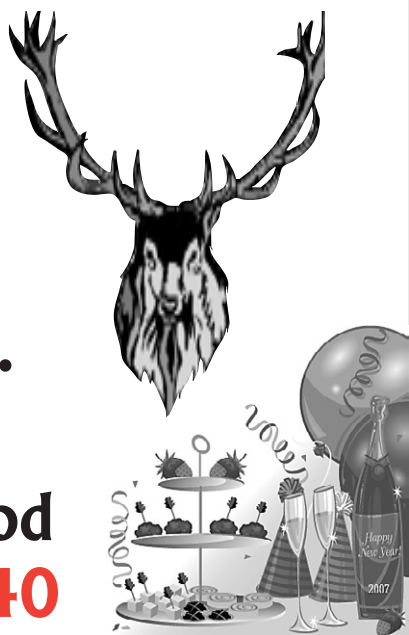
McMurdo says he is truly blessed; "If I am reincarnated, I would like to come back as a music player again. I like to think that music makes a difference in life. It helps bring about a more loving and compassionate world. I truly believe that. I love sharing music."

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## The Rockwood MILLER



### Looking back at 2007...

*Continued from Page 8*

- Village by Arboretum proposed for Acton by Acton East Housing.
- Halton Hills Fire Protection and Prevention Services visit schools in Halton to teach the students fire safety.
- Superior Glove received the Workplace HR and Safety Commitment Award for their new "Triple Play" glove.

#### November

- Acton firefighters battled \$300,000 blaze at 12346 Highway 7.
- George Henderson retired after 35 years with the Canadian Postal Service.
- Old Town Hall on Willow Street gets a face lift.
- Businesses in downtown Acton participate in the Ghost Walk for Halloween

for kids.

- Meals on Wheels celebrated 30 years in Halton Hills
- Remembrance Day ceremonies preparations in full swing around town.
- IODE celebrated their 90th Anniversary before coming to an end due to lack of members.
- Judge throws out assault charges against Councillor John Robin Scott, of Guelph/Eramosa Council.
- John and Marg Creasey and Bob Jefferies were selected as Rotary's Community Champions for their work around town.
- Ted Arnott seeks the position of Speaker's Chair for the Legislation Assembly.
- Hydro One continues plans with new power line

through Halton Hills, holding information sessions for residence in affect.

#### December

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Halton opened The Club tutoring at St. Joseph and MSB for students after school.
- Ted Arnott fell short with his bid for Speaker's Chair, losing out to a Liberal competitor.
- New hub at MSB scheduled to open in February.
- A census showed a 17% growth rate in Halton between 2001 and 2006.
- The Town hires Frank Prospero for the new Recreation Super.
- Acton Fire Fighters' Association spouses presented a \$5,000 cheque to Camp BUCKO (Burn Camp for Kids in Ontario).

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