

GRAPEVINE



Deja vu at St. Joe's

Longtime parishioners at St. Joseph's Church had a sense of Déjà vu at Saturday and Sunday masses on the weekend when Father Kevin Cull was there to preach at the annual Advent Retreat. A great nephew of the late Father V.J. Morgan, who was pastor at the Acton church for over 30 years, the family resemblance was noticeable even to the "bushy eyebrows", as he said. Father Cull is now the director of vocation for the Diocese of Hamilton. He recalls visiting Acton and his great uncle when he was young and being greeted at the rectory door by Father Morgan's pet St. Bernard dog.

As director of vocations, Father Cull has 18 mostly young men studying for the priesthood for the Hamilton Diocese including Brendan McGrath of Acton who will be raised to the Diaconate in a ceremony in St. Ann's Church in Ancaster, where he has been interning, Brendan will be ordained as a priest in May of 2009 and has selected his home parish, St. Joseph's for his first mass. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Bill McGrath of Acton.

Mother Goose program

The Acton Ontario Early Years Satellite is again offering a 10-week Parent—Child Mother Goose program aimed at fostering a strong bond between adult and child. Two trained facilitators will lead the fun interactive program through the introduction of rhymes, songs and stories. Parents and caregivers of infants under a year old have an opportunity to gain confidence in calming and soothing a fussy baby, make new friends and enjoy time with their baby. The program is offered each Tuesday from 10am – 11am and runs for 10 weeks from Jan 6 – March 10. There's no fee. Call Jennifer at 905-873-2960 to register.

All Night Vigil

St. Alban's Church is having an all-night Advent Prayer Vigil in the church this Friday, Dec 12 from 8:30pm to 8am the next morning, Sat. Dec. 13. The vigil will be followed by a breakfast in the church hall at 8:30am Saturday.

Students/teachers face off

McKenzie Smith Bennett public School teachers have a unique way of getting to know their students on a personal level and break down any perceived barriers. Every Friday morning early, the teachers face off against the

grade 8 students in a hockey game at Acton arena. "Not only are the kids participating in great physical activity and improving skating and hockey skills, they are learning some life skills and having fun with the teachers beyond the classroom." The games are led by teacher Matt Jones who takes time before they hit the ice to give advice on respecting other players, working in teams, playing fair and giving it their best.

'A Christmas Carol'

J-Force Acton Baptist Church's youth choir, is presenting the musical, "A Christmas Carol," at the church on Sunday, Dec 21 at 7pm. The choir is composed of kids from age 3 to 17 years. They perform two musicals each year, one in December and another in June. A special love offering will be taken to send J-Force members to Kingdom Bound 2009

Christmas Day dinner

The committee for the annual Community Christmas Dinner is planning this year's 6th annual dinner on Christmas Day at Beth-El Christian Reformed Church at 1pm. Christmas is about being together and the dinner is free and transportation can be provided. They also do deliveries and specially invite everyone who is on their own Christmas Day. The turkey dinner depends on volunteers who donate dishes which have been much enjoyed in the past. They're extending an invitation to provide dishes for the dinner again. Simply call Paulette Switzer at 519-853-1047 if you wish to donate. RSVP to Ann Adema at 519-853-3687 if you know of someone on their own or unable to get out.

Night at MSB

Students, parents and family of McKenzie Smith Bennett school (MSB) are set to gather for the annual family craft and concert night at the school, 69 Acton Blvd., on Tuesday, Dec. 16 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Stations will be set up throughout the school where students can create holiday crafts and ornaments with their families. A concert will feature intermediate and senior bands, the primary choir and more.

Calendar coming

Watch for the 2009 edition of the historic Acton calendar which should be in the Christmas issue of The New Tanner. The calendar is published by Heritage Acton and is eagerly looked forward to each December.



TOP TREES: The former Kinsmen, now Men of Heritage, are still busy selling Christmas trees in the Hide House parking lot. Close to 200 hundred beautiful trees are still available with proceeds going to Heritage Acton and other local projects. Showing some of the great trees still available are Dave and Josh Martin, along with Clude nadon and Tom Cooper. - Angela Tyler photo

Shopping locally - good for the heart!

Now that the doorknobs in Ottawa have settled down with the bonus being commissar Rae dropping out of the liberal leadership race, the rest of us can concentrate on the important things in my life. As of today (Thursday) there's only 13 shopping days until Christmas. No I haven't done any yet but I expect to finish this coming weekend. Always the optimist!

There's an excellent case to be made for shopping in our little town. Granted the cost of gas is more reasonable these days, but surely you don't want to increase the greenhouse gas effect by driving more than is absolutely necessary. For that matter, able bodied people can do a lot of their local shopping on foot. I would suggest those so inclined, to wear galoshes over their Birkenstocks.

Over the years I have heard far too often that there isn't enough retail in our town to do your Christmas shopping. Not so my friends, not so. There are a myriad of places to shop if you are creative.

One obvious place is the world renowned Hide House. I know people who think it's too expensive. Right now, however, there are bargains to be had. Acton's junior department store Giant Tiger has some unique gifts as well as a fine selection of clothing and groceries. We have two fine drugstores in town both with extensive cosmetic departments as well as thoughtful gifts and candles.

As many of you know, I was in the gift and stationary business for more years than I want to admit. In my experience Country Reflections is as fine a boutique as exists in this country. And for gifts from Holland try, what else, The Holland Shop. Their chocolate is to die for and the deli counter is first rate.

Unfortunately My Cottage

The Way I See It

with
Mike O'Leary



Dreams is closing in the new year. They still have a good selection of giftware, so this is your chance to drop by to say goodbye and drop a few bucks at same time. Dollar Stretcher Daze has a good selection of home décor and stocking stuffers.

Our Sobeys store is all decked out for the holidays and it's a reasonable sized store. I've only been in that cavernous grocery (??), down the hill once. I left there wishing I have taken a lunch and went home to take a nap. Watch for Sobeys' specials in their flyers. Hint, if they have steaks on again stock-up. They're great.

Taking the family out for a meal is always appreciated and you can get gift certificates to put under the tree. Mill St. Crossing and Tanner Pub offer a full service menu and, even more important, a good selection of draft beer. Although both serve Guinness, the selection of import brands at Mill St is more extensive. Mill St also has the Lasby room at the back for more intimate parties.

Taking the family out for dinner or lunch was something Mary and I always enjoyed. Quite honestly, I do believe she enjoyed it more than I. We have a number of family restaurants that serve good home style cooking. Lily's, the new Thai restaurant, Andy's, Leathertown Tavern and Rallis Burger are but a few. The toasted western sandwich at Rallis burger is ginormous for the famished.

Flowers are always thoughtful and appreciated gift, especially for the someone who has everything. Locally, Blooms Away, Blue Springs and the Sobeys flower dept. can help you pick

just the right bouquet or plant.

For the car enthusiast how about a gift certificate from Toth Motors for an oil change or tune-up? For the do-it-yourselfer something from Home Hardware, which also has a gift department, Leathertown Lumber, or NAPA (Formerly Carquest) on Hwy 25, north of the tracks. For that matter, a gift certificate from any of the mechanical shops in town would be appreciated by the car enthusiast to keep "old Betsy" running.

We have take out food running from Pizza and other delicacies, subs, burgers, fries and the always popular Chinese food for those who would prefer to snuggle beside the fire with a movie which can also be rented here in town.

If you're really generous a new car from Achille's Mazda in the driveway Christmas morning will have the family calling you super Santa. Of course, if something gently used would suit your gift bag better, the Acton Motors and Sunny's has a decent selection.

The bottom line is that shopping locally is good for all of us. These merchants support our charities, our schools, hire our kids and neighbours. I know that times are tough and many of us are on a reduced budget this year. What I am saying is that there is a vast array of reasonably priced items in our town and you don't have to travel hither and yen to find them. Plus, You help the local economy.

Money spent on Christmas or other occasions, has a compounding effect on job creation. I'm not suggesting you overspend your budget, but rather ask you not to hoard your available cash.

Remember, if we don't support our retail the terrorist win. Both the Bay St. and overseas ones. There's one person we sure don't want to see unemployed. Santa.