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Acton

Willy or won't it see its shadow?

Tired of all the cold and snow? Well, maybe, the Groundhog has good news for you about milder weather when it is supposed to emerge from his burrow next Monday, Feb. 2, traditionally observed as Groundhog Day.

The usual explanation for this phenomena is that if the groundhog sees its shadow on February 2 there'll be six more weeks of winter. If it doesn't see its shadow, spring is on its way and the next six week will be more pleasant, perhaps salubrious weather.

Now we know from a study done at the University of Guelph in 1960s by Acton student, Murray Smith Jr., that the whole Groundhog Day thing is suspect. His study showed that if the groundhogs do emerge from their burrows on Feb. 2 it will only to chase the female gender. Vise-versa for the females. They chase the boys.

This whole Groundhog Day however, has been usurped by promoters in Pennsylvania



where they have Punxsutawney Pete/Phil emerging from a cage. (no doubt without some prodding) and Wiarton Willie in the town of the same first name on the Bruce Peninsula. There's much hoopla and a lot of speculation on what these varmints will predict, accompanied by various amounts of liquid refreshment.

The rub is sometimes these two rodents don't come up with the same prediction. Phil sees his shadow. Wil-

lie doesn't. Deadlock. So maybe there'll be a little bit of both.

Since Feb. 2 occurs about mid-winter it has be important to those who worked the land. Nineteenth Century farmers had a saying, Groundhog Day - Half your hay. They knew the end of winter was still some distance and if they didn't have half the hay remaining there could be lean times for live-stock.

And the date has always had a religious significance, probably going back further than the groundhog myth, which of course was brought to North America by the Europeans; February 2 is also the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, a time when candles are blessed. The weather on that day always important.

An old English song goes:

*If Candlemas
be fair and bright,
Come Winter,
have another flight,
If Candlemas
brings clouds and rains,
Go Winter
and come not again.*

As this is being written, the mercury has plunged into the late teens Celsius, fire is being burned to excess and it's unpleasant to go outside. More than a few people are experiencing cabin fever. We hope that woodchuck doesn't see his shadow on Feb. 2 and we can enjoy some global warming.

FIRE REPORT

False alarm

Tankers from both the Acton and Georgetown fire stations were dispatched to a reported structure fire at the Fifth Line and Five Side Road 1:02 a.m. on Saturday for what turned out to be a false alarm.

Truck totalled

The driver of a brand new Ford F250 pickup truck smelled burning rubber in the engine compartment before the truck burst into flames while driving on 17 Side Road at the Fifth Line at 11:49 p.m. on Saturday. The vehicle, valued at \$40,000, was destroyed.

By Rebecca Ring

Three Choirs of the Grand Philharmonic will be singing for peace in Kitchener this weekend in their concert, Journey through Fire. The Grand Philharmonic Choir, the Children's Choir and the Youth Choir will perform with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony at Centre in the Square on January 31 at 7:30 p.m., directed by Howard Dyck.

Furnace check

Owners of a Spruce Boulevard residence were advised to have their furnace serviced after Acton firefighters were unable to find the source of a reported unknown odour at 7:20 on Thursday night.

Knox Presbyterian Church



44 Main St. N P.O. Box 342
Acton, Ontario L7J 2M4
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In a world of change, come and worship the unchanging God.

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Feb. 1: GOD WANTS US TO DANCE FOR HIM (2 Kings 3:9-20)

Feb. 8: Guest Speaker - Mr. Patrick Gushue

Feb. 15: GOD WANTS TO DANCE WITH US (2 Samuel 6:1-23)

Feb. 22: GOD WANTS TO DANCE FOR US (Zephaniah 3:14-17)

Rockwood producer, author contribute to peace concert

Rockwood producer John Crompton and Linda Sword helped to make the performance a reality as Crompton sits on the Grand Philharmonic Board and Sword has been working tirelessly as a marketing volunteer promoting the event.

Eden Mills author Janet Wilson will be on hand to sign her latest book, One Peace, which features stories of children from around the world who have worked to promote world peace.

Sword describes the event as timely, as war rages on in Gaza and Canadians see images of civilian casualties, including children, broadcast daily. The horrors of war are a grim reality there, as they are in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Darfur, with its indiscriminate bloodshed, inevitable famine and refugee crises.

Journey through Fire opens with the Children's Choir singing three verses of song that they wrote themselves. These verses will be added to "Our Wish", which is a peace song from Hiroshima to the world, written by students at the Ohzu Junior Middle School in 2002.

The work is based on the Christian liturgical mass and the 15th century

song, L'homme armé. The text includes references from the Bible, Kipling, Swift, Malory, Dryden, the Hindu Mahabharata, and the Koran. It takes the audience through the darkness and horror of war but concludes on a joyful and hopeful note.

Adhaan, the Islamic call to prayer, will be delivered by Alkan Mehmet, the muezzin at the mosque in Waterloo. The Rabbi Cantor will chant from the Hebrew Book of Prayer.

Our goofs

Gremlins crept in, or some sort of type devils, in the article last week (Jan. 22/09) regarding the Ecumenical Unity Service at the Acton Legion auditorium misspelling names and changing meanings.

In Rev. Richard Stanley's address his quote should have read: "Maybe they gave the new guy the job (not hob) of explaining unity."

Father Bob Bulbrook's name was misspelled as "Billnook" and there were other typos.

The New Tanner apologizes for all the errors.