

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Our Twelfth year

Believe it or not, with this issue (Jan. 29/09) The New Tanner begins its 12th year of publication.

Following in the footsteps of Paul Nolan, who founded the original Acton Tanner, which folded after five years of operations, Ted Tyler recruited its staff and started The New Tanner. Three of the original are still here as well as columnists Mike O'Leary and Angela Tyler.

The first issue of The New Tanner - a 12 page edition - was published on January 29, 1998, The front page headline was "Cut ribbon for new arena Sunday" So, like The New Tanner, the Acton Arena and Community Centre is on the threshold of its 12th year.

Prospects for The New Tanner did not look bright in 1998 but there was generous encouragement from the community, anxious to have a hometown newspaper again. Acton has had its own newspaper since 1876 when Joseph Hacking founded the Acton Free Press in a village of 800 or so souls. In the ownership shuffling of the 1990s, it was absorbed by its own creation, The Georgetown Independent, and now is largely a replate of the first page.

The poor fiscal climate of 1997 not unlike today's, resulted in many a newspaper either closing, or merging with others to continue publication. Forty-one community newspapers in Ontario closed their doors over a six year span including the original Tanner. Another 19 merged with competitors or with those from larger towns or villages, including the Acton Free Press.

The dawn of the internet led some people to believe newspapers would follow in the footsteps of the dinosaurs - and be fossils. However, over the last decade newspapers especially community newspapers have held their own against competitors, including the electronic media. It has some people scratching their heads.

One reason for the continued acceptance of community newspapers is their coverage of local events that other media outlets are unable or unwilling to provide. Often you will find too, that the electronic media depends on newspapers for stories and opinion.

The New Tanner has expanded in size and circulation since the first edition 1998, now averaging 16 to 24 pages and welcomed into

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Why not quit?

As of January 21 of this year, it is illegal to smoke in motor vehicles where passengers under 16-years-old are present.

The medical science is clear - second-hand smoke is dangerous to children. For many smokers this is another good reason to quit, says Margaret Best, Ontario Minister of Health Promotions.

The new law is part of the Ontario government's Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy, a plan that encourages young people not to smoke, helps smokers quit, and protects people from exposure to second-hand smoke.

As most who smoke or have smoked already know, smoking is one of the toughest addictions to break. No one said quitting is easy, but we are reminded of the need annually in the third week of January.

For over 30 years, the third week in January has been known as National Non-Smoking Week. Every year there is a new theme. This year's theme was "What have you got to lose?" And really, if you are a smoker who wants to quit, what have you got to lose by taking that next step to quit?

There is more support for smokers who want to quit today than ever before. For example, there's Smoker's Helpline service. It provides free, confidential advice, information and quit support. The service can be reached by calling 1-877-513-5333, or by going online to www.smokershelpline.ca.

Smoking is the number one cause of preventable death in Ontario. Every year, 13,000 Ontarians die because of tobacco use. That is 36 lives every day.

So as Margaret Best asks smokers, "What have you got to lose?" when you quit.



BUDDY'S BACK TO WORK: Buddy, the Rockwood Post Office's favourite feline, is back on duty warming hearts. He was absent for a while, as he was apparently vacationing at a neighbourhood home where he received much deserved pampering. - *Rebecca Ring Photo*

Finding 'friends' on Facebook

At the ripe old age of 40 I have discovered Facebook. I don't understand Facebook, yet I am a member.

Friends of mine summoned me to be a member. Soon I had invites from friends on my email saying that so and so wanted to be "friend." So I did what was expected and I joined. I was part of 150 million users of Facebook even though I didn't really understand it.

Mrs. Country Bear Jamboree has given you a poke? Hey, who cares. I could poke back. Country Bear Jamboree's daughter has acknowledged me as a friend, Whoo Hoo!! I had a friend!

I still don't get it. I post what I am doing. I can post messages. I can post photos. I invited people I know to be my friends even though they are already my friends. It is so odd.

Facebook has been around for a mere five years. Four and three quarters of those years, I have avoided being a member. However, recently I had to cave in to "peer pressure."



By
Angela Tyler

So I did what was expected. I tried to invite "friends" to be my "friend," I was in awe when I looked at Mrs. Country Bear Jamboree's friends. On Facebook you can see your "friends' friends."

"Holy crap...." I exclaimed to the Dude. "She has 179 friends!! I was in shock. Counting everybody, including the Dude, who has yet to respond to being my "friend" I had four! Did I mention the Dude has yet to acknowledge being my "friend?"

I will admit I sometimes don't know a whole bunch about computers. This was the most evident when I tried to "create an album," a photo album more specifically.

I tried to post some photos from my collection on my Facebook page. I tried a few days later. I tried again. I am almost as dumb when it comes to Fa-

cebook as I was when I got my IPOD. It took me almost two months to figure out how to actually get music on that darn thing.

In the end, I still don't get it. I don't get Facebook and I still don't have any photos posted on my page. So, you have friends on Facebook? Why not call them? Why not hang out with them? Why give your friend a poke when you can just call them and say hi? Why is it so important to tell your friends you are watching t.v., or just sitting around or scrapbooking? I'm still poking and posting for some unknown reason, just refusing to admit that I am old, I guess.

Maybe I am at that magical age where "new technology" isn't so important. After all, the Dude and I are still trying to figure out that whole Blue Ray DVD thing that he bought me for Christmas and what is all about and why is so great. Blue Ray? Does anybody want to explain to me what happened to VHS and Beta?



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