

EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

Because they care

Until you walk in a mile in someone else's shoes – or roll a mile in their wheelchair – it can be very difficult to understand their issues, concerns and point of view, and doing so can be a real eye-opener as witnessed earlier this week when local politicians and Town staff accompanied wheelchair bound Acton resident Lorna Brooks on a tour of the downtown.

From uneven pavement, steep slopes on curb cuts, narrow sidewalks and difficult to manoeuvre railway crossings, getting around Acton is not always easy for those in wheelchairs, those who use mobility devices or push strollers.

Acton Councillors Jon Hurst, Clark Somerville and Mayor Rick Bonnette learned first hand the obstacles that people like Brooks face daily as they go about their business as they walked the entire length of Mill Street, noting all of the obstacles and safety concerns.

For Brooks, who often avoids shopping in the east end of Acton because she feels the railway tracks are unsafe, and who is forced onto the street in several areas because the sidewalk is in such bad shape, the tour was a validation that her concerns are real and someone is listening. For the politicians, it underscored the need for improvements – some of which have already been made.

Most of us don't worry about our safety when we walk downtown, but for some, the journey is daunting. Because of high thresholds, Brooks is unable to get into many Acton stores, yet she is not bitter – she just would like officials to acknowledge her concerns and try to make changes.

As Dick Spear, the Town's Superintendent of Public Works said, years ago no one worried about the degree of the slope between the sidewalk and road – slopes of such a degree in some areas that Brooks worries she'll be pitched out of her chair.

The Town has made many changes to meet and exceed accessibility legislation from the province and plans to do more to improve pedestrian safety, as money becomes available.

It is to Brooks' credit that she does not have a militant attitude or is demanding immediate changes – she knows it will take a lot of money and time to improve conditions, but she's confident that her elected officials will do what is right, because they care.



DRIVE TO ARRIVE ALIVE: Acton District High School received a \$500 cheque from the North Halton Injury Prevention Committee in a draw as part of the Drive to Arrive Alive campaign. Deputy Chief Bob Percy (left) presented the cheque to Acton High School student council members Rebecca Woolford, Daniel Hunter, Nicole Dixon, Niki Tremblay, Jenifer MacArthur, co-chair of the North Halton Injury Prevention Committee and principal Bert O'Hearn. – Submitted photo

B.Y.O.B. has a whole new meaning

The other day I was listening to the radio on the computer. Dude Sr. gave me a satellite radio a couple years ago for Christmas and with it came the ability to use the online radio as well. Since Little J has been in our lives, I've been listening to the talk radio stations quite a bit.

The other day while listening, one of the hosts was talking about the whole bring your own bag to the grocery store thing. As the satellite radio is an American thing, their discussion was quite interesting. The bring your own bag thing apparently is just catching on in the States.

I like it when we are in the States and grocery shopping. First, I don't have to bring my bags. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for the being more environmentally friendly however, it's a nice break not having to remember to bring the bags. The other thing I like is that most of the places I've shopped at in the States offer you a choice of paper or plastic bags. I like using paper bags. I think it is a better choice because it is my understanding that they are recyclable...that's if they have recycling in the area. At my folks' condo in Florida, the recycling thing has just started. It felt weird tossing plastic and



By **Angela Tyler**

other recyclables in the garbage for years until this past visit.

I find it hard to remember to bring my bags when I'm doing groceries. More than once I've been almost in town and turned around to come back to get the bags. Then there are days when I just can't be bothered going home. I know that must sound bad, however, what's the lesser of two evils...wasting fuel to head back home to get the bags or having to buy two or three bags at the grocery store? After all, I do re-use the bags for household garbage so they aren't being tossed into the landfill for no reason.

What makes me wonder is when the stores charge for bags. I suppose it does discourage one from plastic and encourages you to bring your own however, I do wonder what happens with the money. I much prefer the stores that encourage you to bring your own bag by offering a discount, though nominal, for using your own.

The new superstore in Milton

doesn't even offer you the option of buying a bag which I have a beef with. It's great to be all eco-friendly yet, it stinks when you go to buy something and realize you forgot your bag. I often wonder why they don't let you re-use the boxes that the groceries came in. This way the boxes are still being recycled. I am guessing they get money for their cardboard when they recycle, so if they let their customers use the boxes they would be out money.

I have come to grips with the buying bags or bringing your own at the grocery store. In some ways, I actually prefer it because the bags I use are more sturdy than plastic and because they are bigger I have less to carry into the house when I get back. However, I'm having issues with other stores now doing the same thing.

The other day I was at a department store to buy a floaty thing for Little J. The item wasn't that big and I wasn't about to use a bag for it, however, when the clerk asked me if I wanted a bag and would have been charged for it, I was temporarily irked and I don't really know why.

I guess it's the way of the world now. B.Y.O.B. no longer means what it used to. It now means bring your own bag.

Looking Back



Ten Years Ago

• Concerned with a brain drain to other GTA municipalities and the private sector, Halton Hills hired a consultant to revamp Town job classifications and the pay scale.

• Police don't know why Linda Berry's car drifted into an on-coming transport truck on Guelph Line, north of Brookville, killing the Acton mother of two.

• Bonnie Ross is installed as the first woman president of the Rotary Club of Acton.

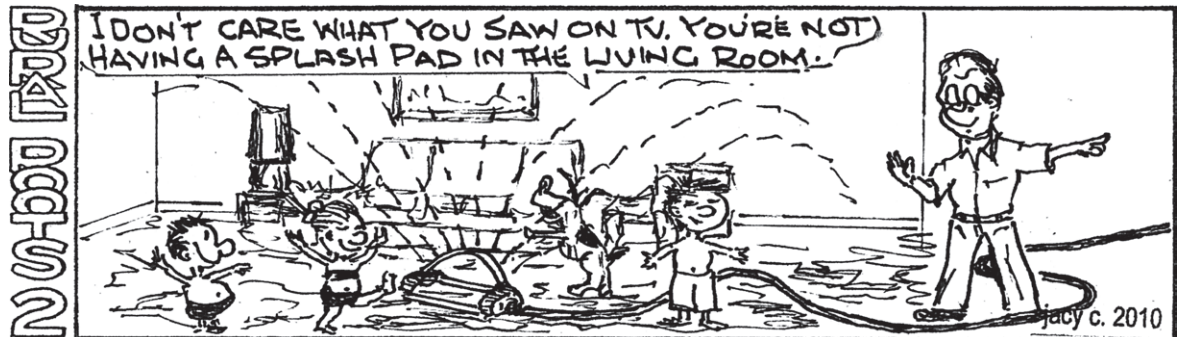
Five Years Ago

• A coroner's inquest will

determine how Acton's Leon Paulin died in his cell at the Maplehurst Detention Centre in Milton. Paulin, 44, was charged with second degree murder in the stabbing death of Hanzel Honeywell of Acton.

• When will four Acton parks be built and what will they look like? – those were the main questions asked at a public meeting to review long range park plans.

• Contestants in the first Acton Idol contest entertained a large crowd in Prospect Park for the Canada Day celebrations.



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