

Durante says sons' involvement has helped business succeed

The rest, as they say, is history.

Durante opened his service station in 1963, at Regional Road 25 and Hwy. 401. Durante's Auto Service and Towing saw him rescue many abandoned drivers on the side of the road at all hours of the night.

They opened at 5 a.m. and closed at 10 p.m., with a snack bar that served coffee and sandwiches for the truckers, who worked at Dufferin Aggregates. The towing business stayed open 24 hours a day, and Durante was always on call.

Even when he arrived home after hours, he had work to do - feeding the chickens they raised that provided food.

As he branched out in business, he also followed his dreams of putting Milton on the map.

During this time, he started to buy land in the area.

It's mind-boggling to consider the number of properties he's bought and sold in town since.

He even has a street named after him in High-Point Business Park called 'Durante Way'.

In 1992, he built the Royal Canadian Mounted Police headquarters in Milton that employed more than 300 people.

His companies Scrap Metal Depot, U Need Storage, Ads at Work Inc., Durfam Development Group and AC Canada Enviro Safe have employed hundreds and hundreds of Miltonians over the last 50 years.

As soon as his sons were old enough to work, they joined the family business and have been working there since. Durante says he couldn't have done it without them.

The last time the Leafs won the Stanley Cup in 1967, Durante bought the property where his family home remains today: nestled in the base of the Niagara Escarpment on Tremaine Road. For a mere \$13,500, he sold his first home so he could begin building his current house, brick by brick.

Photos of his large family adorn the walls of the modest two-storey home - his four grown children and nine grandchildren at various get-togethers over the years.

"My life was work and family," he said, adding he used to get together with close friends, like Mayor Gord Krantz for regular card games.

Krantz used to deliver oil to his home. "Your Honour was the BP oil man," he recalled.

As Durante points out, however, business wasn't always peaches and cream.

"To make money, I lost money too," he said. "It's not all roses, there's some thorns too."

"Whatever I have, I worked for what I got." He points to the property where Sobeys and Gordon Food Services is located and notes the ups and downs it cost him.

Another 26 acres of land on Dublin Line South of No. 5 Side Road he bought and sold twice - once almost losing everything when the real

estate market bottomed out in the late 1980s. Durante's proud of the fact that every cent he ever borrowed he paid back - quickly. He even paid back the \$19 his father loaned him to come to Canada. And he paid back his boss after 1958, when he had to fly home to Italy to see his dad, who died following leukemia, at 55 years old.

"I was there to see him, I got two weeks leave, but I had to be back in two weeks, or my job was gone," said Durante, who now enjoys golfing four days a week, playing bocce and cards at the Italian Club.

His daughter said her dad was generous beyond words. While he admits to helping a few people out financially without so much as a loan in writing, she said it was dozens of Miltonians he helped over the years.

"Anytime people fell on hard times with life," she said. "He'd do whatever he could do to help."

"He always enjoyed people and family."

Durante said a local business owner once came to him and told him he was going to lose his business if he didn't help him out. Years later, Durante said the man thanked him every time he saw him.

But that's the way it used to work, he said.

"Where there's a will there's a way."

Mangotich said she admires her father. "Not because he is successful, but because of his honesty, courage and his desire to succeed," she said. "He taught his kids to be humble despite of money and success."

"He taught us that you always need to save for a rainy day, you need to give to those who need more than you and that your word is the most important thing a person has."

Only recently has he been out of commission, "put in jail" as he puts it.

He crashed to the ground at a work site, falling about 10 feet and landing directly on his heels. Unable to support the keen mind on his shoulders, his heels were crushed by the impact, leaving him bed-ridden for six weeks.

He'll find out tomorrow if he can start standing again...and he's itching to get back to work.

As for his business success, he says the Durante family has a reputation for being "respectable to do business with...we pay the bills."

"I never thought I'd be this successful," he admits. "But I never gave up the dream, and that's what you have to do."

And the money he's earned has also benefited Milton through the various charities Durante's family businesses have supported over the years: Milton District Hospital Foundation, Milton Leisure Centre, Salvation Army, Cancer Society, United Way of Milton, Milton Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor's Golf tournament, sports teams and more.

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NOTICE OF INFORMATION SESSION

Union Gas Limited - Burlington Oakville Pipeline Project

To ensure the continued reliable, safe delivery of natural gas and serve an increased demand in the fast growing communities of Milton, Oakville and Burlington, Union Gas is proposing to construct a new 12-14 kilometre up to 24 inch (610-millimeter) diameter natural gas pipeline. The proposed pipeline would begin at Union Gas' existing Dawn-Parkway Pipeline System and travel south to its existing Burlington-Oakville Pipeline System. The exact location of the proposed pipeline has not yet been determined.

As part of the planning process, Union Gas has hired Stantec Consulting Ltd. (Stantec) to undertake an environmental study of the construction and operation of the natural gas pipeline. The environmental study will fulfill the requirements of the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) "Environmental Guidelines for the Location, Construction and Operation of Hydrocarbon Pipelines and Facilities in Ontario (2011)".

As part of the study process, several Route Options for the proposed natural gas pipeline have been identified. The routes follow existing linear features where feasible, such as hydro corridors, road right-of-ways and property lines. Maps of the Route Options are available for public review at the following locations: 1225 Trafalgar Road, Oakville Town Hall; 1051 Glenashton Dr., Oakville Public Library (Iroquois Ridge Branch); 150 Mary Street, Milton Town Hall; 945 4th Line, Milton Public Library (Beaty Branch).

An Information Session regarding the Project and Route Options will be held as follows:

Boyne Community Centre
8175 Britannia Road (at Regional Road 25)
Milton, On, L9T 4B6
Thursday May 23rd, 2013
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Information Session will be conducted as a drop-in centre, and representatives from both Union Gas and Stantec will be available to discuss the Project and respond to questions or comments. Comments received at the Information Session will be instrumental in the evaluation of the Route Options and ultimately the Final Preferred Route. Comments will also be used to help develop site-specific protection and mitigation measures.



It is anticipated that an Environmental Report will be completed by the end of August 2013 at which time Union Gas will file an application for the proposed pipeline to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB). The OEB's review and approval is required before the proposed natural gas pipeline project can proceed. If approved, construction of the pipeline could begin in the spring of 2015.

For questions regarding the Project, please contact Mark Knight at Stantec (1-519-836-6050; mark.knight@stantec.com).



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