

# GRAPEVINE



## Feed the hungry

Thanks to the generosity of Acton area IGA shoppers, Acton's FoodShare food bank is able to feed many more hungry people.

Before Christmas, shoppers donated \$1,970 in \$5 and \$10 donations, to FoodShare while shopping at IGA.

"I was kind of surprised with the total, but then Acton always has been very generous," said store manager John Van Dam, noting the total is considerably more than last year when shoppers were able to purchase bags of food to donate to FoodShare.

## Laughing Out Loud

Mark February 6 on your calendar if you want some laughs while helping raise some much-needed money for Acton's Off The Wall youth centre.

A group of comedians from Humber College will be performing in Acton on that date in a show billed as Laughing Out Loud being presented by Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHSCI) which runs the Mill Street youth centre.

The troop will take its show to Acton's four schools during the day and that evening, it will entertain adults with a show at the Acton Legion.

"We often need some cheering up during the February blahs," said HHCSI board member David Burland, adding tickets will be on sale at various Acton locations and people should watch for posters featuring mascot, Mr. Rollo.

## Home, sweet home

The first residents of Devon Place, the new neighbourhood taking shape on Acton's east end, move into their brand new home next Friday, but they won't have to wait long to meet their new neighbours.

A Charleston Home spokesman said the second family will move in Jan. 24, and in the coming weeks, the closings will be "fast and furious."

## Library programs

There are still openings in some of the programs offered for pre-school children at the Acton library. Call the library - 853-0301 - to find out about availability of winter program spaces.

Participants are required to fill out an application and show proof of the child's age. Registration is free for the weekly programs.

## Chicken Rx?

Persistent rumours that Swiss Chalet and Shoppers Drug Mart will locate in a new plaza at the corner of Young and Queen Street (the old Ajax property, most recent home of the Acton Trunk Sale) continue to circulate.

Property co-owner, Doug Fread, said he "had no idea" about Swiss Chalet or Shoppers, but confirmed he and Bower Street Investments partner, Gerry Rivers have received a conditional offer from a numbered Ontario company from Woodbridge.

"What they're doing, I don't

know," Fread said on Monday, adding the potential purchaser has applied for a rezoning to remove conditions that prohibit a food store or drug store on the property and to increase the size of individual stores.

## Christian coffee

Young people who want some casual Christian company should check out the next RAD Rally event - a coffee house at the Acton arena and community centre next Saturday (Jan. 18.)

The free event, from 7 to 10 p.m., is geared to teens and those in their twenties.

## Coaching update

Coaches, assistants, trainers and other volunteers with Acton House League Hockey are invited to a mandatory "Speak Out" seminar on Wednesday (Jan 15) at the Acton arena.

Sponsored by the OMHA, "Speak Out" is a prevention services program that will see 20,000 hockey volunteers and officials attend harassment and abuse clinics in the next two years. Space is limited and the cost is \$18. Anyone interested in attending should contact a League official.

## Watch your mail

Acton urban residents should receive their 2003 waste collection calendar from Halton this week - a handy year planner that people look forward to receiving, according to Acton and Halton Councillor Rick Bonnette, chairman of the Region's planning and public works committee.

The educational calendar clearly marks waste, Blue Box and special collection days, and includes "all you need to know" about waste management, Bonnette said, adding if you don't receive your calendar, call Halton toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

## Parenting help

Want to maintain or develop a good relationship with your teen? An upcoming parenting lecture-workshop in Acton could possibly help.

Run by Halton Hills Community Support and Information, with help from a South Halton parent support group, the three-session evening program will tackle the big issue of communication, along with peer pressure, drug use, setting limits and encouraging independence and responsibility.

The first session is January 23 at the Acton Parent-Child Centre on Wallace Street.

Pre-registration is required for the \$25 program. Call Claire at 853-9825 for details.

## Tasty rumours

While a loyal employee at a large Acton business confirmed there's a surprising sale in the works - the local owners are playing their cards very close to the vest - not willing to even say "no comment" on the record.

The staffer said they were told of the pending deal last week.



**SNOW LOVERS:** Last week's snowfall was not welcomed by some residents but snowmobilers made the most of it as they roared around roads and field and on Fairy Lake despite open water on a stretch of the lake at the west end of Prospect Park. This rider is poised on a snow bank to take a run up the western shore.

## Hey Buddy - Wanna buy a bridge?

Legendary American Showman P.T. Barnham is credited with coining the phrase, "There's a sucker born every minute." Recent events have proven P.T. to be a prophet. I suggest most of the "suckers" grew up to be TV newscasters. That's the only reason I can come up with to explain why we have been inundated with dawn to dusk coverage of a hoax.

I don't believe that "Cloneaid" has cloned a human. I don't believe that CEO Boisselier has either the sophisticated techniques or the facilities to produce such a result. Have you seen any evidence of a lab? I do believe that the whole exercise is a public relations campaign, aimed at impressionable youth, to generate new converts for an obscure wacko in Quebec and his self-proclaimed religion. I can't believe how many professional journalists have been hornswaggled by this deceitful duo.

I was a marketing major at school so how, you may ask, have I come to this conclusion? My last science class was in grade 13, more than a few years ago. Well, this column has a science advisor. My youngest daughter Erin is enrolled in Honours Biology at the University of Waterloo and is specializing in genetics. She's in her last semester and, after earning an additional Masters Degree, is planning to be a genetic councillor.

As a scientist, Erin is enraged at the possibility Cloneaid has cloned a human being. She is acutely aware of the enormous risk to any human clone. In this area, science has outstripped the available research. Little or no thinking has gone into the possible health implications for human clones. We already know that cloned sheep suffer from premature aging and early onset arthritis. We learn more about the negative consequences of cloning every day. Strictly at the practical level, the science is not complete enough to attempt human cloning unless the "scientists" involved intentionally disregard the well being of the end result.

In addition to scientific objections to human cloning, there are valid sociological and moral objections to human experimentation. Personally, I object to human cloning. I think it is folly for man to try and play God. Disaster is sure to follow. We all grew up with the phrase "It's not nice to fool Mother Nature." There's wisdom in those words. Besides, didn't we fight a war over the concept of a master race? Why would we embrace the concept now? Have we, as a society, sunk that far?

My science advisor suggested I clarify a few terms other media are

## The Way I See It

with  
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using which are misleading. News reports continually refer to the woman who supposedly bore this child as its mother. By definition, a clone is an identical twin to the original cell donor. Therefore, since the child is claimed to be a product of this woman's harvested cell, they are identical twins. Sisters in fact. Media keep referring to the child's father. But there is none of this man's DNA in this child. They have no blood relationship. He's not even an uncle or a cousin. He may, one day, prove to be a friend, but that's it. If you analyzed this "clones" DNA it would indicate that the genetic parents are her sister's (mother's) parents. In other words, "eve" shares parents with her identical twin sister who claims to be her mother.

Because she is her mother's twin, Eve's DNA at birth would show the same degradation as the donor. Eve is a 31-year-old newborn. As we grow older our DNA deteriorates in the telomere portion, which is implicated in the ageing process. As her mother's twin sister, Eve shares an identical DNA sequence. No one knows what potential health risks to this child exist because of her unnatural conception. It's important to remember that this is not an in-vitro fertilization where male and female DNA combine to create an individual genetic signature from which the new life develops.

It's generally accepted that we have evolved from lower life forms. Over the millennia, the mixing of DNA among tribes allowed our species to develop. Widespread cloning would bring this process to an end. Cloning may well start the slide to oblivion of our species. That is not a Chicken-Little speculation. We're fooling with the essence of what we are here and we don't know what we're doing past the mechanics.

Even the name given to this baby suggests this dog and pony show has been concocted to promote the Quebec based Raelian Cult. "Eve"; a new beginning for the human race. If these charlatans are so smart, why couldn't they come up with an original name? If they claim to clone a boy, odds are they call him Adam.

Rael, founder of the Raelians (can he spell narcissism), says with a straight face that he was abducted by Aliens. They revealed to him that we are all clones of these self-same aliens,

seeded here some 25,000 years ago. I presume all those artifacts dating back hundreds of thousands of years were replicated at the same time. His "religion" features free love, nudity during rituals, immortality through cloning and God (Worf, if you prefer) knows what else. The free-love aspect of this cult received hundreds of millions of dollars of gratis publicity during this charade. So what did all that titillating stuff have to do with cloning? Nothing, but sex sells. That's why I'm convinced this was a marketing ploy the media bought hook, line and Toga.

Rael boasts he currently has a list of some 2,000 individuals ready to cough up \$200,000 for a clone. That's just what this world needs, to support 2,000 egocentrics. I wouldn't doubt that there are many individuals who would pay big bucks to be cloned. I suspect they would not pay a con-man like this, with no credentials, for the procedure. But then, thousands of people succumb to greed and send millions to the perpetrators of the Nigerian fraud every year. A fool and his money are soon parted, I suppose.

Unfortunately, there are too many folks wandering around loose who will see Rael as the answer to their life quest. These poor souls will join his merry band looking for Shangri La. It just galls me that the media have been his accomplices. Only the people on CNN's Crossfire gave Rael and Madame Boisselier a hard time. Tucker Carlson asked the Cloneaid CEO if the aliens were proud of the new baby? Both Raelians handled the press professionally, not as scientists, but as the hucksters I believe them to be. Old P.T. would be in awe.

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Continuing in a science vein, we note that reliable researchers suspect that sexual activities trigger the development of new neurons in the small centre of the brain. It is hoped that this discovery will provide clues to finding a procedure to induce the brain to heal itself after strokes or head traumas. Pretty exciting stuff.

It also occurs to me though that I've heard many women complain about their men being dense or downright stupid. If so ladies, I have to ask you, are you part of the problem or the solution? Conduct yourself accordingly.

I want it made abundantly clear that the O'Leary girls are not, repeat not available as tutors! If you're wondering, of all the names "the bride" has called me over the years, stupid is not one of them.

I can't get a break.