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## Children: 1 Nestlé: 0

*Candy maker reverses decision, will retain peanut-free facility*

By Angela Blackburn  
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

Nestlé Canada Inc. couldn't bring itself to take candy from a baby — or anaphylactics.

Last month Nestlé announced it would bring nuts into its Toronto nut-free chocolate bar plant in January to stay competitive and protect the plant's 500 jobs.

Research said people want nuts in their chocolate. But then Nestlé began to hear otherwise and on Monday, reversed its decision.

One of the voices complaining was that of an 8-year-old Oakville girl who'd penned a letter and mounted a petition against the decision — and her 6-year-old brother for whom she did it.

Stephanie Scicluna's brother, Adam, is allergic to nuts. Neither Adam nor his family members — Stephanie, dad Dave and mom Karen — eat nuts.

Those who are allergic to nuts can literally stop

breathing in reaction to nuts.

That means the Scicluna family's chocolate munching is restricted to chocolate bars that are not only nut-free but are made in a nut-free environment — where there's no chance of cross-contamination.

Those are Smarties, Kit Kat, Aero, Coffee Crisp and Mirage made at Nestlé's Toronto nut-free plant, the only such plant in North America.

So prevalent is the condition, known as anaphylaxis, that many schools have banned nut products.

Nestlé's decision last month devastated many for whom it spelled the end of chocolate fun as they counted on Nestlé products to keep the chocolate tradition alive, not just at Easter and Christmas, but every day.

Stephanie's petition went to Oakville MPP Gary Carr's office to collect more than 50 signatures.

"You may not want to listen to a bunch of kids, but we are the ones who want to buy, and eat, your prod-

ucts," wrote the Grade 2 Rotherglen School student.

Others in Oakville like Anaphylaxis Network of Canada member and Glen Abbey Resident Diane Johnson called Nestlé's complaint hotline.

Nestlé heard their voices along with thousands of others across Canada — and in an unbelievable move, changed its mind.

"We received literally thousands of complaints, between 8,000 to 10,000. It was just overwhelming and not just the number of calls but the emotion that was attached to this issue," said Nestlé vice-president of marketing, communications and corporate affairs Graham Lute.

While consumer research showed competitiveness lay in catering to those who want nuts in chocolate bars, it failed to take in another human side, said Lute.

Monday's news went down as smooth as chocolate at the Scicluna household.

(See 'Company' page A2)



Photo by Riziero Vertolli  
**Stephanie and Adam Scicluna**  
helped in lobbying Nestlé to retain  
peanut-free plant.

## Election run cost Regional Chair \$57,000.

By Angela Blackburn  
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

In her bid to win the first ever election for the regional chair's job in Halton, the victor, Joyce Savoline, spent a whopping \$56,681 of an impressive \$57,592 in campaign funds that she raised.



Joyce Savoline:  
cost of running for  
top job was  
unknown

"I didn't know what to expect. It was the first time a chair ran a campaign in Halton," said Savoline.

The former Burlington city/regional councillor since 1982, had held the regional chair's job for two previous terms.

The post had previously been awarded through a vote of regional councillors, but all that changed in last November's municipal election.

As the percentage of regional taxes grew, Savoline said, "This office had to be accountable to the people."

So Savoline hit the campaign trail against two competitors: Anne Marsden and Lisa Cooper, both of Burlington.

Early last month, the trio filed financial statements for the campaign, as required by the Municipal Elections Act.

Statements filed by Savoline's competitors showed that neither raised any campaign funds.

"I wasn't running a campaign in opposition to anyone but I was putting myself forward. From the beginning I vowed to stay focused on I what I believe is right," said Savoline.

"I take the job seriously, rather than taking myself seriously," she said.

Cooper spent \$207.59, mostly on brochures — a drop in the bucket compared to the \$30,775.35 Savoline spent on brochures.

The re-elected chair also spent \$11,970.99 on advertising and \$8,348.57 on election signs.

Savoline dished out \$390.64 on office expenses; \$262.63 on telephone and travel charges; and, \$2,409.22 on a voting day party/appreciation notices.

"I used my home as my campaign office," said Savoline.

The major criticism of making the regional chair's job a publicly elected post is the massive geographic area that must be covered in Halton — Oakville, Burlington, Milton and Halton Hills.

(See 'Riding' page A5)



Photo by Riziero Vertolli

In the greenhouse at White Oaks Secondary School, getting ready for WOSS Plant Sale on Thursday, are from left, Grade 9 students Phil Tricane, Kalan Buksanovich and Jennie Charbonneau, with teacher Wendy Peters.

## High school's horticultural program growing to fill need for landscapers

White Oaks plant sale tomorrow

By Wilma Blokhuis  
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

White Oaks Secondary School, the only high school in Oakville with a greenhouse, is branching out.

With the hiring last fall of a new program co-ordinator/teacher, Wendy Peters, WOSS is expanding its horticulture course into an interactive Landscape Horticulture Program — complete with practical experience.

"Our first project will be to revive the school grounds," says Peters, who taught at General Brock High School in Burlington for 15 years.

"We'll be focusing on landscape design," said Peters, adding WOSS is the only high school in Oakville to offer such a course.

"We'll be setting up apprenticeships, co-op placements and work experience programs.

"We also want to expand the program into neighbouring areas. I've sent 60 letters to the industry, asking

for support."

Peters is asking for everything from input to donations of materials, guest speakers for her classes, short-term student work experience projects, hiring students to fill summer jobs, and to sponsor apprenticeships.

Peters has between 125 and 175 students in her Grades 9 and 10 classes.

"Our greenhouse will supplement the program," said Peters, adding a variety of potted and hanging plants — annuals, perennials and herbs are in bloom.

The greenhouse will be open to the public for a Plant Sale to be held tomorrow, Thursday May 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., at WOSS, North Campus, 1055 McCraney St., at Montclair Drive.

Included in this sale will be snapdragons, marigolds, impatiens, petunias, geraniums, sunflowers, morning glory, Sweet pea, lavender, black eyed Susan, purple coneflower, lupins, delphiniums, hollyhock, tiger lily, English ivy, forget me nots, rosemary, thyme, roses, hot mini peppers, and cherry tomatoes. Prices will range from 50 cents to \$10. Proceeds will be used for the Landscape Horticultural Program.

## MPP backs petition on Sithe plant

By Angela Blackburn  
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

The political hot potato of Sithe Energies' plan for a gas-fired power plant on Mississauga's side of Winston Churchill Boulevard was tossed on the table Monday — at Queen's Park.

That's just where many Oakville residents opposed to the plan want the issue — stirring up heat at the Legislature.

Fanning the flames is a petition spearheaded by Oakville MPP Gary Carr and signed by more than 8,000 Oakville residents.

The petition, and the people, want the Ontario government to do a formal Environmental Assessment (EA) of Sithe's plan.

The Canadian arm of New York-based Sithe Energies hopes to open the \$500 million Southdown Plant in 2003 just south of Royal Windsor Drive.

It would supply the GTA, and possibly U.S. markets, with electricity — and could replace coal-burning plants like the Lakeview Generating Station in west Mississauga.

Residents, particularly those in Joshua Creek, fear the plant and its 75-90 ft. emission stack will create noise and pollution.

"We're cautiously optimistic. We're hoping (the petition) will make a difference. In the past, petitions for other issues, with far fewer signatures, have had an impact," said Joshua Creek Ratepayers Inc. (JCRI) president Mary Trudelle.

"We're waiting to see what impact the petition has, if any," said Trudelle.

(See 'Facility' page A5)

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