

Georgetown symposium looks at home heating

Using energy wisely

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

With winter coming to an end and homeowners reviewing five months' worth of heating bills, Thursday night's energy symposium sponsored by two Georgetown residents provided about 50 people with an opportunity to find out why their bills are so high this year, where they can cut back next and what they can look forward to in terms of innovative home heating methods.

Held in the Georgetown and District High School cafeteria, the symposium was sponsored by local restaurateur-caterer Dave Kentner and insulation specialist Sid Heller. Panel guests included representatives from Boehmer's Ltd., a local oil company, Union Gas and Halton Hills Hydro as well as Mr. Heller and special guest Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed, the provincial liberals' energy critic.

"Ontario is in the never-never land of energy consumption," Mr. Reed told the audience, as he reiterated his party's position that the province must depend less on oil for its energy needs and look to alternative resources to meet growing demands.

"Canadians are the largest per capita consumers of energy in the world and we've tried to justify that by saying we live in a northern climate and have to move more goods and services. Now, we're conscious that there must be a better way."

He accused the province's Conservative government of trying to make Ontario more energy self-sufficient by increasing the growth of Ontario Hydro and purchasing an equity share of Sunco Oil Ltd.

Mr. Reed maintained that government should act as "a catalyst" for new energy ideas, like burning peat, alcohol fuels and expanding hydroelectric power rather than generating electricity with nuclear plants.

CUTDOWNS

There are two types of conservation, he said, explaining that homeowners can "quantitatively" cut down on energy costs by insulating their houses; or the province can begin exercising "qualitative" conservation by finding efficient new energy sources which "get us just as much quantity as we had before with less waste."

"There is no energy crisis as such anymore," Mr. Reed said, "but there is a deep crisis of brain-power and imagination...which could find us viable alternatives."

At a cost of \$11 billion last year, Mr. Reed added, Ontario was forced to import most of its energy requirements, largely as oil. The remaining 20 per cent signifies electric power produced here and trace amounts of Ontario's own gas and oil.

"We have great unused resource potential," he said, "and we must allow all the options to take their place in the energy mosaic of the province."

Government began to take serious looks at alternative energy sources about ten years ago when the price for Middle Eastern oil skyrocketed and oil supplies dropped in North America, Mr. Heller said.

"We came to the realization that this (oil) bounty wasn't endless and that we would have to look at other sources," he explained.

He recounted a decade of conservation efforts like the promotion of the federal government's CHIP (Canadian home insulation program) to encourage homeowners to save fuel. And he reviewed other noble efforts such as geothermal experiments to steer the world away from homes heated with oil and petroleum products to other, cleaner, less expensive resources.

SOLAR HEAT

While he declined to give details, Mr. Heller announced that some enterprising Georgetown individuals are working on innovative solar heating plans.

The symposium managed to avoid arguments about the merits of any one of the energy resources represented by panel members. Nor did the evening's main speakers, Mr. Heller and Mr. Reed, discuss in detail the province's thornier and preferred energy resource option, nuclear power.



During an energy symposium at Georgetown District High School Thursday night, energy reps (left to right) Hugh Campbell (Halton Hills Hydro), Beryl Carter and Kirk Brutski (Boehmer's Oil Company Ltd.), symposium chairman Bill Johnson, Jack Gibbs (Union Gas), Sid Heller and Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed fielded questions from an audience of about 50 residents interested in learning how to cut their heating bills. The symposium was organized by Mr. Heller, an expert on home insulation, and restaurateur Dave Kentner.

With the advent of nuclear power, scientists realized that the potential energy source was great, Mr. Heller said.

"But as we proceeded along this course, we became aware that nuclear power had certain drawbacks," he said. "I don't want to make a judgement on it now because the whole picture is not yet in. Safety is the most important aspect we should be looking at."

Fielding audience questions under the chairmanship of regional public works committee head Bill Johnson were

ons allowed representatives to discuss their products and heating systems, the audience also learned that they can save energy by turning down the thermostat on the hot water heater to as low as 50 degrees Celsius and by insulating hot water pipes. If they want to discover where the heat is leaking out of the house costing the homeowner money, they can have special infra-red photographs taken.

"Chrono-therms" can automatically turn down heat in a home when it's not needed and turn it up again during periods when additional comfort is required.

OUT OF DATE

Responding to one question, Mr. Reed concurred that the province's current building code is "30 to 40 years out of date" by not allowing builders to make simple heat-saving adjustments to the home.

He also attacked the province's proposed energy audit bill which would allow homeowners to have Ontario Hydro conduct an energy survey of their homes to determine where they are losing energy and how much it is costing them. Mr. Reed argued that Hydro has a vested interest in conducting the audits and suggested that they should, instead, be carried out by an impartial agency.

Some of the residents at the symposium were interested in heat pumps—a rather recent addition on the market of home

heating equipment. Heat pumps draw heat from the air, groundwater or the surrounding ground itself, in much the same way a refrigerator pump draws heat from the inside of

the fridge cabinet and exhausts it.

While usually requiring some kind of back-up furnace during long cold periods, heat pumps can deliver up to three times as much heat as the energy they consume.

Mr. Kentner's hypothetical questioning about the best way to heat a house addition maintained the momentum of questions from the audience.

Panel members agreed that a thorough examination of Mr. Kentner's current heating system would be needed to accurately assess the new needs required by the addition.

But rather than change the heating system, the most viable solution, it appeared, would be to maintain the present system, while "tightening" up the house to gain savings through "quantitative" conservation.

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POINT OF ORDER, MR. SPEAKER!

Ten schools from the Georgetown area participated in a community-wide public speaking contest at Joseph Gibbons Public School Thursday morning. Participants at the event were Lisa Carter, Joseph Gibbons; Sharon Burrell, Limehouse Public; Kim Hollinger, Park Public; Stephen Lee, Harrison Public; Alex

Cachia, Holy Cross Separate; Julie Holmes, Centennial Middle; Andrea Sybersma Georgetown and District Christian; David Williams, Glen Williams Public; Adam Broughton, Kennedy Public and Lorna Richards, St. Francis of Assisi Separate. (Herald photo)



"Rabbits", "How I Dislike Speeches" and "Piano" were the winning topics respectively chosen by (left to right) Shannon Burrell, Leah Stansbury and Chris Williams, recent winners in a public speaking contest held at Limehouse Public School. Shannon's speech was featured again Thursday in the public speaking contest held at Joseph Gibbons school in Georgetown, along with topics prepared by nine other students from local schools. (Herald photo)

Two-car crash sends seven to hospital

Seven young people were taken to Peel Memorial Hospital Sunday afternoon following a two-car collision at Side-road 5 when one driver failed to stop for a stop sign on Winston Churchill Boulevard.

Driver Walter Veenstra, 18, of Brampton was taken to hospital with internal and head injuries and is in stable condition. Passenger Edward Boersma, 22, of RR2 Norval suffered lacerations and is in stable condition.

The second driver, Phillip Collett, 20, of Waterloo also suffered lacerations from the collision and is in stable condition.

His passengers Jennifer Gordon, 18, of Waterloo had back injuries, Diana Collett, 19, of Eden Place, Georgetown, and brother Paul Collett, 18, both had a broken leg as a result of the accident. They are all in stable condition.

Leslie Collett, 12, was transferred to the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto with internal injuries and her condition is unknown.

Mr. Veenstra was charged with disobeying a stop sign. Damages were \$20,000, with both vehicles demolished in the accident.

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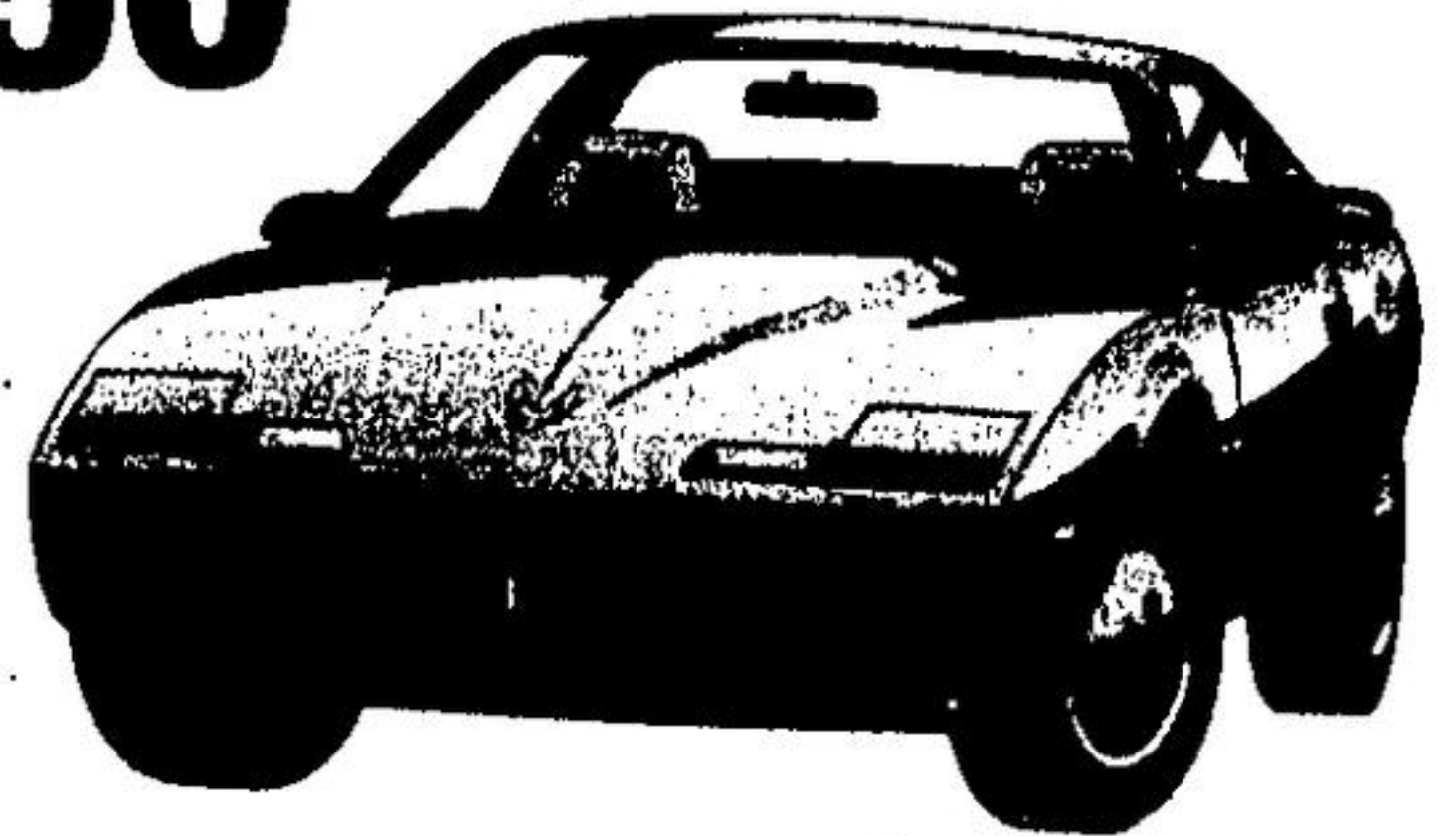
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