

# Community



Participants in North Halton Literacy Guild's Oral History project included (left to right) student Eileen Evans, student Alan and Melanie, coordinator Rilla. (Photo submitted)

## Oral history question addressed at Guild annual meeting

"What is oral history?" was the question addressed at the North Halton Literacy Guild's annual general meeting on November 19.

Eileen Evans, guest speaker at the meeting, played tapes from the Oral History Project she coordinated. Twenty-nine literacy programs across Ontario have participated in this project, funded by the Ministry of Education to commemorate the International Year of Literacy.

Ms. Evans, who is also a tutor, staff member and Board vice-president for the North Halton Literacy Guild, helped four learners and a tutor conduct interviews with long-time residents of this area. Their project, titled "Main Street, Georgetown," resulted in about 12 hours of taped conversations, complete with transcripts.

"Oral history is the record of the reminiscence of anyone with an interesting story to tell," Ms. Evans said. "It isn't dates and events in a chronological order, but random remembrances and anecdotes."

Ms. Evans and the learners used archival photographs of Georgetown and old newspapers to jog the memories of those being interviewed.

"One interviewee, who is 86-years-old, said 'If I don't tell you all this now, by next year I won't remember any of it,'" Ms. Evans related. She added that "the best memory jogger is the interviewer."

A common theme emerging from the interviews was that people were much friendlier in the "olden days" than today; in fact, every person interviewed expressed that opinion.

The Oral History Project has resulted in increased motivation for learners to continue improving their literacy skills and to widen their horizons. Interview questions were formulated and asked by the learners themselves. A tremendous sense

of achievement arose from listening to the tapes, as well as seeing their work in print.

One learner went on to write and publish her own story after interviewing her father. Another learner became so interested in local history that he began reading about it in the library, and did a second interview at his own request.

The project has also resulted in a higher profile of the North Halton Literacy Guild in the community at large. One person who was interviewed has since contacted the Guild about becoming a tutor.

The North Halton Literacy Guild has been honored by having four excerpts from its taped interviews included in an oral history anthology produced by the government. As well, a recent celebration of oral history at Harbourfront, titled "Story Visions", included some of the Guild's tapes.

Ms. Evans, Tutor Training Co-ordinator for the North Halton Literacy Guild, intends to use materials resulting from the Oral History Project as a resource for learning.

"Everybody can talk," she said. "It's a very good learning method. I hope to incorporate it into the tutor training."

Prior to Ms. Evans' presentation of the Oral History Project, the annual general meeting of the North Halton Literacy Guild included the election of a new member to the Board of Directors - Kathy Mills, adult education manager for the Halton Board of Education. Two more positions on the board are vacant at this time.

As well, the Guild's project manager, Maureen McCallum, introduced staff members who have joined the Guild in recent months: Karen Bongard, Workplace Literacy Co-ordinator; Eileen Evans, Tutor

Training Co-ordinator; Heather Angus, Social Services Co-ordinator; and Marilyn Hughes, Administrative Assistant.

## Open Door pasta night

The Open Door Youth Centre invites everyone to attend its third annual Pasta Night Dinner on Dec. 5th at St. George's Anglican Church, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

You will be able to enjoy a delicious supper of homecooked spaghetti and thick, tasty sauce, caesar salad with a creamy dressing, warm garlic bread, kitchen-baked desserts and assorted hot and cold beverages -

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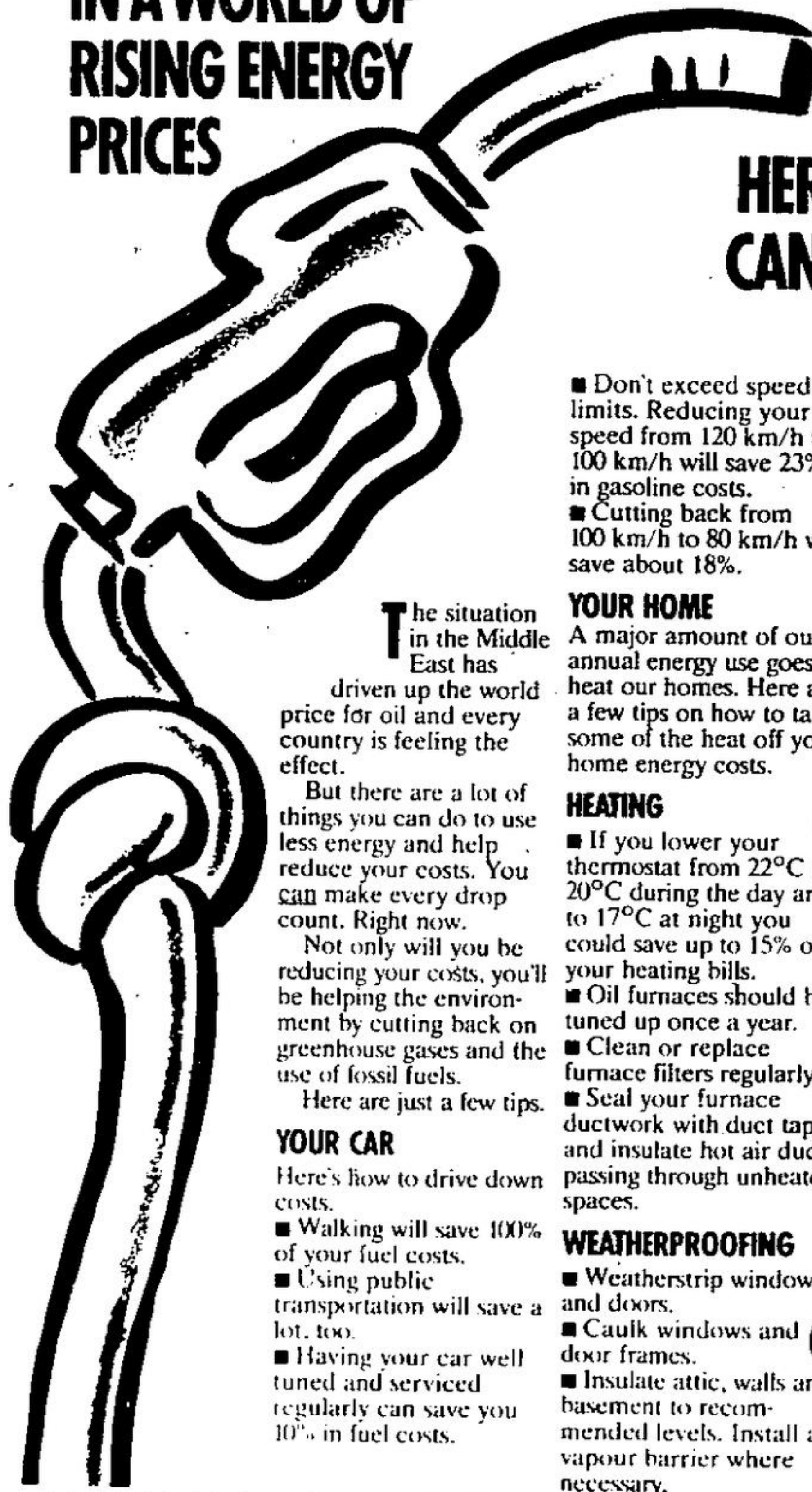


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A major amount of our annual energy use goes to heat our homes. Here are a few tips on how to take some of the heat off your home energy costs.

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■ If you lower your thermostat from 22°C to 20°C during the day and to 17°C at night you could save up to 15% on your heating bills.  
■ Oil furnaces should be tuned up once a year.  
■ Clean or replace furnace filters regularly.  
■ Seal your furnace ductwork with duct tape and insulate hot air ducts passing through unheated spaces.

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■ Caulk windows and door frames.  
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The situation in the Middle East has driven up the world price for oil and every country is feeling the effect.

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## Morris appointed to CVCA position

MEADOWVALE - "It is with great pleasure that I can announce the appointment of Bob Morris to the position of Authority Biologist," said Ken Owen, Manager of Land Resources, for the Credit Valley Conservation Authority in a press release.

"Bob comes to us from the Ministry of Natural Resources, Simcoe District Office, and the Long Point Region Conservation Authority where he was involved in fisheries habitat enhancement, wetland evaluation and fish and wildlife research. Bob is a graduate of Brock with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and Trent with a Masters Degree. Bob's thesis was on the effects of urbanization on the hydrology, physical habitat and fish communities of the Don River."

For more information please contact Robert Peace, Community Relations Spokesperson at the Authority. Mr. Peace can be reached at 416-670-1615.

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