

GRAPEVINE



Weaver wins

Congrats to Acton's Sydney Weaver, 12, winner of the US Trotting Association's annual Marie Hill Youth writing contest. Weaver, a Grade 7 student at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School, was the only Canadian entry in the contest. She received the most points in all age categories and was named the overall top winner.

Weaver's non-fiction essay titled "My Wonderful Life" details her involvement in the Standardbred horse racing world and her unique outlook on life from a wheelchair. Entries were judged on content, accurate industry references, spelling and grammar.

Along with a \$300 cash prize, Weaver's winning entry will be published in the December issue of Hoof Beats magazine. Writing well about her beloved harness racing comes easy for Weaver – earlier this year she won the "I Love Canadian Harness Racing" Fan Club's VIP O'Brien Awards package, which included two tickets to the gala.

Weaver knows how she will spend her most recent winnings – she will buy tickets to the next O'Brien Awards gala.

PA Day fun

The G-rated movie *Big Miracle* will be screened at the Acton library branch for the Munch to the Movies PA Day event on Friday, November 30. Kids are invited to bring their lunch and enjoy the movie. For details call 519-853-0301.

Local families with young children are invited to celebrate the holiday season with Christmas stories, hot chocolate and songs on Thursday, December 13

at 6:30 p.m. at the Acton library.

Winter winner

Congrats to Acton's Steve Mclean who earned two first-place red ribbons this week at the Royal Winter Fair in the roadster classes with his horse, *Armbro Beau*. The Royal, which wraps up November 11, is celebrating its 90th anniversary.

Life-giving gift

Fifty units of blood were collected at the Canadian Blood Services clinic on Monday at Acton arena. The pre-Christmas clinic is December 20 at the Legion, and at the January 7 clinic at Acton area, a donor will make their 125th blood donation. Call 1-888-236-4273 to book an appointment to give the gift of life.



GLADLY GIVEN: Acton's Walter Gordon gave the gift of life for the 13th time at Monday's Acton blood donor clinic. – Ted Tyler photo

Lest We Forget

The poppy is the icon worn on most collars as communities prepare to honour those who fought and died for our freedom. The poppy was first introduced as a symbol of Remembrance in 1921 – a visual pledge to forget the Canadians killed in war and military operations. Two moments of silence are observed at Remembrance Day services across Canada at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of the year.



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS: There were sweet treats and good deals at St. Alban's Anglican Church for Saturday's Christmas bazaar and tea which was enjoyed by, from left: Lynne Marcoux, Fran Marcoux, Adele Nolan and Cynthia Blades. – Ted Tyler photo

Science Matters

By David Suzuki



Will we learn from Sandy?

By David Suzuki

The storm that wreaked havoc on Caribbean nations and the U.S. East Coast in late October offers a glimpse into our future. Along with recent heavy rainfall, flooding, heat waves and droughts throughout the world, it's the kind of severe weather event scientists have been telling us to expect as global temperatures rise.

Does that mean climate change caused Hurricane Sandy? No. Experts know that tropical Atlantic storms are normal this time of year. This one and its impacts were made unusually harsh by a number of converging factors: high tides, an Arctic weather system moving down from the north and a high-pressure system off Canada's East Coast that held the storm in place.

But most climate experts are certain the intensity of the storm and the massive damage it caused were in part related to changing global climate, attributed mainly to our habit of burning fossil fuels as quickly and inefficiently as possible. Global warming causes sea levels and ocean temperatures to rise, which results in more rainfall and leads to a higher likelihood of flooding in low-lying areas.

Scientists also believe this year's record Arctic sea-ice melt may have contributed to the high-pressure system that prevented Sandy from moving out to sea. In short, the storm and the unprecedented flood-

ing and damage are exactly what climate scientists have been predicting.

Extreme weather events, including heat waves and drought, are no longer just model-based predictions, though. NASA scientist James Hansen, who sounded the alarm about climate change in 1988, recently wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Our analysis shows that it is no longer enough to say that global warming will increase the likelihood of extreme weather and to repeat the caveat that no individual weather event can be directly linked to climate change. To the contrary, our analysis shows that, for the extreme hot weather of the recent past, there is virtually no explanation other than climate change."

The damage that climate change is causing and that will get worse if we fail to act goes beyond the hundreds of thousands of lives, homes and businesses lost, ecosystems destroyed, species driven to extinction, infrastructure smashed and people inconvenienced. It will even devastate the one thing that many corporate and government leaders put above all else: that human creation we call the economy – the very excuse many of our leaders use to block environmental protection and climate action.

According to Hansen, the Texas drought in 2011 alone caused \$5 billion in damage. Repairing the damage from Sandy in the U.S. is expected to cost at least \$50 billion. And as former World Bank economist Lord Stern has pointed out, slowing climate change will cost, but doing nothing will cost far more.

And yet, in the U.S. presidential election, one candidate

openly mocked climate science while the other all but ignored it. In Canada, our government's highest priority is to quickly extract and sell tar sands bitumen so that it can be burned up, mostly by China, which will further fuel global warming.

Some solutions are relatively simple and would provide economic benefits: implementing measures to conserve energy, putting a price on carbon through taxes and cap-and-trade and shifting from fossil fuels to clean and renewable energy sources. Some may require a bit of sacrifice for people in the wealthiest parts of the world – substantially cutting down on automobile use and air travel and shifting from rampant consumerism to a more conservative way of living, for example.

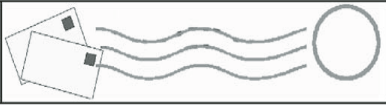
Much of this requires rethinking the ways we measure progress and govern our economies. That's what we've always done when our tools no longer fit our circumstances. But it's just not compatible with rapid tar sands expansion and governing for the sake of the fossil fuel industry.

Even the Conference Board of Canada says we can rapidly expand tar sands production or we can do something about global warming – but not both. Thus, we see a mad rush to get the bitumen out of the ground and sell it quickly before it becomes economically unfeasible.

For the sake of our health, our children and grandchildren and even our economic well-being, we must make protecting the planet our top priority.

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Communications Manager Ian Hanington.

Letters



Quarry expansion has risks

Dear Editor,

I'm a student from Acton High School. As part of my Civics class, I researched the Acton Quarry expansion.

We live on the Niagara Escarpment, part of the Greenbelt. Yet, a place banned from being built on is going to have 750 acres of its best land disappear in a few years.

The Jefferson salamander, an endangered animal, and the local water shed are also at risk. Besides, any damage to roads impacts taxpayers.

I ask those who cherish this area we live in to voice their concerns to the town. They need to hear your "no's". Cause if you don't say "no", the town's going to say "yes".

If you want any more information, you can contact Doris at P.O.W.E.R. Also, there's a free bus tour they're organizing near the Acton Sobeys at 10 a.m. on November 17.

Regards
Andrew Hilson,
Acton, ON