

# GRAPEVINE



## Holiday cheer

The sounds of Christmas will fill the air on Sunday, December 9 as the Acton Citizens Band celebrates its 140th anniversary with its annual Christmas Concert. The holiday concert at Bethel Christian Reformed Church is a fundraiser for Acton FoodShare, and a free will donation of non-perishable food or cash will be gratefully accepted.

## Seat 'sale'

The best seat in the house could be yours – literally. Just like 37 years ago when supporters “bought” seats in the John Elliott Theatre – actually they had the names engraved on them – to help raise funds for the Cultural Centre in Georgetown, the current “Perchance to Dream” fundraising library/Cultural Centre campaign is offering the same opportunity for new seating being installed during renovations.

Along with the \$750 to “buy” a seat, supporters can also “buy” a shelf in the new library. Both options are limited to 260 donors.

## Choir call

The Acton Ministerial Association will host an Easter Cantata on Palm Sunday this spring, and is holding the first rehearsal tomorrow (Friday) at 7 p.m. at St. Alban's Anglican Church.

The rehearsal is open to all singers from all Acton churches, whether they are in a choir or not. Participants will sing though the Cantata “Once Upon a Tree”, and the music score and a practice CD will be distributed so people can practice until regular rehearsals begin in January. For more information email [jculpeper@cogeco.ca](mailto:jculpeper@cogeco.ca)

## Ready to ignite

Lights on the Colorado Blue Spruce tree in Acton East will be ignited on Saturday at the Light Up The Hills ceremony what gets under-

way at 7 p.m. in front of the Acton arena.

The festivities will include music, free hot chocolate and cookies – and a visit from Santa Claus, who will throw the switch.

## Welcome to the Acton library

During December, it will be even more worth the drive to Acton for book lovers as the temporary Maple Avenue site of the Georgetown library closes tomorrow (Friday) for good.

When the Georgetown library re-opens, it will be at the renovated Church Street location. In the meantime, Acton library officials are ready and willing to help anyone who usually uses the Georgetown library. The borrowing time on items checked out of temporary Georgetown library before Friday will be extended, and late fees will not be charged. For more details call 905-873-2681 or visit [www.hhpl.on.ca](http://www.hhpl.on.ca)

## Toy depot

Acton's Active Choice – Rehabilitation Centre will double as the North Pole until December 15 as staff collects new donated toys which will be distributed to local needy kids by the Salvation Army.

Toys can be dropped off at 19 Mill St. East during regular business hours – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Fridays.



**SHOEBOX GENEROSITY:** St. Alban's Anglican Church member Chris Miller knows it is better to give than receive, and the generosity of the congregation and friends was evident in the 129 shoeboxes, filled with donated gifts for children in developing countries, that were offered to the Samaritan's Purse “Operation Christmas Child” program. – Submitted photo

## President Obama must show climate leadership

By David Suzuki

The race to become leader of the world's most powerful democracy often seemed disconnected from reality. During debates, the two main candidates stooped to insults, half-truths and outright lies. The overall campaign included appallingly ignorant statements about women.

But the most bewildering disconnect was over the greatest threat the world faces: global warming. Republican candidate Mitt Romney only mentioned it mockingly, and President Barack Obama brought it up in passing toward the end of the campaign and in one line during his acceptance speech.

We should probably be happy that the candidate who at least acknowledged the seriousness of climate change won. Obama has had more to say since being elected to his second term. “I am a firm believer that climate change is real, that it is impacted by human behaviour and carbon emissions, and as a consequence I think we have an obligation to future generations to do something about it,” he told reporters at a post-election news conference.

He went on to list his accomplishments on climate during his first term: better fuel efficiency standards for cars and trucks, increased clean-energy production and investment in “breakthrough technologies that could further remove carbon from our atmosphere.” But those were inadequate, given the scope of the problem.

He should have done more. As investment strategist Jeremy Grantham recently wrote in Nature, “President Barack Obama missed the chance of a lifetime



**Science Matters**  
By David Suzuki

to get a climate bill passed, and his great environmental and energy scientists John Holdren and Steven Chu went missing in action.”

Part of the problem is the increasingly dysfunctional nature of a polarized and paralyzed U.S. political system – including a Congress dominated by anti-environmental, anti-tax and often anti-government Republicans. Many of us – not just Americans – hope the president will show stronger leadership this time around. Unfortunately, his news conference statement sent mixed messages. Although he acknowledged that more should be done and promised to have “a wide-ranging conversation with scientists, engineers and elected officials,” about reducing carbon, he also said “if the message somehow is that we're going to ignore jobs and growth simply to address climate change, I don't think anyone's going to go for that. I won't go for that.”

He went on to acknowledge the costs of climate-related natural disasters and mentioned the danger of climate change as, “something we're passing on to future generations that's going to be very expensive and very painful to deal with.”

In trying to say the right thing without alienating the fossil fuel industry and other moneyed interests, he came across as confused. Even though it will be expensive and painful not to act, he's not prepared to take the necessary steps if it will impede jobs and growth. But climate change is already

costing the U.S., and the rest of the world – in money, human health and lives. The increasing frequency of extreme weather events, droughts and floods is in line with what climate scientists have been predicting for decades – and evidence is mounting that what's happening is more severe than predicted, and will get far worse still if we fail to act.

Because our leaders – in Canada and the U.S. – have too long listened to fossil fuel interests and their denier minions rather than scientists, it will be more difficult than it might have been to reduce carbon emissions to the extent necessary to prevent runaway global warming (if it's not too late already), and it may require more sacrifice than it would have had we acted sooner. But there are many ways to protect the health of the planet and the future of humanity without destroying economies.

Conserving energy and thus saving money, reducing consumption of unnecessary products and packaging and shifting to a clean-energy economy would likely hurt the bottom line of polluting industries, but would undoubtedly have positive effects for most of us. Many scientists and economists also say putting a price on carbon through carbon taxes and/or cap-and-trade is necessary. Rethinking the economy as a means and not an end in itself would also help.

If America wants to retain its position as a global power, its president must listen to the people and show strong leadership at this turning point in human history.

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

## Correction

The Sunday, December 2 Acton Ministerial Association Remembering and Healing Service will be held at St. Alban's the Martyr

Anglican Church at 2 p.m. An incorrect location was reported in last week's issue. The New Tanner regrets the error.