GRAPEVINE

GRIEFSHARE

GriefShare is starting up again at Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Acton, beginning Thursday, September 11 from 7 to 9 p.m.

GriefShare is a 13-week video based small group to support people who have suffered the loss of someone close. You'll have the opportunity to interact with others who have experienced a recent loss, learned about their experiences, and be able to share your own. The setting is casual, the discussion is confidential. Call Ann at 519-853-3687 for more information. Sponsored by the Acton Ministerial Association.

NEW BUSINESS BUZZ

New Acton business, Local Motion Fitness will be hosting a Grand Opening on September 6. Owner Jason Fournier is excited to welcome everyone to his newly renovated 1600 sq ft space located at 341 Queen Street (the old Mazda dealership).

Local Motion Fitness will offer classes such as yoga, zumba and cardio, as well as personal training. Memberships can be obtained in advance of opening by visiting localmotion.ca

LITTLE OFF THE TOP

Leathertown Lumber's David Lindsey, along with wife Karen and daughter Amanda will again be donating their hair to the *Angel Hair for Kids Foundation*, on September 13 at 12 noon.

Angel Hair for Kids is a foundation that works to provide wigs and hair loss solutions to financially disadvantaged children.

This will be the fourth year that the Lindsey family have had Monica and Sandy from Profile Hair Salon participate in this event. Donations can be made at Leathertown Lumber 519-853-1970 or 519-853-1298.

THAT GIRL RACING

That is three in a row for Acton's Tiina Duncanson and *That Girl Racing*. Duncanson, a world record holder who races in the NHRA Division 1 Prostock Snowmobile, won her third race in a row this past weekend at Cecil County Dragway in Maryland, and is currently second in points standing in the series. Duncanson brought home a famed "Wally" trophy, named in honour of NHRA founder Wally Parks by her winning times of 8.296 at 156.35 MPH. Next up for the team is Englishtown, NJ in September.

FREE SUNGLASSES ON UV GROOVY WEEK

The Doctors and staff at Acton Eyecare (Dr. John W. Pond & Associates) have a goal this summer - to keep children's eyes healthy and protected from damaging UV rays. That's why they're celebrating UV Groovy Week on August 25-29, by giving away free sunglasses to children ages five and under.

UV exposure is cumulative and can cause damage to the eyes over time. It is important to protect your child's eyes early in life to ensure that they have the best chance for healthy eyes through out their lifetimes.

Give their eyes a healthy start and visit Acton Eyecare to receive a free pair of children's sunglasses. No purchase is necessary but quantities are limited.

GRAVITY GOT YOU DOWN?

Balance is very important to us at any age, but especially so as we get older. Falls resulting from balance loss can be very serious, potentially causing a hip fracture, head/brain injury, and associated complications.

The Halton Hills Active Living Centres are offering a free trial QIGOING and T'AI CHI classes during their Open House Week from September 8-12, as well as a presentation on the Benefits of Balance Training.

Balance Training can help prevent falls due to lack of muscle strength and can also reverse age-related decline including our ability to recover from sudden loss of balance.

Contact the Active Living Centre for dates and times at 519-853-5951.

CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE

The United Way of Halton Hills will kick off the 2014 fall campaign at their 'Champions for Change' event on September 13 at The Club at North Halton at 6:30 p.m. This year's theme *'the world at your doorstep'* will celebrate countries from around our globe and will feature an entertaining evening of International food, dance and a fabulous silent auction.

Local artist Laura Thompson will play keyboard throughout the evening and guests will enjoy a dance demonstration by South Pacific Dancers. Guests are encouraged to dress in international apparel.

For more information about tickets, donations or sponsorships, please call Janet Foster, at 905 877-3066.

REACHING FOR A CAUSE: The last session of Yoga In The Park held last Thursday evening, was a huge success. Participants were also treated to a surprise Zumba lesson taught by Cheryle Da Ponte from Staying Alive Fitness. - *Ted Tyler photo*

SCIENCE MATTERS

BY DAVID SUZUKI

Nanoparticles can be used to deliver vaccines, treat tumours, clean up oil spills, preserve food, protect skin from sun and kill bacteria. They're so useful for purifying, thickening, colouring and keeping food fresh that they're added to more products every year, with the nanofoods market projected to reach US$20.4-billion by 2020. Nanoparticles are the new scientific miracle that will make our lives better. Some people say they'll usher in the next industrial revolution.

Hold on... Haven't we heard that refrain before?

Nanotechnology commonly refers to materials, systems and processes that exist or operate at a scale of 100 nanometres or less, according to U.S.-based Friends of the Earth. A nanometer is a billionth of a metre — about 100,000 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair. An FoE report finds use of unlabelled, unregulated nano-ingredients in food has grown substantially since 2008. Because labelling and disclosure are not required for food and beverage products containing them, it's difficult to determine how widespread their use is. Nanoparticles are also used in everything from cutting boards to baby bottles and toys to toothpaste.

"Major food companies have rapidly introduced nanomaterials into our food with no labels and scant evidence of their safety, within a regulatory vacuum," says report author Ian Illuminato, FoE health and environment campaigner. "Unfortunately, despite a growing body of science calling their safety into question, our government has made little progress in protecting the public, workers and the environment from the big risks posed by these tiny ingredients."

Studies show nanoparticles can harm human health and the environment. They can damage lungs and cause symptoms such as rashes and nasal congestion, and we don't yet know about long-term effects. Their minute size means they're "more likely than larger particles to enter cells, tissues and organs" and "can be more chemically reactive and more bioactive than larger particles of the same chemicals," FoE says. A Cornell University study found nanoparticle exposure changed the structure of intestinal-wall lining in chickens.

Like pesticides, they also bioaccumulate. Those that end up in water — from cosmetics, toothpaste, clothing and more — concentrate and become magnified as they move up the food chain. And in one experiment, silver nanoparticles in wastewater runoff killed a third of exposed plants and microbes, according to a CBC online article.

Their use as antibacterial agents also raises concerns about bacterial resistance and the spread of superbugs, which already kill tens of thousands of people every year.

The Wilson Center, an independent research institution in Washington, D.C., recently created a database of "manufacturer-identified" nanoparticle-containing consumer products. It lists 1,628, of which 383 use silver particles. The second most common is titanium, found in 179 products. While acknowledging that "nanotechnologies offer tremendous potential benefits" the Center set up its Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies to "ensure that as these technologies are developed, potential human health and environmental risks are anticipated, properly understood, and effectively managed."

As is often the case with such discoveries, widespread application could lead to unintended consequences. Scientists argue we should follow the precautionary principle, which states proponents must prove products or materials are safe before they're put into common use. Before letting loose such technology, we should also ask who benefits, whether it's necessary and what environmental consequences are possible.

Friends of the Earth has called on the U.S. government to impose a moratorium on "further commercial release of food products, food packaging, food contact materials and agrochemicals that contain manufactured nanomaterials until nanotechnology-specific safety laws are established and the public is involved in decision-making."

The group says we can protect ourselves by choosing fresh, organic and local foods instead of processed and packaged foods and by holding governments accountable for regulating and labelling products with nanoparticles.

Nanomaterials may well turn out to be a boon to humans, but we don't know enough about their long-term effects to be adding them so indiscriminately to our food systems and other products. If we've learned anything from past experience, it's that although we can speculate about the benefits of new technologies, reality doesn't always match speculation, and a lack of knowledge can lead to nasty surprises down the road.