



**OH, SANTA:** Julie Conroy (left) and Pauline Barlow got big hugs from Santa as members of the Acton Seniors Centre celebrated at their recent annual Christmas dinner/dance at Blue Springs Golf Club. — Submitted photo

HALTON HILLS  
**SENIORS**  
RECREATION CENTRES  
ACTON

Members of the Acton and Georgetown Seniors Centres were disappointed to discover through the local media that plans for both the Acton and Georgetown Seniors Centers' future expansions had disappeared from future budgets.

On November 28 at the Halton Hills council meeting, Acton Seniors Centre President Bev Jones and Georgetown Seniors Centre President Rick Chambers made presentations to Council expressing their disappointment, and asking for the budget plans to be reconsidered.

The gallery was filled with members from both Acton and Georgetown showing support for both presidents, and the Centers' expansions to be included in the forecast budgets. Councillor Jane Fogal put forward a resolution to keep the project alive, amended by Councillor Jon Hurst. Halton Hills CAO, Treasurer, and Director of Rec and Park will be coming back to Council with a financial strategy to make these much needed projects a reality.

Thank you Council members.

There were a record number of mooners at last Thursday afternoon's Bid Euchre. Betty Brewer had two, Catherine Hunt,

Shirley Hunter, Frances Hogenbirk, Mary Irwin, Joan Bateman, Elma Braida, and Ruth Burke had one each.

December 13 is a busy day at the Centre. At 10:30 a.m. students from St Joseph School's choir are coming to entertain us with Christmas music as we enjoy refreshments, followed at 1:00 p.m., by a Fifth Avenue Jewellery display. The jewellery is exquisite and guaranteed for life.

Still in the Spirit of Christmas, the sign up sheet is up for the *Tour of Lights* on Wednesday, December 14. Please add your name if you are interested, as the tour will be cancelled if there is not enough interest.

The following Tuesday, December 20 at 10 a.m. you can enjoy *Christmas with the Kranks* and at 1 p.m., members will enjoy an afternoon of laughter and camaraderie while they are entertained by McKenzie Smith Bennett School's choir, and have a friendly game of exchanging "Secret Santa gifts." The gift should cost no more than \$10. Christmas refreshments will be served. If you aren't still busy with last minute shopping this is the perfect way to relax, have fun, meet new friends, renew old acquaintances and get in the Christmas Spirit.

The Christmas Dinner and Dance at Blue Springs Golf Course was a great success. Everyone enjoyed getting dressed up for the festive occasion.

Before the three course dinner, Acton Seniors Centre Coordinator Wendy Krever introduced President Bev Jones. He gave a brief update on the presentation he made to Council. Mayor Rick Bonnette brought seasons greetings from the Council, and brought regrets from his wife Josie and Councillor Jon Hurst who were at the *Light up the Hills* ceremony. Director of Recreation and Parks Terry Alyman said it was a pleasure to join us and thanked the members for their support, their hours of volunteering, and the Board members past and present for their hard work. Also present was Ward One Councillor Mike O'Leary. Santa stopped in to enjoy the dancing and give out the door prizes.

There were two 50/50 prizes this year of either \$123 cash or two tickets for a Maple Leaf hockey game. Mac Sprawl's name was drawn first and he went for the money, and when Shirley Broostads' name was second out of the hat, and she opted for the cash rather than the tickets too.

The person whose name was drawn this week had not put her loonie in the box, so next week the pot should be over \$200.

**Science Matters**  
By David Suzuki



Who is influencing Canada's resource priorities? In a puzzling appeal to anti-American sentiment, some industry supporters claim that U.S. foundations are threatening Canadian policy by donating money to environmental groups here. These arguments have appeared in publications such as the *Vancouver Sun* and *Calgary Herald*, and on Sun TV.

Greenpeace has released research that points in a different direction, one that seems more logical. The Greenpeace report, "Who's Holding Us Back?", shows that multinational and U.S. corporations in the oil, mining, and chemical sectors, among others, have been spending money and using industry trade associations, think-tanks, lobbying, and revolving doors between government and industry to block action on climate change and influence resource policy in Canada and elsewhere.

Opponents of environmental initiatives point to recent protests against the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline, which would carry bitumen from the Alberta tar sands to B.C.'s north coast. They say this opposition is part of a conspiracy by U.S. funders to ensure that oil keeps flowing to the U.S. and not to Asia. That the same people also oppose the Keystone XL pipeline, which would take bitumen from the tar sands to the U.S., doesn't faze those who promote this twisted logic.

If these conspiracy

theorists were truly upset about U.S. influence on Canadian infrastructure and resource development, they would lobby for greater national control of the oil industry, much of which is owned by U.S. and Chinese corporations. They might also question U.S. industry and foundation funding for organizations such as Canada's right-wing Fraser Institute, which has the same charitable status as the David Suzuki Foundation and other conservation groups and is thus governed by the same rules.

The criticism of U.S. money going to Canadian non-profits is part of a recent spate of efforts to silence those who want to bring more balance to discussions about the fossil fuel industry and environmental issues. Sun Media, owned by media giant Quebecor, has been especially aggressive in its opposition to those who don't go along with its pro-government, pro-industry way of thinking, with recent attacks on environmental groups and the CBC.

In one of those "revolving door" scenarios that the Greenpeace research highlights, Kory Teneycke left his position as Prime Minister Stephen Harper's communications director to join Sun TV before its launch. Several reporters who were considered for positions at the TV channel have said that Teneycke told them part of their job would be to go after me. Sun Media has also campaigned to have the David Suzuki Foundation's charitable status removed. Of course, one of Sun TV's major personalities, Ezra Levant,

has strong ties to the Harper government. He also launched the "ethical oil" campaign, which was taken over by Alykhan Velshi, who was recently hired as Stephen Harper's planning director.

I wish I had the kind of influence over public policy that anti-environmentalists and news media claim I have but, alas, I think Greenpeace is much closer to the mark in saying that corporate interests, including many foreign interests, wield more power.

As for funding, just as we're glad that Canadians donate money to important causes worldwide — from earthquake relief in Haiti to aid for famine victims in Africa — we're pleased that people outside our borders understand the global importance of environmental protection in Canada.

Like many environmental organizations, the David Suzuki Foundation is able to do its work thanks to the many people who give us their time and money. Over half of our funding (55 per cent) comes in donations from about 28,000 individuals — more than 9,000 of whom give us a bit of money every month. Philanthropic foundations and businesses provide the rest. Our funding from sources in the U.S. and other countries ranges from six to 10 per cent per year. All must meet the requirements of our ethical gift acceptance policy.

I encourage everyone to carefully consider the arguments on both sides. *Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation editorial and communications specialist Ian Hanington.*

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