

Hydro rate "cut" will cost us more over the long run

On March 2, the Ontario Government announced a plan to lower hydro rates by 25 per cent beginning this summer.

In order to finance the rate cuts, the Government has extended the costs of electricity generation contracts over a longer period.

"This means that we are going to be paying billions of dollars more over a longer period of time," Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott said. "It's like refinancing a mortgage on a house - your monthly payments may be smaller, but in the long run you end up paying much, much more. They're pushing the bill off to our children and grandchildren."

According to published reports, it is estimated that the rate cut will ultimately cost Ontario an additional \$1.4 billion a

year in interest.

"The Government boasts about cutting rates by 25%," Mr. Arnott observed. "However, that 25% includes the 8% HST reduction that already went into effect on January 1, which they are essentially re-announcing."

Mr. Arnott pointed out that these cuts would not have been necessary if not for the Liberals disastrous energy policies which sent Ontario hydro rates skyrocketing in the first place.

"They're scrambling to fix a problem they've admitted to creating," he said. "Our Ontario PC Caucus has consistently opposed the Liberals energy policies which have caused this mess, including voting against the Green Energy Act in 2009."

Mr. Arnott also questioned why it took the

Government so long to act.

"We've been raising this issue in the Legislature repeatedly. I launched a petition calling on the Government to stabilize hydro rates over a year ago," Mr. Arnott said. "It shouldn't have taken the Government so long to realize that hydro bills have risen to the point where they are increasingly unaffordable for many families. Also, skyrocketing rates are costing us jobs, as businesses have closed or relocated outside Ontario."

Mr. Arnott believes that with an election looming on the horizon, the Liberals are desperate.

"We all know there's an election coming next year," he said. "With their diminishing support in Ontario, the Liberals are focused only on political survival."

Aqua Ducks raise funds with annual swim-a-thon



AQUA DUCKS: top - Skye Fuelscher (left), Jordyn Kroezen, bottom - Kelsea Marcolini (left) and Reka Paradi

By: Les Schmidt

Over 70 swimmers from the Acton Aqua Ducks were working hard in the pool on Friday night in their annual swim-a-thon. They weren't racing against the competition, they were raising money, so that they could take on their competitors. There are several levels of swimmers on this competitive team, for this event though, they were arranged into two groups. The younger, or newer competitors, tried to swim as many lengths of the pool as they could in an hour.

Some in this group were hoping to

complete 50 lengths of the pool which is the equivalent of 2.5 kms. One of the youngest, a five year old, completed 34 lengths.

Some of the older, stronger swimmers went for two hours non-stop, hoping to complete 5km. Most of the stronger swimmers actually completed the 5km in about an hour and a half. While there were clearly some impressive individual efforts made, together the team hopes raise approximately \$2,000 from this event.

The team has another long distance swim on March 24 and final results of the Swim-a-thon will be totalled up by SwimOntario on March 31.

World Day of Prayer at St. John's Anglican Church in Rockwood

By: Les Schmidt

The World Day of Prayer was celebrated with an Ecumenical Service at St. John's Anglican Church in Rockwood, in other churches in the area, and around the world, last Friday, March 3. The first national Day of Prayer in Canada was organized on January 9, 1920. Organizers of this event are committed to uniting all Christians in the support of women's spiritual growth, social justice, and women's issues. Their focus is on anti-racism, poverty, and on ending violence against women.

Each year one country is chosen, and examples of these issues, in that country are highlighted as part of the service. This year the stories of three women from the Philippines were shared with those attending the service. The Philippines is a nation of over 100 million people spread out across over 7,000 islands. Because of financial hardship many young women from the Philippines end up working abroad, as Nannies, or as domestic help.

For those that choose to remain in their homeland, life can be equally challenging. On November



8, 2013, when Typhoon Haiyan, the strongest storm ever recorded on landfall, hit the Philippines, it didn't make life any easier. Over 6,300 people died, and the stories of some that survived, and are still trying to recover were

shared. Quenten Johnson of Everton, also shared some of his experiences as a community nutrition specialist in a number of developing countries, and in disaster relief situations around the world, including the Philippines.



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