Committee updates Halton Hills Council on Canada 150 celebrations

By: Vivien Fleisher

Cultural Centre Supervisor Jamie Smith outlined proposed initiatives to Halton Hills Council on February 21 for Canada 150 celebrations, all part of an initiative undertaken by the Federation of Canadian

municipalities.

Three community leaders have taken on the role of ambassadors to the committee: Connie Karlsson of the Inuit Outreach Centre; Laurent Thibault, on the Hospital Foundation Board; and Alex Hilson from Inspire Halton.

Council was presented with ten major activities for the town in a power-point presentation. Highlights included kicking off the year with "The Most Patriotic Town" Challenge, where all residents are challenged to fly the Canadian flag on July 1, with flags to be supplied

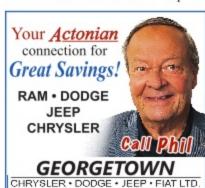
for purchase in advance by the Chamber of Commerce. Another is the "3 Things for Canada" initiative, where residents perform three gifts of service to Canada over 2017, and then record their experiences to be shared at the library. The main goals are to generate a lot of enthusiasm and involvement, enhanced by the high visibility of our flag and the planting of lots of trees and flowers around town.

Another proposal to keep the celebrations going involves enhancing existing events, and combining forces to increase marketing

town, the Cultural Roundtable, and the Chamber will all work together to get the word out. The town will sponsor

for events. This means the

many events, as many grant opportunities did not come through. The full report is available at www. haltonhillscanada150.ca or www.visithaltonhills.ca



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Loss of Youth Centres

Think Tank of Hope gathers momentum

By: Jane Dougan

Seventeen years of support for young people 12-19) in Acton and Georgetown may end June 30 with Links2Care's decision to close 'Off the Wall' and 'Open Door' youth centres. The agency can no longer effectively and securely meet local young people's increasing and complex needs around critical issues such as family dysfunction, anxiety, homelessness or food insecurity. Instead, "ongoing support to youth will require a community of providers".

19-year old Youth Advocate Ivy-Lynne Halis knows first-hand the difference the Youth Centres have made for her, and across several generations. "[Links2Care youth workers] Amanda and Ross were there for us every step of the way." Ivy started a 'Save the Youth Centres' Facebook page for brainstorming ideas such as a fundraiser.

The Youth Services Network is a recent Regional and Town-based initiative. Commissioner of Recreation and Park Warren Harris explains

"Halton differs from other municipalities in offering an integrated service-delivery model with other community-based providers. We're continuing to sit down with local young people and other key stakeholders to figure out criteria for 'what and where' such space should

"A Think Tank of Hope" is how Senior Pastor Ray Vander Kooij of Acton's Bethel Church describes the broad-reaching group convened by the Housing Task Force of the Community Support Network of Halton Hills around key issues such as youth homelessness. "We're moving forward the social pillar of the town's sustainability plan," he explains. The group met at Bethel Tuesday morning. "Two things stood out. There was representation of the whole spectrum that's so important for someone going from a place of crisis to a place of being cared for and supported. There were sparks of synergy, some good hopeful things are moving forward.'



THIN ICE: Spotted on the mill pond in Eden Mills recently, this mink seems to be enjoying the ice and open water, but for the rest of us caution needs to be used around all bodies of water as thinning ice, rain and snow melting can make the banks unstable and the water levels high. - Les Schmidt photo



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