

EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

Pitch in for a better world

While looking out the window and faced with another foot of snow and ice so late in the month of April, it's easy to imagine that spring will never come. Despite the over all sense that winter may never end, we, of course, know on an intellectual level that this is not true, that temperatures will rise and the snow will melt and spring will return again—hopefully. In fact, weather forecasts are already calling for sunshine and double-digit temperatures for the weekend; a vast improvement to last weekend's dire predictions.

No doubt everyone is sick of snow, but—as we have seen from previous thaws—the snow can hide a multitude of unpleasantness. Let's face it, it's been a long winter. A winter of windy days blowing recycling from blue boxes, newspapers off porches and other bits of lost litter that has been buried beneath blankets of white. These early days of spring can look nearly as bleak as the snow—between the dormant, yellow-brown vegetation and months' worth of litter emerging from the snow.

This Sunday, April 22 will mark the 48th anniversary of Earth Day, and the Town has events scheduled for the next week from this Saturday to April 28 to celebrate and to help make our community a better place for us all to live.

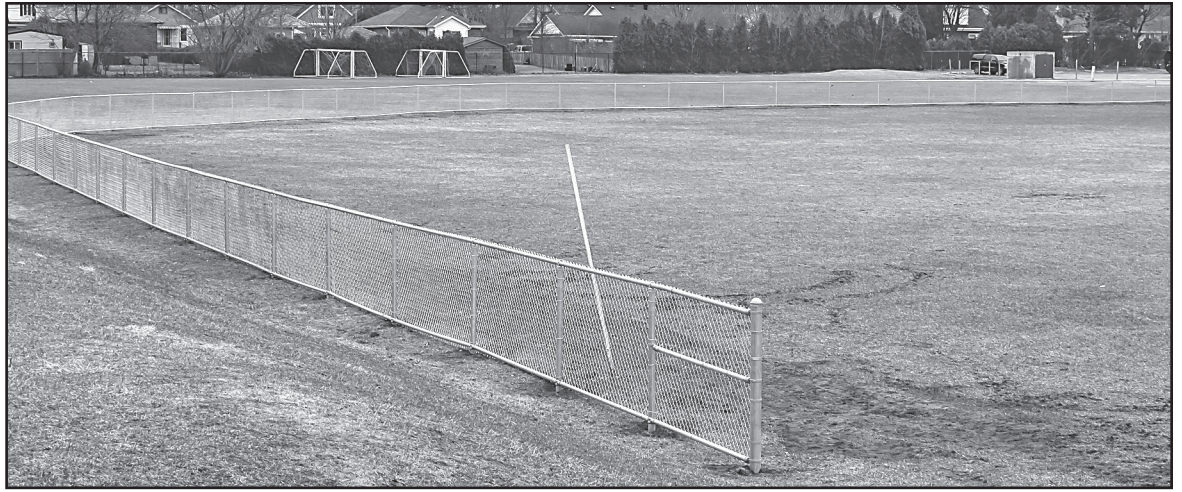
This Saturday is the Community Clean-Up where residents and community groups join together to pick up litter from our parks, ravines and roadsides. Free bags and gloves are available from the Robert C. Austin Operations Centre between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. and from McDonald's restaurants in Halton Hills during regular business hours. For more information, or to join a clean-up location, please email: cleanup@haltonhills.ca

On Monday, April 23 is the 22-Minute Makeover where everyone from residents, schools to businesses are encouraged to take 22 minutes to clean-up the area where they spend their day. Again, email cleanup@haltonhills.ca to register your participation and to help the Town track clean-up locations.

Next Saturday, April 28 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Robert C. Austin Operations Centre will be Halton Hills Earth Day. As well as free compost and woodchips, and free drop-off for hazardous and electronic waste, trees will be available to purchase for \$5, and there will be a BBQ breakfast and lunch available for a small fee. Donations for the Acton Foodshare and Georgetown Bread Basket will also be accepted.

Also, on Saturday, April 28 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. is the Earth Day Sustainability Fair. There are a number of events happening at the Georgetown Market Place, Mold-Masters SportsPlex and Willow Park Ecology Centre in Norval to encourage families to learn a little more about our local environment.

Taking a little extra time over the next week to clear up some of the litter that has collected over the winter months can make a huge impact on our Town, and help to make our community an even better place to live.



DIAMOND UPGRADE: A new outfield fence was installed on one of the baseball diamonds at McKenzie-Smith Bennett Public School last week. - Les Schmidt photo

Mother Nature teaches us to plan

They taunted us stating it could be worse than 2013 ice storm. Let me just say that our kids and I have been permanently scarred by the last ice storm.

The kids were obviously much smaller then, but they still remember it. We went about a week without power. We spent the nights cuddled in a mass by the fireplace or in our bed trying to keep warm with each other's body heat. The doors to the rooms in our house were all closed except for the main corridor, and the floor vents shut so we could keep what little warmth we had. We salvaged water from our broken hot tub to flush the toilet once only when we totally needed to. It wasn't a great Christmas that year, but we certainly learned a few things. The first was we were reminded what Christmas was truly about, and the second, we realized how ill prepared we were for an emergency.

Here we were after a winter of "special weather" advisories, in mid-April with yet another special weather notice. Many, many days this past winter the Dude and I would be checking the weather app on our phones, chatting about how it was calling for a horrendous snow storm of 15



By
Angela Tyler

to 20 cm of snow, and in the end, we barely got a dusting of white stuff. It was like Mother Nature was becoming the little boy who cried wolf. She had called snow too many times, and we weren't fully believing her this time.

However, after chatting with a friend, I thought I had better stock pile some extra water and a few other essentials. The Dude was less convinced. He fluffed off the weather report...initially...and I'm sure he thought I was a bit nutty when I brought home two extra cases of water and started washing clothes. The last ice storm taught me another valuable lesson...if you think you might lose hydro and you're in the country where no hydro equals no working water pump, then you best be making sure you have a few extra pairs of clean underwear.

By Saturday morning though, things were a bit more real. Mother Nature and the Weather Network seemed to be right in line and that radar map was getting scary. We had our generator,

fuel for it, water to drink, clean clothes, and we were ready to hunker down. Yet thanks a momentary lapse of memory, I had forgotten about the most important thing. We live where we don't have town sewer and rely on electricity to flush because we need our electric water pump to work. I had buckets, but I didn't have them filled with water. If your pump doesn't work, at least you can flush with a bucket of water. And when you have kids, that is a really important bit of information. "Fill up the tub," the Dude told me. It was an awesome idea because we have a big tub, which meant a lot of water, so we could flush quite a bit.

Mother Nature and the Weather Network were right this time. Three days later we were still inside watching what she threw at us from a safe place. Thankfully, Halton Hills Hydro and the Town worked at trimming back trees and our hydro only flickered three times. We survived yet another ice storm and once again I learned something...the bathtub toilet flushing trick. It was a great idea. Chalk up one more thing on our emergency preparedness family plan. Which really is becoming all about water—drinking it and flushing it.



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PUBLISHER: Ted Tyler

EDITORIAL: Dawn Brown, Angela Tyler, Jane Dougan, Vivien Fleisher, Les Schmidt, Harry Rudolfs, Trish Bell, Alex Hilson, Michael Oke

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ADVERTISING AND CIRCULATION: Marie Shadbolt

PRODUCTION: Iain Brennan

Distributed to every home in Acton and area, as well as adjoining communities.

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DEADLINE: Advertising and Editorial TUESDAY at 9 a.m.