

EDITORIAL

Be cool!

with Dawn Brown

This week it seems summer arrived in full force, so much so, Halton Hills saw its first Heat Warning of the season on Monday. The region issues "Heat Warnings" when temperatures reach a minimum of 31 degrees Celsius with temperatures overnight remaining above 20 degrees Celsius, or when the humidex reaches 40 or higher for two days. Warnings such as these are issued in the attempt to help the public take precautions when temperatures rise.

During times of extreme heat, there are a number of health risks that can result from even a short amount of exposure. Heat Cramps are painful spasms that usually affect the legs or stomach muscles and are often accompanied with heavy sweating. Switching to a cooler location and lightly stretching or massaging the affected muscles can help to alleviate symptoms as well as slowly sipping cool water—up to a half glass over 15 minutes. Heat exhaustion can also see an individual sweating heavily, though their skin can remain cool and either pale or flushed. Said individual may also experience a weak pulse, dizziness, fainting, nausea, vomiting, exhaustion and headaches. While body temperature may be normal at first, it will very likely rise. Those who experience heat exhaustion should lie down in a cool place, loosen or remove clothing, and put on cool wet clothes. As with heat cramps, they should also sip water slowly at the same rate as above. However, should individuals experience nausea as a result of the water, it should be discontinued. If vomiting occurs, seek medical attention immediately. Heat Stroke occurs when the body's temperature rises—103 degrees Fahrenheit or 39.4 degrees Celsius—compared to normal body temperature—98.5° degrees Fahrenheit or 37 degrees Celsius. Symptoms of this serious condition can also include a strong, rapid pulse, and shallow, rapid breathing, as well as a throbbing headache, dizziness, nausea, confusion, with red, hot and dry skin—no sweating—and an individual may even become unconscious. Someone suffering from heat stroke should be taken to a hospital immediately. Delay could be fatal. While on the way, individuals should be kept as cool as possible—removing clothing and sponging with cool water.

There are a number of precautions people can take in an effort to "Beat the Heat", including: drinking lots of water and fruit juices, avoiding being out under the blazing sun or in the heat, avoiding strenuous physical activity outdoors like gardening and yard maintenance. Go to places that are air conditioned like shopping malls, libraries, community centres and movie theatres. It is also important to remember that car temperatures are even higher than outside. Don't leave children, older adults or pets in a car, even for a short time.

Halton Hills also has cooling centres available as places of refuge during extreme heat, though the town recommends calling ahead or checking their website—www.haltonhills.ca/coolingcentres/—for available hours. This includes: Acton Arena and Community Centre – 415 Queen Street, Halton Hills Public Library, Acton Branch – 17 River Street.

While anyone can be at risk during a heat wave, older adults—65 and over—infants, young children as well as the chronically ill tend to be at a higher risk. For this reason, we should be sure to check in with family or neighbours who could be vulnerable to the extreme weather.



Family, friends and other well-wishers celebrated Marjorie McDonough's 90th birthday on Sunday afternoon, at Blue Springs Golf Club. Marjorie and some of her family are seen here: Scott McDonough (left), Gary Masters, Marjorie, Lynne Robertson, and Tom McDonough. - Les Schmidt photo

To flash or not to flash?



By
Angela Tyler

Years ago, drivers were courteous of each other. Do we even remember those days? Truck drivers would drive in the right-hand lanes and space between rigs. If one was passing the other, they would toss on their hazard lights to note appreciation to the other driver. Bus drivers and others who drove larger vehicles would show the same courtesy. Motorcyclists do the obligatory drive-by wave. Bus drivers do this too. So, why is it that automotive drivers are largely self-absorbed?

Let's face it, most of the time everyone is in such a rush. Drivers are distracted way beyond cell phones. Kids, radios, sips of coffee, traffic and being "under the gun" with time deadlines, it's no wonder so many people are injured riding bicycles or even just as a pedestrian. With being that busy and distracted, how on earth could we find time to be courteous to one another?

Do we even remember the days of the sneaky notification from one car driver to another, warning of a police car waiting to catch unsuspecting motorists? It was the subtle and lightening quick clickety-click of the high beam button on the car floor being activated by our left foot. It was truly a refined

process of smoothness and speed. It was even more of a talent to be quietly aware of the warning and finding the patrol car.

Now, though, the police car warning signal is pretty much non-existent. People don't look for the flash of light, most can't be bothered, and the younger kids have no clue what it's all about. Yet, if you think about it, is it really something that should be happening, anyway?

In retrospect warning others of a patrol car is pretty dumb. Don't we want the person possibly street racing or driving at insane speeds caught before anybody is injured? Don't we want the person not wearing a seatbelt to be safe? Do we really want to be driving behind a pick-up truck with long pieces of lumber that aren't securely fastened? If we warn those who are not operating motorized vehicles in a legal and safe manner, we could not only be jeopardizing our own lives, but the lives of others as well.

When I first became a licensed driver—eons ago, or so it feels—I remember one of my parents' friends grum-

bling about how the "cops had to get their monthly quota of tickets". Surely, they appreciated our police and the laws that govern our lands. However, there was always that connotation that the enforcement of these regulations was just part of the mandated quantity.

Some of that generation did think that way, and maybe some of it was true back in the day. Was that part of the reason for the high beam warning signal? Sadly, though, it isn't just the previous generation's ideology. Some still think that way, that the "cops are out to get us".

The other day, after I passed a patrol car just outside of town, I for some odd reason—and I haven't done this for years—high beam warned an oncoming driver. I surprised myself, and I found myself actually questioning myself out loud "why the hell did I do that?" Oh, how times have changed. 20 years ago, I would be flashing the high beam warning then even arrogantly wave at the oncoming driver to celebrate. Today, two kids behind my driver's seat, a trunk full of groceries and responsibilities a mile long, I'd rather be celebrating that the police are doing their job and protecting us in all aspects of the law.

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