

# Walkerton should be a wake-up call

According to the United Nations, more than 1.4 billion people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water. Unfortunately we can now add the residents of Walkerton, Ontario to that list.

The recent tragedy in Walkerton should be a warning to Canadians that we cannot take our clean and plentiful fresh water supply for granted. Canada is home to more fresh water than any other country in the world, but we are not immune to pathogens that can cause illness and even death. And unless we increase our diligence over water safety and find and clean up the source of contaminants, this disaster is bound to repeat itself.

Although the media have focussed largely on what events directly led to the fouling of the town's water supply with E.-coli, the larger issue is one of environmental health, and how it can affect human beings.

The area immediately surrounding Walkerton is home to many cattle and dairy operations, as well as factory-style hog farms. So far, the evidence suggests that the bacterium responsible for the outbreak, E-Coli 0157:H7, likely originated from animal waste from one or more of these farms.

This should not be surprising. According to the Globe and Mail, a Health Canada study published last year found that 32 per cent of wells

## Science Matters

d by David Suzuki



in rural Ontario exceeded the acceptable standards for fecal contamination (a common indication of the presence of pathogens like E.-coli). The study also noted that there was a strong association between E.-coli infection and cattle density. Cattle density around Walkerton is among the highest in Ontario and rates of E.-Coli infection in the area (even before the Walkerton outbreak) were also found to be very high.

Large, high-density cattle farms and factory farming methods for hogs and chickens have become the norm in North America, replacing many smaller farms. Industrial style hog farms, for example, have spread across the country, especially in Ontario, Quebec and Alberta. Some 18 million hogs are now raised for meat in Canada, on third of which are bound for export. Southern Ontario's Huron County alone is home to 400,000 hogs.

By raising animals in high densities we have, in effect, created crowded cities of animals, with the waste to match. The US-based Environmental Defense Fund estimates that hogs, for example, each create nearly two tonnes of urine and feces every year. This waste is usually held in large,

open tanks or pits before being spread onto farmers' fields. A recent article in American Scientist reported that lagoons and sprayfields for animal waste near streams and watercourses may be significantly degrading water quality and endangering human health. As well, a 1999, study by the University of North Carolina found that industrial hog farms reduce the health and quality of life of people living in the surrounding area.

E.-coli 0157:H7 (which is thought to have originated from Argentinian beef) is a particularly dangerous bacterium because a person exposed to fewer than 10 organisms can become ill. But other pathogens are also spread through animal waste, including Salmonella, Cryptosporidium, and Campylobacter jejuni. In 1994, when the water supply for Milwaukee, Wisconsin became contaminated with Cryptosporidium from farm animal wastes more than 400,000 people became ill.

The move to more densely-populated farms and factory farms creates large volumes of waste that the surrounding environment may be unable to absorb. Clearly, strict regulation is required. We need either fewer animals per farm, or in some cases, fall waste treatment as we would expect of a large city. One of the reasons factory farming lowers costs is because the full impact to our environment and health is being passed on to the rest of us.

Merely adding more chlorine to our water to kill bacteria is not good enough - our drinking water is not a dumping ground for waste. Canada should be a world model for clean waters and the healthy ecosystems needed to maintain them, not an example of what can go wrong when we become complacent.

## SOCCER COACH OF THE WEEK



Marc Van Den Akker

From mini-squirt player to coaching instructor, Marc Van Den Akker has been involved with the Acton Soccer Club for over 20 years, this year as coach of an Under-11 boys' team.

Van Den Akker, the Acton Soccer club - MacMillan's Coach of the Week, said he likes to teach the kids the skills, and not just field a team. He's enrolled in a National Professional Referee Association training course and has refereed at two provincial level professional games.

Acton Soccer Club spokesman Chuck Tysoc said Marc is an accomplished indoor and outdoor player, as well as one of the most highly regarded young referees in southern Ontario.

"Marc has coached boys and girls at all levels in the club; last year he was an at-large coach, helping struggling teams with their practices. Marc was an instructor with the club's pre-season coaching clinics this year," Tysoc said.



Russel Coleman in action - Frances Niblock photo.

## Bulldog lacrosse...

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had a pair and Thompson had a single. Assists went to Zach Chenier, Thompson (2), Artem, Jesse Modzelewski and Gibson.

In regular league play last Thursday, Mimico downed Ramrock Electric 10-6. The Bulldogs had a 3-1 lead in the first and a 4-3 lead after the second, but fell apart and was outscored 7 to 2 in the third period for a disappointing loss in a game they could have won. Gibson scored four goals and had an assist. Artem had a single goal and single assist and Thompson had a single. Helpers went to Devine (3) and Brett Maltby (2).

### BANTAM

After three losses the Halton Hills Acton Home Hardware Bantam Bulldogs exploded with a 17-1 rout over Shelburne to win the bronze round at the Brampton tournament.

Adam Holton and Chad Artem scored in an 8-2 loss to Mimico. Alex Dube, Tim Walinga and Matt Lyons had assists.

Aaron Chiasson scored,

unassisted, in game two, a 7-1 loss to Peterborough. Scott Williams, Brendon Doran and Holton had singles as Whitby doubled the Bantams 6-3 in game three.

In their fourth game, the Bulldogs exploded with a vengeance, winning the bronze round with 17 goals against shell-shocked Shelburne. Jason Morton Williams, Walinga, Lyons and Matt Bronizewski had doubles. Singles went to Dan Slihas, Daine Kuiken-Rogers, Holton, Artem, Nick Newby, Chiasson and Kyle McDonald. Assists went to Morton, Williams, Walinga (3), Lyons (2), Kuiken-Rogers, Holton (3), Artem, Chiasson, McDonald (3), Jason Herron Jacobs, Alex Dube and Brendon Doran (2).

Brady Masters was in goal for games one and three and Jason Herron Jacobs for games two and four.

In regular season play last Wednesday, Mimico drubbed Home Hardware 10-3 in Georgetown. Chiasson scored unassisted and Holton and Brad Torres had singles with help from Lyons, Williams and Doran.

## Indoor Soccer Report

### UNDER-7

Blue Springs Flowers downed The Holland Shop 15-7 on Monday. Troy Weaver led the scoring for Holland with four goals. Jennifer Doraty had a pair and Aaron Weaver had a single. No game sheet was supplied by Blue Springs.

### GIRLS

#### UNDER-11

High Five Photography doubled Empress Communications 6-3 at MSB last Tuesday. The whole High Five team put in a great effort and Kaylyn McGilloway scored five goals and Caitlin Bowen had a single. Jessica Dunn booted all three goals for Empress. Great hustle by Chantal Seguin on forward and strong defence by Emily Bent.

#### UNDER-15

The HEADS I goalie did everything but stand on her head to edge Bev Gray Designs 2-1 in an away game last. HEADS notched two goals and Emily Henderson scored in the last minute of the first period to put Acton on the board. The second period was scoreless. Larisa Viel made some shape defensive plays and Megan Brown played well in midfield.

#### UNDER-17

Toth Motors battled to a 6-6 tie with BRAMS III in Acton. Acton started slow and was down 2-0 in the first ten minutes. Bad luck and good goaling kept Acton at bay and Acton finished the

half down 4-2. Acton rallied and went ahead 5-4, but had to settle for the tie. Heather Moon had a pair of goals and Lynn Watson, Jasmine Stofast and Eva Sitarz had singles. Special mention to Amanda Johnson who was sharp in net, standing in for the regular goalie.

### BOYS

#### UNDER-13

Jordan LaRose and Ben DeKleer shared the shutout as Acton Cleaners blanked Erin/Hillsburgh III 6-0 in a rainy, foggy away game last Tuesday. Thomas Glassford had a pair of goals. Mike Kellas, Justin Lim, Eric Corman and DeKleer had singles.

## Aqua Ducks get medals

The Acton Aqua Ducks swam their way onto the podium at a recent meet in Newmarket. Club members captured one gold, two silver and three bronze medals and had 24 top-120 finishes along with 18 personal best times.

Meghan Colvin, 14: 200 free - 6th\*, 200 IM - 5th, 400 free - 6th.

Faber, Losina, 12:

200 free - 12th, 50 back - 17th, 50 free - 3rd\*, 100 free - 14th, 100 IM - 11th\*, 100 back - 17th.

Victoria Fritz, 11: 100 back - 7th, 50 free - 18th, 100 breast - 14th, 50 breast - 18th, 50 back - 6th\*

Kimberly Galvin, 11: 200 free - 6th\*, 50 back - 11th, 100breast - 7th\*, 100 back - 7th, 50 breast - 2nd\*.

Sarah Keith, 13: 50 free - 4th\*, 100 breast - 4th\*, 100 free - 24th, 50 breast - 2nd\*.

Sarah Kiley, 12: 100 breast - 23rd, 50 breast - 6th\*.

Alicia Roza, 14: 200 Free - 10th, 100 back - 5th\*, 200 IM - 4th\*, 50 back - 1st\*.

Jordan Dunn, 10: 200 free - 6th, 50 back - 4th\*, 50 free - 8th, 100 free - 7th, 100 back - 4th\*.

Ashton Roza, 12: 50 back - 3rd\*, 50 free - 25th, 100 back - 4th\*.

Acton Aqua Ducks - 'A' Relay Girls 13 & Over 200 Medley Relay - 3rd\*



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