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Free workshop offered by CAVES

Volunteers though Guelph and Wellington County are being offered a day of free workshops to enhance their skills and explore new ideas, on November 4.
 The CAVES (Community and Volunteer Education Series) Committee will be offering 12 workshops at the Evergreen Seniors Centre on Topics including Working with Individuals with Special needs, Child Abuse, Identification, Music Therapy, AIDS Awareness, Let's Play! Nutri-

Pets & Livestock

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Graduation Photos
 Have you forgotten to pick up your Grad photo from the New Tanner?
 Please stop in between 9-5 Mon-Fri to pick them up at 59 Willow St. N., Unit 5

ATTENTION ALL LANDLORDS
FREE LISTING SERVICE FOR LANDLORDS IN HALTON
Housing Help Centre Coming Soon
 Free listing and referral service for landlords renting apartments, townhouses, or rooms in Halton.
 Contact:
 The Regional Municipality of Halton, 1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, Ontario, L6M 3L1 (905) 825-6000 or (519) 853-0501. Ask for extension 7142 or 7193.

Learning the art of cloning

There's a new bull on the block and his name is Starbuck II. He's a clone of Starbuck, a famous bull that sired an amazing 200,000 calves in 50 countries. In fact, he's had so many offspring that researchers say most of the world's dairy cows are somehow related to him.

The Quebec company that owned Starbuck has created Starbuck II from one of Starbuck's cells in hopes that this genetically identical animal will be just as prolific.

But will he? Scientists can't really say. Cloning animals is hot these days, but the technique is still in its infancy. And although clones animals are genetically identical to their originals, recent research has indicated that there may be a hidden genetic cost to cloning over sexual reproduction.

Successful animal cloning first began with amphibians in the 1950s. The most common technique, called nuclear transfer, involves taking the nucleus from one of an animal's cells (which contains the animal's entire genetic code) and inserting it into an egg that has had its nucleus

removed. A mild electric shock then kick-starts cell division and the embryo is transferred to a surrogate mother. The resulting offspring, like Starbuck, has neither mother or father, but is rather a genetic copy of the original.

In 1996, the birth of Dolly the sheep became big news, not just because she was a clone, but because she was a mammal and one that had been cloned from an adult sheep, rather than a young one. Before Dolly, most researchers had assumed that DNA taken from adult mammals could never develop into a complete embryo. Suddenly, it seemed like cloning could become commonplace.

In a sense, it has, with labs all over the world cloning everything from pigs to monkeys and mice. But cloning animals is still a hit-or-miss affair. In spite of the advances made since Dolly was born, only two per cent of all cloning attempts actually result in a live, healthy animal. Many pregnancies end in miscarriages, other animals die shortly after birth and yet others suffer from serious

abnormalities. In fact, Jean-Paul Renard of the French National Institute of Agricultural Research recently told the journal Nature that cloning is really more art than science.

Last week, researchers with Rockefeller University in New York discovered another potential problem. The team has been cloning successive generations of mice - making clones from clones. But it has become more difficult with each generation and the team has been unable to produce a clone past the sixth generation. In fact, only one live clone was produced out of 724 attempts in the sixth generation and that one was promptly killed and eaten by its surrogate mother.

It each successive generation of clones is genetically identical to the previous, why does the process become so much more difficult and eventually impossible? Right now that has scientists baffled. At first they thought that the bits of DNA known as telomeres that cap our chromosomes may become shortened after each cloning. The length of telomeres is believed to be


Science Matters
 - by David Suzuki



related to aging, so shortened telomeres could make producing offspring more difficult. But the researchers have found that mouse telomeres actually appear to be longer with each generation, so that's not likely the problem.

In fact, the cloned mice that do survive grow up healthy and robust, with no apparent deficiencies. So why do most attempts fail? Is it because of the crude nature of the techniques used? Or is it perhaps because animals simply weren't meant to be cloned? Perhaps there is a biological requirement for mammals to be produced through sexual reproduction - a process of rejuvenation of the nucleus or some other ancient evolutionary advantage that we have yet to understand.

The field of genetics has made tremendous advances in recent years but, as these findings illustrate, we have a long way to go before we can say that we truly understand the complex interplay between reproduction, genetics and the environment.

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HALLOWEEN


The Halton Regional Police have been contacted by the Acton community with the request that police officers adopt a **"ZERO TOLERANCE"** towards rowdiness and vandalism during Halloween.

I have requested that extra officers be assigned to the Acton area, along with foot patrol officers in plain clothes and civilian volunteers also patrolling to call police to potential trouble spots.

All too often the youth of the community say they are just going out to have fun, and I have nothing against them having fun, but when their **fun** causes damage to private or Town property it is no longer fun - it is a crime and will be treated as such.

Parents be aware what your children are doing, because what they do could come back to haunt you.

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