

GRAPEVINE



Share the wealth

Kudos to the Acton High School students whose generous donations of food - 1,414 items in all - helped ensure less fortunate Acton area families didn't go hungry this Christmas.

"The (food) donations show students really care," said school council rep., student Becky Chapman, who added that 200 of the donated food items were collected at a recent school dance.

Christmas treats

The food donated by the students, along with toys and cash from many generous individuals and groups, was distributed to the less fortunate through a hamper program orchestrated by the Salvation Army and several Acton service groups.

Fifty-two hampers were distributed this year and there were toys for needy children under Christmas trees, thanks to the generosity of many.

Tanner tourney

At least 1,000 rep hockey players and their families are expected at Acton arena today (Thursday), tomorrow and Friday, for the Acton Tanner Minor Hockey Association's annual Christmas tournament.

Approximately 24 teams will compete in four divisions with skills competitions each day and both consolation and championship finals.

Organizers have also planned a barbecue, Toonie toss, raffles and draws.

Still at the arena....

Because of the tourney, there's no public skating or house hockey at the arena on Saturday, but there will be a regular paid public skating session

on Sunday (Dec 31) from 1 to 2:20 p.m.

Once again this holiday, there's free public skating, courtesy of the Rotary Club of Acton, next week.

Each year, the local Rotarians pick up the tab for public skating sessions and skating is free from 1:30 to 2:50 p.m. daily, from January 2 to 5.

More ice....

If the cold weather holds Actonites will be skating outside on the Towns rink beside the McKenzie-Smith Bennett School property, sooner not later.

Although it's usually January before the rink is ready, parks and recreation crews began tamping down the snow, trying to build a frost base, last week at the Churchill Road rink, one of five outdoor rinks maintained by the Town each winter.

Holiday closures

With the less-than-expected rush of pre-Christmas shopping in Acton, merchants are now preparing to ring in the New Year. If you need something from the drug store, make sure you pick it up before 6 p.m. Saturday, or be prepared to leave town.

If you're tired of turkey, IGA will be open regular hours - until 5 p.m. on Sunday - and will re-open on Tuesday.

The liquor store will continue its extended hours - 11 to 6 p.m. on Sunday - and close until Tuesday.

Most variety stores and Beaver Gas Bar - but not Tim Hortons - will be open New Year's Day.

Acton's Blue Box day is this Wednesday. Christmas trees, devoid of tinsel, please, will be picked up January 17.



TRADITIONS CONTINUED: Members of the Acton Citizens' Band continued their four-decade plus tradition of carolling around town the week before Christmas. Above they were making their tunes heard at Lakeview Villa. - Angela Tyler photo

Science Matters

- by David Suzuki



Global warming slows ozone repair

A Canadian business magazine recently featured an excellent article on the race to build more efficient automobiles. But the article also seemed to equate the problem of global warming with the hole in the ozone layer. It's a common misconception because the two issues are related, but in an indirect way.

The ozone layer is a blanket of gas surrounding the Earth, high in the atmosphere. At ground level, ozone is a pollutant and key component of smog, which can irritate the lungs and cause health problems. But in the upper atmosphere, ozone is beneficial to humans and other organisms because it helps filter out the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, which can cause skin cancer and cataracts.

In 1974, scientists discovered that chemical compounds known as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), commonly used as coolants and as propellants for aerosols, could make their way into the upper atmosphere. There, they start a complex chain of events that destroys ozone. Over time, enough CFCs have made it into the stratosphere to create "holes" in the ozone layer over the Earth's poles. The seriousness of this environmental problem, brought to the world's attention by several key scientists, drew 170 nations together in 1987 to sign the Montreal Protocol, creating an international

ban on CFCs.

And at a recent meeting of the World Climate Research Programme in Buenos Aires, scientists declared the Montreal protocol to be a success. The amount of CFCs in the lower atmosphere, they said, has stabilized to the point that, barring any unforeseen circumstances, the ozone layer will most certainly recover in the long term.

But the ozone layer will not recover in the short-term. In fact, the holes could continue to grow because of global warming. That's one of the most frustrating things about global warming - its insidious ability to make other environmental problems worse. For example, in addition to having direct effects such as melting polar ice caps and increasing heat waves, global warming also exacerbates seemingly unrelated environmental problems like air pollution, species extinction and holes in the ozone layer.

Global warming slows the ability of the ozone layer to repair itself because increased amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere trap heat close to the Earth, so that less heat radiates back into the upper atmosphere. This cooling creates ice crystals in the stratosphere which improve the ability of CFCs to destroy ozone. So even though CFCs have been banned for more than a decade, the largest hole in the ozone layer

ever recorded occurred earlier this year and researchers say that holes could continue to grow for the next five years. CFCs themselves are also potent greenhouse gases.

Still, atmospheric chemist Drew Shindell of NASA commented in the current journal Nature that the Montreal Protocol has been an unqualified success, saying: "The science was listened to, the policy-makers did something, and it actually worked."

It's too bad the same thing could not be said for the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, aimed at reducing the greenhouse gases that are causing global warming. Unfortunately, the most recent negotiations in The Hague aimed at establishing rules for the Protocol broke down when Canada, the United States and a few other nations insisted on including some dubious greenhouse gas reduction methods in the process. A follow-up meeting in Ottawa last week met with similar disappointing results.

We must hope that when the world's nations meet again next spring to discuss global warming, they will be more successful. Unlike the Montreal protocol, in the case of global warming the science has not been listened to, the policy makers have done little, and as a result the problem is only getting worse.



Have you seen what children bring home?

To the Editor,

Earlier this week I had the shock of my life when my 10 year old returned from school with an application form for a SIN#. This was given to him and his classmates by his teacher on behalf of the "Service delivery operations consultant-Human Resources Centre of Canada"

The cover letter that accompanied the form had no explanation why they were handing them out to 10 year olds or even why they would need to obtain one, only instructions on how to complete the form or what documents to send with it.

One point on the form said that any "CHILD" (they refer to the person applying as child) under 12yrs old will need a parents signature. Since when can a 12 year old enter into a binding contract? It is my understanding that anyone under 18 years of age is considered an infant and unable to enter into any type of contract.

The last paragraph on the form reads: "As this is a VERY important Government document that your child is applying for, I cannot take anything but the above mentioned ORIGINAL documents. Please do not send your child with any other documents as they will be disappointed when I can't take their application." [capitals and emphasis is theirs]

They know full well that this is a CHILD, not applying for a Government document, but a CHILD, entering into a contract with certain terms and consequences.

It states that "your child is apply-

ing for". When a parent signs the form it is now the parent applying on behalf of the child.

It seems they also have a guilt thing going that no parent would want to disappoint their child so they better send the right paperwork.

As I understand this contract the parent that signs for their child can be held liable if the contract is not fulfilled to its proper terms.

Also it asks the question can the parent be held liable by the child, for entering the child into a lifelong contract without the child's consent.

I am writing this to you in the hopes that you could have this published, to inform other parents and have them fully investigate this contract, and maybe get some answers from Human Resources.

Thank you,
Concerned parent

Angela's ...

Cont. from Pg. 4

through phone calls or the endless political signs he posted all over Halton Hills, not just in Acton.

Bob and Gail Jarrett, Acton residents with leather motorcycle jackets. Forget the stereotype you might have of grandparents. These grandparents are neither old or need be home before dark. Bob and Gail take off every summer to ride their motorcycle out west to visit their daughter and the grandkids. This year, on a new Harley-Davidson they ventured to the U.S.A. travelling on their hog

throughout 22 states.

Marilyn Serjeantson, former Mayor of Halton Hills. Throughout her reign as the first female mayor of Halton Hills she maintained that she was not just the mayor of Georgetown, but of all of Halton Hills. During her entire time as Mayor, not just during the election, she was often seen in Acton shopping or visiting. In defeat she was graceful and still proudly attended the Acton Santa Claus Parade after the election.

Len Tuitman, owner of Tuitman

Garden Centre. While posing for the Men of Acton calendar, Len reminded us it's not the clothes that make the man. I don't know what his family thinks of him standing 'au natural' in some shrubs, but you have to give him credit for having the chutzpah to do it and for helping raise money for a good cause.

Nick Dunne, grade one student from Robert Little School. Many of you might not know Nick, but you should meet him. He's my neighbour. After a long day at work when I come

home a little exhausted with a long list of grown up things that need to be done (laundry, cleaning, bills to pay), Nick reminds me about the great things in life. Sometimes he rides his bike in the snow. Sometimes he finds great pleasure in finding snails in his mother's garden and sometimes he will be bald. He said he got his head shaved so he could look like his grampa. Everybody needs a kid like Nick living next door.

A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL!