

We're on board!

One of the great benefits of being the President of the Chamber is the opportunity to meet with and listen to members of the business community, politicians and residents of Halton Hills. Over the past 3 months of my presidency, it has been a privilege to share the Chamber's new strategic plan with our members, in addition to gaining a better understanding of the issues that our community is facing.

What I have heard is that there are a number of matters that are of importance to us all – *the environment, the growth and sustainability of our community, customer service and opportunities for our youth.*

The Chamber's role is to link business and community and we take this responsibility seriously. As a Chamber, we make available information and create opportunities for discussion and debate, by fostering diversity of opinion and

open, honest, transparent dialogue.

I believe that growth and change is inevitable. However, we, as businesses and residents of this town can influence

the pace and nature of this growth. We must take accountability to understand the issues, to help find solutions and to take action to effectively manage this change. The reality of our current limited water supply is a perfect example of this. The Town continually struggles to meet the growing service needs of our business and residential community. Conservation must form part of the solution to help accommodate the growing service needs of our town.

Customer service was also highlighted as an area of concern. I have personally

received great service from local merchants. I believe in shopping locally and I show my appreciation for great service by being a repeat customer. As

consumers, we should not have to compromise the convenience of shopping locally.

If you receive great service from a local merchant, tell us about it. The Chamber regularly takes the

opportunity to celebrate great customer service in our community through our selection of the Business of the Month.

The Chamber also provides opportunities for youth by making Junior Achievement programs available to students from Grade 3 to Grade 12.

The youth of today are our leaders of tomorrow. Through the JA programs, our

'Achievers' learn the fundamentals of business and are provided with the opportunity to embrace the entrepreneurial spirit.

The Chamber remains deeply rooted in the community, from Acton to Georgetown and all the hamlets in between. We represent the voice of the business community and work hard to strike an appropriate balance between where we live and where we work. As a Chamber, we are seeking your input. The opinions from both the business community and the residents of Halton Hills are important to us and we want to understand your issues and concerns.

Tell us - what do you want your Halton Hills to be? I look forward to your comments, which can be sent to me at jamie@haltonhillschamber.on.ca. I want to hear from you.

*Jamie Schumacker, President,
Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce*

From the Boardroom

Jamie Schumacker
President



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328 Guelph Street,
Halton Hills, ON L7G 4B5
Tel 905.877.7119
Fax 905.877.5117
Email info@haltonhillschamber.on.ca
www.haltonhillschamber.on.ca

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Neilson's Dairy Goes Green

By Marnie Hughes,
Communication Artistry

Neilson's Dairy has been recognized as a leader in a variety of areas over the past twenty-five years. As a member of the Mayor's Green Task Force initiative, Neilson's are continuing that reputation for leadership by spearheading new and effective environmental initiatives.

"Going green" is a good connection point with employees," says Mike Cote, VP Logistics. "They are forward-thinking and concern for the environment is something that has always been part of their lives." Environmental responsibility is a regular part of communication with employees.

Neilson's Dairy recently underwent a major retrofitting to install a high efficiency lighting system in order to systematically control the lights and HVAC systems. With the high efficiency fixtures (T8s) combined with timed control, the company has already seen benefits. Energy costs have decreased but not just because of lights turning off when people leave the room and during down times. In refrigerated areas, the high efficiency lights give off substantially less heat, meaning the cooling system doesn't have to work as hard and thereby saving energy.

The retrofit was a two and a half month project that is not only saving the company money, but is having a positive effect on employees. They say that their work environment is brighter now and that makes their work area more pleasant.

Neilson's is working with their vendor community to reduce packaging



Neilson's Dairy

and improve efficiencies in production processes. The benefits of 'going green' and being environmentally conscious are having the positive side effect of reducing costs. For example, the thickness of the bags used for milk has been reduced year over year significantly decreasing what hits the landfill.

Neilson's were also proud supporters of the 'Porch Light' program providing 1500 homes with compact fluorescent light bulbs helping Halton Hills residents save on their energy bills.

Mike would recommend to any business, large or small, to consider looking at their environmental footprint and developing a sustainability plan. To those who are intimidated by the potential vastness of any green initiative, Mike advises, "Take one thing at a time and run with it. Environmental consciousness is here to stay. Embrace it." If you don't know where to start, begin by asking questions. Your vendors

can be a wealth of information. Do research about your industry on the internet. Join committees or groups of like-minded individuals to help put a plan together. Find conferences to attend and learn everything that you can.

Part of the Neilson plan over the coming years is to take a close look at their water consumption. They are actively looking for ways to improve in this area. Education is a key part of the scope document on sustainability and reduction goals must be practical and achievable. The document will outline the kinds of things that they can do within their control and they will share it with their employees, vendors, and customers.

Neilson's is the largest dairy plant in Canada providing fluid milk since 1981. They are one of the largest employers in Halton Hills delivering to all of southwestern Ontario and as far north as Barrie.