

GRAPEVINE



Election pains

While waiting for election results was a yawn for many acclaimed politicians – not so for Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette – the first Halton Hills mayor to be acclaimed – who equated the stressful wait to an expectant father anticipating the birth of a child.

“I’m antsy,” Bonnette said four hours before the polls closed on Monday. “I’m like an expectant dad wondering what I’m going to get,” Bonnette said, adding with the potential for five new faces at the council table, he’s anxious to see the results. (Just one incumbent councillor, Georgetown’s John Duncan, was defeated.)

Incumbent Ward two (including rural Acton) Councillor Joan Robson suspects dirty politics led to someone puncturing all four of her car tires – on four separate occasions in the past month.

Robson is sure was targeted, reported the incidents, including her car being keyed, to police who told her to remove re-election signs from her car.

“I’m P.O’ed,” Robson said on Monday when asked if she was spooked or angry by the repeated acts of vandalism.

“They say the longer you’re in office the more people you p... off. The best way to beat them is just to win,” she said. (Robson was easily re-elected.)

Food for fright

Want to get scared silly and help feed the hungry? Check out 21 Hurst Street on Sunday night to see what the Ing family is doing this year to celebrate Hallowe’en. The driveway and a new addition this year, will be transformed into a ghoulish fun house, suitable for all ages.

Guests are asked to donate an

item of non-perishable food for Acton’s FoodShare. Last year, the Ings collected 110-pounds of much needed food.

Using real people – family members – and mannequins, the family’s haunted house has drawn huge crowds in past years and will be better than ever this year according to Jack Ing, who said there will be an electric chair, skeletons, ghouls, lights and a grave yard theme.

Holiday hampers

Want to help make Christmas a lot happier for someone in need? Donations are now being accepted for the annual Holiday Hamper Program run by Links2Care that provides hampers of children’s clothing and toys to needy families.

If you sponsor a family, you’ll get a list of ages and sizes to shop for. Donations of cash and gift certificates are also welcome.

To fill out an application to receive a hamper, call Cathy at Links2Care at 519-853-3310.

Pathway planning

Are your teens ready for a rapidly changing world when they finish high school? Parents can help prepare their kids with relevant, engaging and active education that meets their needs and interests.

To help students succeed with apprenticeships, college, university or the workplace, the Halton District School Board is offering Pathway Planning Information evenings for parents and students.

The Acton presentation, including information on the new Specialist High Skills Major program, expanded Cooperative Education programs and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship programs.

For more information visit www.hdsb.ca/pathways



IT’S YOURS TO GIVE: Over 60 generous locals attended Acton’s Royal Canadian Legion last Thursday, rolling up their sleeves to donate blood to the Canadian Blood Services. Happy to give the gift of life were Chris Adamson and Candice Anderson, both of Acton.

– Denise Paulsen photo

Ozone deal shows progress is possible

By David Suzuki
with Faisal Moola

Science Matters

By David Suzuki



International leadership based on sound science can lead to great results. For proof, we need only “look up, look way up,” as one of my colleagues at CBC used to say. The ozone layer is no longer shrinking.

Starting in the 1970s, scientists observed a connection between our use of chlorofluorocarbons, or CFCs, and a weakening of the ozone layer in the stratosphere. High above Earth, ultraviolet light breaks chlorine off the CFC molecule, and chlorine is a potent scavenger of ozone. Stratospheric ozone absorbs ultraviolet radiation, protecting us from the sun’s rays like a giant pair of sunglasses.

CFCs were once used in products ranging from aerosol spray cans to refrigerators. As more of the chemicals were dumped into the air, they began to destroy the ozone layer, creating the potential for dramatic increases in skin cancers and damage to the phytoplankton that form the base of life.

In September 1987, world leaders signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Now, a report written and reviewed by 300 scientists from around the world, concludes that phasing out production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol “has protected the stratospheric ozone layer from much higher levels of depletion.”

It’s not a complete turn-around, but it is good news. The scientists found that global ozone and ozone in the Arctic and Antarctic regions are no longer decreasing but they are not yet increasing either. They also write that “the ozone layer outside the Polar regions is projected to recover to its pre-1980 levels some time before the middle of this century.”

UN Environment Programme executive director Achim Steiner noted that, without the agreement, atmospheric levels of ozone-depleting substances could have increased tenfold, leading to “up to 20 million more cases of skin cancer and 130 million more cases of eye cataracts, not to speak of damage to human immune systems, wildlife and agriculture.”

If we can succeed in tackling the ozone problem, despite attacks from industry, why is it so difficult to resolve an even greater threat to life on the planet, climate change? One of the scientists who won a Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1995 for his work on the ozone layer has an explanation. Sherwood Rowland says that “arguing which propellant to use was rather trivial to society. One could replace CFCs and still use existing technology. This is quite different from having fossil fuels as our

primary energy source for the whole world.”

In other words, the stakes are higher – for industry and society. In many cases, CFCs could be replaced by something as simple and non-polluting as compressed air. And despite the claims of chemical manufacturers, phasing out CFCs did not bankrupt the industry, because these chemicals were only one product among many that the companies produced.

Although some energy companies are working on clean-energy technology, their massive profits come mainly from exploiting ever-dwindling supplies of fossil fuels. And pretty much everyone in the world relies on fossil fuels to some extent. The good news is that in the past two years total worldwide investments in renewable electricity generation were greater than total investments in fossil fuel-based electrical capacity.

The solutions exist, but it will take a lot of effort and political will to make the shift. If we do it right, it will have enormous benefits for human health and economies. But don’t expect the most profitable industry in the history of the universe to get on-board any time soon.

It’s up to all of us to demand change. The Montreal Protocol shows that progress is possible, but we must listen to reason rather than the claims of those who put profits before people.

Learn more at:
www.davidsuzuki.org



Food for Fright at the Hurst Street Haunt