



It's Your Business

with **JANE MULLER**

Importing planet-friendly weapons

"Save our planet" is the new battle cry and with the melting of the Cold War and arms reduction, we're looking at a new kind of environmental warfare.

The arms race in this war against pollution and excess at the expense of global health is just beginning.

Dabbling in the import-export business has turned Chris Usvaltas into an arms dealer in this new type of war. She discovered a British company during her research as a correspondence course student. Her Wade World Trade course led her to discover Fleetsharp Ltd., a company specializing in natural products that eliminate germs and odours and control toxic gases, hazardous substances and organic wastes.

"It took a while to decide which product I'd get involved in. It's best to specialize and the course suggested choosing a product you're interested in so you'll stick with it," explained Ms Usvaltas.

She's working as an agent for the company and is in the "early stages" of developing the import business. Ms Usvaltas plans to market the products here and put Canadian companies in touch with the British supplier.

Geared to hospitals, institutions, offices and residences the products include Adsorbex, made from a natural mineral which attracts odour-bearing dust particles from the air and will absorb liquids. The product's ionic chambers are lined with negatively charged ions, which electrostatically attract and hold positively charged ions — dust. It's touted as a cure for sick building syndrome.

Absorbex is sold in small sacks, refillable shakers, drums weighing one or five kg and 25 kg sacks.

A detergent, called Bactek, powerful enough to kill salmonella and other bacteria, is also being marketed by Ms Usvaltas.

Those who neglect their house plants might want to invest in some Cameltech, a product that can be used indoors or outdoors to keep soil moist from four to six times longer. Cameltech is described as "granular reservoirs for the soil". The granules are said to absorb 400 times their volume in water, then gradually release moisture.

Ms Usvaltas says customers of her young company Valtas International Trade Services will have to be patient. While she develops her network she's using the postal service to deliver the products. As business grows, she'll be shipping the stock.

She's currently promoting biodegradable shopping bags to large grocery store chains. The entrepreneur, who has a full time job as well as her importing business, has also promoted the product line to Premier Bob Rae. He responded to her letter and said it was referred to the Minister of the Environment responsible for Greater Toronto, Ruth Grier.

From composting and recycling at her Campbellville home, Ms Usvaltas has taken the slogan "act locally, think globally" a step farther.

Advice for handypersons

Many manufacturers will give free advice on the use of their wares during an open house at Milton Builder's Hardware, 150 Nipissing Rd.

Thursday to Saturday (Nov. 8-10) the open house will include demonstrations of various paints, glues, sandpaper and other abrasives as well as hand power tools. Vic Wilyman, a co-owner of the hardware store, says the open house will be of interest to trades people and the handy homeowner. The demonstrations run from 3-9 p.m. on Thursday and Friday and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

Education cost to rise by \$21.7 million

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charging trustees weren't accomplishing anything, largely due to a lack of information.

"Philosophically, I've got a problem with just throwing our hands up in the air and saying we can't do anything. I'm not convinced there isn't some fat on the pork chop and I for one am prepared to nickel and dime the budget to death," he said.

Mrs. Hillhouse agreed that giving up was not the answer, however she cautioned that trustees would be "fooling themselves" if they thought they could cut the budget significantly without looking hard at staff levels.

Trustees will now hear from the public at another budget meeting set for November 19 at the board's Burlington offices and will further discuss the budget in a meeting on November 26 — one which isn't open to the public.

Burlington trustee Noel Cooper cynically asked if anything had been accomplished in the two budget reviews to date.

"I've got the message loud and clear that the 1991 budget better be in more detail than in the past and

that supporting information for it better be there. I've also got the message that a double digit increase in expenditures is not acceptable to the board," said business services superintendent Jerry Jenkins.

"I haven't got any answers but I'm clear on the questions," said Mr. Cassidy.

Mr. Jenkins said nothing was being hidden when Mr. Cooper demanded specifics on the costs for additional staffing in recent years.

Approximately 700 new teachers have been hired by the board since 1988 — making 30 per cent of the elementary teaching staff and 17 per cent of the secondary staff new to the board in the last two years.

Education director Bob Williams described the budget as "heavily weighted on paying our staff" and said, "if you want to look for a major reduction you'll have to scrutinize this part of the budget carefully because it's the lion's share."

Mr. Williams also noted there's public and parental support for the board's educational programming.

"We never hear from parents, 'take this away.' We do get lots of requests to increase the program, reduce class

size or what have you."

He called for a "pretty clear direction" from trustees to board staff on where cuts should be made.

The 8.5 per cent increase amounts to "maintaining our existing programs, essentially," said Mr. Williams.

"In tough times, unlike the private sector, there's an increase in demand for our services.

"As times get tough people come

back to school because it's a nice place to be when you don't have a job. The demand on the education system goes up."

Trustees will hear presentations from the public Nov. 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the J.W. Singleton Education Centre at 2050 Guelph Line in Burlington.

Those wishing to appear as delegations should contact the board in writing prior to Wednesday, Nov. 14.

Fundraising is for the birds

The Halton Region Conservation Foundation's current fundraising campaign is going to the birds — to help improve the second largest bird banding program in the country.

The Foundation is aiming to raise more than \$600,000 over the next three years to support major improvements to Mountsberg Wildlife Centre.

The funds will be used to enlarge and update the nature interpretive centre at Mountsberg, which was recently renamed the R. Ross Craig Centre in honour of a long-time foundation director.

Proceeds will also go toward improving the birds of prey rehabilitation and bird banding programs as well as the exhibits along the park's wildlife walkway.

The Foundation has selected the wood duck as a symbol for the campaign called *Jump for Conservation*. Newly hatched wood ducks jump from their tree cavity nests to reach the ground.

Anyone wishing to support the campaign or would like more information, call the Halton Region Conservation Foundation at 336-1158.



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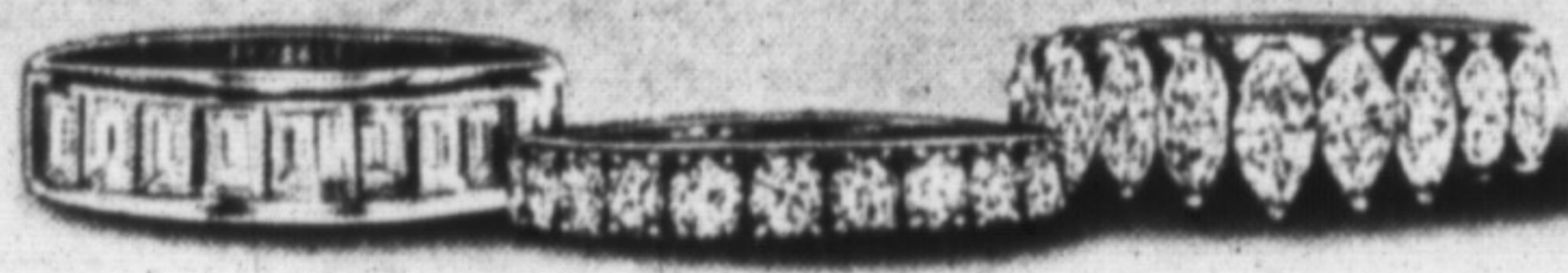
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