## ESSEX COMMUNITY

Planting In MEMORIAM -Members of the Boys II Men program of the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Southfield, Mich., fulfill their right-of-passage by planting a tree at the John Freeman Walls Historic Site and **Underground Railroad** Museum in Maidstone Township Aug. 6. The tree planting was part of the 17th annual International Interfaith Gospel Festival, hosted by the Proverbs Heritage Organization and the Underground Railroad Museum. The

boys, along with their spiritual guide Clarence Lewis, honoured the efforts of fugitive slaves from the U.S. who made their way to freedom in Canada. From left: Marcell Snodergrass, Mose Hogan, J.R. Lumpkin and Lewis.



## Windsor-Essex County residents reminded to beat the heat

The Windsor-Essex Health County Unit reminds residents to take steps to prevent heat related illnesses during periods of high temperatures and humidity. "The combination of high heat, high humidity and smog can be very dangerous," states Dr. Heimann, Medical Officer of Health. "High risk groups include the elderly, infants and preschool children, people with chronic illnesses like heart conditions, those who are obese, people involved in strenuous outdoor activity and people taking certain medications."

Heat related illnesses result from prolonged exposure to high heat and humidity. While there are varying degrees of heat related illnesses, the most extreme cases can be life threatening.

The public is advised to beat the heat by taking these precautions:

• Drink of lots of water and natural fruit juices.

• Stay out of the blazing sun or heat.

• Avoid strenuous physical activity outdoors.

• Never leave children and pets unattended in a car.

• Check on neighbours, relatives and friends who are frail, elderly and live alone.

• Use air-conditioned places like shopping malls and community centres.

• Seek medical attention if you have or observe signs of heat illness in someone else.

• In an emergency, call 911.

## Ottawa reporter takes journey on tracks of freedom

## BY DANIEL SCHWAB

Ottawa Citizen reporter Chris Lackner is tracking the trails of freedom.

Two months ago, Lackner, 27, embarked on a journey that began in May's Lick, Ky., and will end at the John Freeman Walls Historic Site and Underground Railroad Museum in Maidstone Township on Labour Day weekend.

He's walking the entire trip.

Along the way, Lackner is interviewing descendants of slaves, Underground Railroad conductors and historians to gain insight into the lives of fugitive slaves and the journeys they took from the U.S. across the Canadian border and into freedom. He is journaling the experience for a historical series that has been appearing free to readers every day on the Citizen's website.

"This series is an extremely rare opportunity for any reporter," said Lackner, who has been with the newspaper for three years. "In the regular, fastpaced 24-hour news cycle, you rarely get the opportunity to spend months to really throw yourself into a subject. This (subject) is such a rich human tapestry. From the tragedy and moral darkness of slavery to the triumph of many of the fugitive slaves who were courageous enough to run away from the only life they'd ever known, it just covers the whole gambit of human emotions."

Lackner is being followed in a van by photographer Malcolm Taylor.

For 63 of the 93 nights of the journey, the pair will be sleeping at historical sites, such as museums, former Underground Railroad locations and even a jail.

Lackner said he walks an average of 10 to 12 miles per day, and is sometimes fortunate enough to have a local resident join him for a while.

Brian Walls, curator of the John Freeman Walls Historic Site and Underground Railroad Museum, will be greeting Lackner and Taylor with a homecoming celebration when they arrive.

Walls says there's a great interest in this type of history, from people on both sides of the border.



CELEBRATION FOR ONE, GREAT DAY FOR MANY – CFTV34 news anchor Meg Stahl, right, celebrated her birthday last week with a party. Although birthday parties are not generally newsworthy items, in Meg's case all the gifts went to the food bank run by the Learnington Salvation Army. Here Meg and friends are shown with her birthday gifts – 3,000 pounds of food and personal items, and \$500 in cash for the food bank. Contact any local food bank for ideas on your next birthday party. In Essex, contact the Salvation Army Food Bank at 519-776-4628, or the Essex Food Bank at 519-776-5607.

