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*Artisans in developing countries benefit*

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**MEET THE 73'S**

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# The ESSEX FREE PRESS

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

**\$1.00** (GST included)

Whole Number 6207  
Registration No. 08565

Volume 127 No. 41

Phone: 776-4268  
Fax: 776-4014

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## Town following spending guidelines, no violations treasurer says

By SARAH FISHER

Essex town council is giving a point-by-point explanation to claims administrators are spending irresponsibly with the town's credit cards.

Included in the agenda for the Oct. 2 council meeting was a response to claims made by John Balvert. Balvert made a presentation on Sept. 18 and gave the town a D- in fiscal responsibility. He claimed department heads and other employees should use purchase orders and not credit cards, and that too many employees were dining out at the town's expense. His argument was based on his assessment of a Freedom of Information Act request of the town's credit card statements for the past 31 months.

Town Treasurer Donna Hunter compiled the report. She said the policy about credit card use and purchase orders is outlined in a by-law passed by council. The regulations require that purchase orders be used for any purchase over \$1,000. She

said she encourages employees to use a credit card because it is more economical for the town.

"I promote people using credit cards because there's less cost to the municipality," Hunter said Oct. 6. "To process a cheque can be \$15 to \$20-per-cheque, so 20 credit card statements as opposed to 20 cheques is far more economical."

Wayne Miller, the town's chief administrative officer, called Balvert's claims "mistruths," and said although council knew Balvert was incorrect, a public report was warranted.

Hunter said there have been occasions when an employee has accidentally used the town's credit card. She said there were one or two instances where an employee thought they were using their personal credit card when they made a purchase. Each time, the receipt and a reimbursement were brought to her attention.

SEE TOWN SPENDING, 2



**JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER** - Gesto Station No. 2 volunteer firefighter Mike Bosse, left, shows four-year-old Connor Wuerch how to use a fire hose during a fire safety display at Canadian Tire Oct. 7. The program was sponsored by the Fire Marshal's Public Safety Council and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs. Volunteers from stations in Essex, Gesto and Harrow offered safety tips to the public. Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 8-14. This year local firefighters will focus on promoting kitchen safety. For Essex Fire and Rescue Service Chief Ed Pillon's safety tips, see page 9.

## Father and son tell story of organ donation

By DANIEL SCHWAB

Last year, when Cottam native John Bunn was in need of a kidney transplant he turned to his three sons to save his life.

In 2002, John was diagnosed with kidney disease. He started dialysis shortly afterwards, but said at that time, he felt as if he had already stopped living.

"Living on dialysis, you're alive, but you're not really living because by the time the toxins build up in your body you feel really lousy," John said. "You

can't go anywhere for extended periods of time. You still don't really have the energy to do anything."

John was included among a long list of people awaiting organ donations. His son Matthew was anxious and afraid for his father, but quickly realized he could help.

"My three brothers and I got blood tests to find a match," Matthew said. "We knew it'd be one of us."

On Oct. 12 of last year, at the London Health Science Centre, one of Matthew's kidneys was successfully

transplanted into John's body.

"Basically I was given a whole new life," John said.

John said since the operation his energy level has been higher than it's been in years.

"Now I'm able to be with my kids and grandkids and really enjoy life," John said. "Whereas before, I was just getting from one day to the next."

John used much of that energy to help co-ordinate the first ever Be a Life Saver Walk for Organ Donor Awareness, organ-

ized in part by the Windsor and District Kidney Foundation of Canada.

The event drew 30 supporters to Colasanti's Tropical Gardens on the morning of Oct. 7.

John said the purpose is to make the foundation's fundraising efforts available to people in Essex County.

"I just felt it was unfair for people in Essex, Leamington and Kingsville and all over the county to have to go all the way to Windsor for an hour long walk," John said.

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