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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

VOLUME 69 | NO. 37 50 CENTS

Isaac Brock, Highgate set for upgrades

Work delayed a year

By Kevin Werner
News Staff

Upper Stoney Creek residents will finally get some pavement markings on a couple of highly-used roadways sometime this fall.

Martin White, manager of traffic operations, confirmed to Ward 9 councillor Doug Conley that staff will get to Isaac Brock Drive and Highgate Drive after a year's delay.

He said traffic staff has been busy with other projects and the hot weather has slowed down painting road markings. He said the optimum temperature for painting is 65 degrees, instead of the 90-plus degrees that have covered the area this season.

See Page 7



Rallying for the 21

Clare Forndran, left, and Barbara Ann Haggerty joined canine friend Maggie Blue for a rally at Valley Park last Saturday in support of 21 pit bulls currently in the Ontario SPCA's custody. Despite the fact pit bulls are banned in Ontario, animal rights groups hope to win a reprieve to rehabilitate the dogs at Dog Tales Rescue and Sanctuary in King City, Ont. See full story on page 11. | Photo by Mike Pearson

NEWS

New math increases Taro waste

New calculation effectively boosts capacity five per cent. **Page 4**

LIFESTYLE



Let's Shake

A special acoustic evening Oct. 1 at the Powerhouse will bring Finger Eleven to town. **Page 23**

City considers buying Gateway

Hamilton councillors and the owners of the private Gateway Ice Centre have agreed to begin a feasibility study to determine whether the city will buy the three-pad facility on the South Service Road.

Opened in 2013, Gateway could provide an attractive option for city recreation staff, as an alternative to refurbishing the aging Stoney Creek and Saltfleet arenas.

See full story on Page 30

Hydro shock

Hamiltonian plans to protest skyrocketing electricity prices

By Gord Bowes
News staff

A Hamilton resident is harnessing the power of the people to show politicians they are fed up with being shocked when they open their electricity bills.

Sarah Warry-Poljanski has planned a protest in front of Ham-

ilton city hall on Wednesday, Sept. 28 at 5 p.m.

"Residents of Hamilton and all across Ontario have reached a breaking point," said Warry-Poljanski.

"We can no longer afford to pay these high costs for energy, especially when it's being conserved and sold off to others at a fraction of

what we pay."

On Monday, the Liberal government introduced legislation to rebate an amount equal to the provincial portion of the HST on residential, farm and small business electricity bills as of January 1. The move is expected to save the average household \$130 per year.

See Page 5

Price matters

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in the Creek

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Green energy, global adjustment drive up costs

From Page 1

Power prices in Ontario have tripled since the Liberals took power in 2003. The Liberals said there was a need to upgrade the energy infrastructure in the province; they promised to close coal-burning power plants to reduce pollution and replace their reliable power production in part with wind and solar generation. The latter two are renewable, but not reliable and producers are being paid a premium to generate it.

Last December, Ontario auditor-general Bonnie Lysyk reported ratepayers spent \$37 billion more than necessary on electricity from 2006 to 2014.

Last May, in response to energy conservation efforts and a mild winter, the Ontario Energy Board hiked hydro rates to make up a revenue shortfall.

At the same time, surplus Ontario-generated electricity has been sold off to neigh-

bouring provinces and states at a loss.

"We can no longer afford to pay these high costs for energy, especially when it's being conserved and sold off to others at a fraction of what we pay," Warry-Poljanski said.

The Liberal tax rebate was announced Monday during a Speech from the Throne by Ontario Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

The speech also noted the government is on track to balance the budget next year. A plan was also announced to create an additional 100,000 infant to preschool child care spaces.

Green energy initiatives and the global adjustment are key factors in the rising hydro costs.

Energy analyst Stephen Aplin said the drive to have wind and solar tackle carbon emissions is where the brunt of the blame lies for skyrocketing electricity prices.

While solar produced 3.5

per cent of electricity in 2014, it accounted for 18.6 per cent of the cost, he said. Nuclear produced 57.6 per cent of electricity and only accounted for 39.2 per cent of the total cost in 2014.

Since wind and solar do not produce continuous output, gas production of electricity is used to smooth out electricity consumption — eliminating some of the positive environmental effects of going green, said Aplin.

The government still plans to double its wind capacity, said Aplin, and is still signing more solar and wind contracts.

According to the Ontario 2013 Long-Term Energy Plan, the annual cost of producing electricity is forecast to peak in about 2023.

Independent Electricity System Operator spokesperson Chuck Farmer expects costs to stabilize over the next 10 years after the current period of investment in

Ontario's grid.

In 2013, roughly two thirds of electricity costs came from global adjustment.

The bulk of global adjustment comes from closing the gap left between the fair

market price of electricity and the contracted rates for energy producers.

For example, if a wind producer is given a 13 c/kWh contract to operate, but fair market value for electricity is 3 c/kWh,

that difference is paid for through global adjustment. This also applies when that electricity is sold to the U.S. for "fair market value."

-With files from Joel OpHardt, The Hamilton Spectator

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NEWS

Sudden tragedy

Fire victim Harjinder Singh Bhullar is remembered by his family as a skilled gardener who was eager to help others. **Page 4**

LIFESTYLE



Purr-fect donation

Hamilton/Burlington SPCA benefits from generosity of former cabbie. **Page 15**

Price matters

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Flying high

Mattia Palermo, Violet McKenzie and Elliott Webb, left to right, enjoyed some aerial action on the trapeze during Zacada Circus School's summer camp on July 25. See more photos on Page 3. | Photo by Mike Pearson

Mid-pen support

PC leader Patrick Brown says highway should be studied

By Kevin Werner
News Staff

Ontario Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown is willing to revive the idea of building the mid-peninsula corridor from Fort Erie to Halton Region.

Talking to a group of about 15 people at the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce's business roundtable July 25, Brown told reporters it's an idea that should be considered.

"It's something that our party would look very seriously at," said

Brown. "I do see the arguments made by (Haldimand-Norfolk Tory MPP) Toby Barrett and (Niagara West-Glanbrook MPP) Tim Hudak and I would have a lot of empathy for that advocacy."

See Page 7

Peachy problems

Drought shrinks local fruit

By Kevin Werner
News Staff

What some farmers are calling this summer season's drought "historic," the dry, hot conditions are having a critical impact on Niagara and Hamilton agricultural crops.

And with the Winona Peach Festival's annual three-day event a month away, farmers are concerned about how the peach crop will fare as July turns into August.

Anne Bridgman, who operates Bridgmans' Farm in Winona, said the lack of rain and the extreme heat has been a "challenge" to her crops.

The weather has produced smaller peaches, she said, but they taste sweeter.

See Page 11

City to host LRT open houses

Hamilton is giving residents another chance to comment on the contentious light-rail transit plan through a series of open houses throughout the city.

In Stoney Creek, an open house will be held Sept. 20, from 5-8 p.m. at Battlefield House Museum.

See full story on Page 12

in the Creek

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Lack of rain still produced good cherry crop

From Page 1

Yet the lack of rain produced a good crop of cherries this season that were readily picked up by eager customers, she said.

"The peaches taste delicious," she said. "They are small but sweet."

Still, the trees on her small farm where people can pick their own fruit look droopy and are in need of rain, despite the downpour Hamilton and Niagara farms saw July 25.

"All these trees need moisture," she said.

Agriculture Canada has identified southern Ontario from the Ottawa Valley to the Niagara Peninsula as "extremely dry," with record low precipitation. It has a rain deficit of about 100 millimeters.

Dry weather has also forced Hamilton to issue a ban on open fires, while the Hamilton Conservation Authority earlier this month issued a Level 1 low water



Many Niagara peaches are smaller compared to previous seasons. These peaches were purchased from a Fenwick, Ont. farm on July 19. | Photo by Mike Pearson

condition for the HCA watershed. The Grand River also issued a Level 1 low water condition for most of its rivers, with some rivers receiving a Level 2 designation.

Phil Tregunno, chair of the Ontario Tender Fruit Producers Marketing Board, called the drought "historic" for the Niagara and surrounding area.

In 2012, the last time Niag-

ara, Hamilton and the nearby area experienced severe heat, there was only 15 mm of rain over five weeks or about 16 per cent of the average seasonal rainfall. This year the region has seen up to 25 per cent of its average precipitation.

It's not just the lack of rain, but the consistently high temperatures over 30 degrees Celsius, he said.

"We've had some dry spells in the past, but this is pretty extreme," said Tregunno. "There are also hot dry winds."

The wind sucks up any moisture and rain that does manage to fall, he said.

He acknowledged the first peach crop had fruit that were under sized, but with the intense sun they had a high sugar content that made them tasty to eat. But

there are more peach varieties ready to be picked and farmers are concerned about what they will look like and taste like with the limited rain.

Tregunno, who operates a 700-acre farm in Niagara-on-the-Lake, said farmers can irrigate their crops, but it's expensive, and uses a lot of energy. But not a lot of farmers have the ability to irrigate. In addition, smaller

fruit means it cost the farmer more to fill the containers, he said.

What farmers need, said Tregunno, is a sustained, steady rain for a few days, which could increase the yield. But the weather forecasts for the next week predicts days of stifling temperatures of 30 degrees or more.

"We really need rain," said Bridgman. "At least a whole day of it."

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COMMUNITY

Trek for Tourette

Local chapter of Tourette Canada works to dispel the myths of a misunderstood syndrome.

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SPORTS

Generals up 2-1

Weekend split leaves Stoney Creek up a game heading into another big weekend. Page 29



Walking for Haiti on World Water Day

St. Gabriel Catholic Elementary School students, from left, Amanda Giannini, Adam Pettorossi and Christopher Lewis, were among more than 100 students who took part in the Water for Life Walkathon on Tuesday. The event, which coincided with World Water Day, helps to build wells for clean drinking water in Haiti. See the full story on Page 35.

Making a splash

Committee backs councillor's request for upper Stoney Creek site

By Kevin Werner
News Staff

Upper Stoney Creek will soon get its long-awaited splash pad.

Hamilton's public works committee has backed Stoney Creek

councillor Doug Conley's motion to apply for funding from the Heritage Green Community Trust that will help to construct a new splash pad for the area.

Conley said upper Stoney Creek is the last major area without a

splash pad.

He said in some areas of the city, including the Mountain, communities have more than one pad for youths to play in during hot weather days.

See Page 4

Roadwork on the way

Paving tops agenda

By Mike Pearson
News Staff

In terms of dollar value, the Southmeadow Neighbourhood rehabilitation will be Stoney Creek's top road construction project this year, with a tender value of \$2.2 million.

Marco Oddi, city construction manager, said the project has been tendered. Work is expected to begin in April and continue until September.

The project includes resurfacing of residential streets, including Green Road south of King Street to Kilbourn Avenue and south of King to the plateau.

See Page 3

Gas bar, service station approved

By Kevin Werner
News Staff

Hamilton politicians have approved a gas bar and service station at the corner of Green Mountain Road and Upper Centennial Parkway.

The zoning bylaw amendment, approved by the planning committee March 22, will allow construction of a complex that will also include a drive through automatic car wash, a convenience store, coffee shop with no seating and a drive through on 0.42 hectares of land.

See Page 5

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Save the date: Orchard Park reunion gala is Saturday, June 4

Orchard Park Secondary School's 50th anniversary gala is Saturday, June 4, 6 p.m. - 1 a.m. at the school, located at 200 Dewitt Rd.

Parking is available at Eastgate Square with shuttle service to the event.

The \$35 meet and greet admission includes one food truck item, one beverage,



an anniversary T-shirt and full access to memory rooms and a DJ party with Pynx Productions.

Any remaining funds will support a school scholarship fund and cafeteria renovations.

The school will be open during the day for a stroll down memory lane. All alumni and guests are invited to join the festivities.

See orchardparkreunion.com to register.

Site chosen on First Road West

From Page 1

Conley said former councillor Brad Clark had already taken out about \$290,000 to be used for the existing 2013 Olde Stoney Creek Urban Design Plan project. Conley said the money had yet to be used. Instead, councillors agreed to re-appropriate the money to build a splash pad at Maplewood Park at 155 First Road West.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be about \$433,000. Conley said the trust fund will be contributing the remainder, or about \$143,000 for the splash pad.

Politicians will finalize the committee's recommendation at their March 30 council meeting.

Conley, who has made it a priority to build a splash pad in upper Stoney Creek, said money is in the 2016 budget for another splash pad for Heritage Green Sports Park. About \$684,000 is earmarked for the Heritage Green Sports Park phase



If plans come to fruition, kids in upper Stoney Creek will be able to cool off at a local splash pad by the summer of 2017. | File photo

"We are approving 1,000 residential units, but there are no amenities."

two in 2017. In addition, in 2019, \$100,000 has been set aside for a splash pad, and another \$400,000 budgeted in 2020.

Conley said design work will begin for both splash pads this year. It is expected the splash pads will be ready

for the summer of 2017.

"We have no splash pads in the upper Stoney Creek area," said Conley. "We are approving 1,000 residential units, but there are no amenities. People are going to ward 6 for splash pads and recreation activities."

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