

Volume 3, Number 2

Spring 2003

## **Festival Season!**

### **Halton Eco-Festival**

Willow Park Ecology Centre will again participate in The Halton Eco Festival, on Saturday, April 5 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Glen Abbey Recreation Centre on Third Line north of the QEW in Oakville.

One hundred environmentally-friendly businesses and organizations will be exhibiting. Wastewise joins us as another Halton Hills exhibitor. Oakville Honda will display their alternative energy cars, the Civic Hybrid and the Element. Other exhibitors will feature personal care products, alternative health, hemp products, reuse and recycle providers, and socially-conscious financial services.

Fifteen one-hour workshops will cover environmental topics, including smog and your health, healthy homes, buying locally-grown foods, and wise water use. In the afternoon, take part in David Suzuki's Nature Challenge.


The children's program includes Earth Day presentations, planting a seedling and eco-friendly crafts. Children can have their faces painted like an endangered animal.

These activities are free with admission and will take place all day long. For schedules and more information, call 905-849-5501 or check out the website at [www.oakvillepeacecentre.org](http://www.oakvillepeacecentre.org) and follow the links. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students, free for children 12 and under.

### **Riverfest 2003**

WPEC will again offer popular nature activities at this fifth annual Riverfest on Saturday, May 24. Credit Valley Conservation will demonstrate electrofishing, while Wye March staff will introduce the curious and the brave to wet and scaly amphibians and reptiles. Don Noble expects to release more newly-hatched butterflies, and Jack Imhof will reveal the astonishing number and variety of tiny creatures that inhabit the Credit River.

You can compete in the Paddle-to-the-Sea Race, in which the tiny wooden boat you've just decorated will race down a stretch of Silver Creek. Prizes will be given to the top finishers. The first-place winner's boat and environmental message will be sent off on a Paddle to the Sea as Riverfest's 2003 Official Ambassador for Waterway Protection. This year, you can first participate in a Paddle Quest that will lead you to the race.

The village of Norval will again be celebrating life on the Credit River. The day begins with the Georgetown Rotary pancake breakfast in the morning and a Norval Community Association barbecue at noon. Hiker Mike will lead a morning hike along the Credit Valley footpath. A cold-water rescue demonstration will be given near Canoe Country. Music will be performed in Norval Park, and you can shop at the Riverside Vendor Market. For more information on all the activities at Riverfest, call Gini at 905-877-3883 or see [www.canoe-country.com](http://www.canoe-country.com). 

## Brian Thomas: Rotary Club Representative

“My first function with Willow Park Ecology Centre was to attend the 2000 Christmas party,” remembers Brian Thomas, member of the WPEC steering committee, and manager, on behalf of the Rotary Club of Georgetown, of the Trillium Foundation grant. “That was a good way to start with a group of total strangers.”

Brian was right for the position of grant manager because he was the outgoing president of the Georgetown Rotary Club and has years of business and program management experience. Brian supervises the Trillium grant portion of WPEC’s budget, checking that expenditures match the intended use of the budget.

“The responsibilities are to make sure the money is spent in a way that is consistent with the negotiated Trillium plan,” explains Brian, “or failing that, with the intent of the plan. And to ensure that a report is sent to Trillium when it is due.”

Yet Brian regularly volunteers for more work than he is required to. “I’m just responding to the enthusiasm shown by the rest of the team,” he says. “The most enjoyable activities are those in the park itself, doing the hands-on volunteer work, such as when the Rotary Club stained the woodwork on the bridge. I also enjoyed writing the minutes of the meetings. Another interesting activity is working with Ruth to put together the annual reports for Trillium.”

Brian appreciates the insight that was shown in building the vision of WPEC and then making it a reality. “I’ve always been impressed with the skills and knowledge of the people in Halton Hills who willingly give their time for projects and activities they believe in.”

Brian enjoys learning about the flora and fauna of the area. “I have always like plants, grasses and flowers, but was not well informed. Having the details and significance of specific items explained is well worth the effort of volunteering. Learning about invasive and non-native species was very interesting.”

As for animal life, Brian feels rewarded by seeing things that move by themselves. “Meeting a milk snake was a real pleasure,” he reveals. “I’m always trying to identify the birds in the park. The variety of birds is different than those in my back yard, even though I live less than a kilometer from the park.” Brian was able to correct some steering committee members who mistook a kingfisher for a blue jay.

His hope for the future of WPEC is that it will be used and supported by the public. “I’d also like to see the number of volunteers and the general level of volunteer support grow, so that the work done by the core people can be eased.” ❧



### Contacts

Willow Park Ecology Centre is an initiative of the Town Environmental Advisory Committee. It is located in Norval, with an entrance off Mary St., on land leased by the Town of Halton Hills from Credit Valley Conservation.

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[www.willowparkecology.com](http://www.willowparkecology.com)

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## How the Credit River Got Its Name

By Carolyn Martin



Before the 16th century, the Iroquois inhabited most of the lands in southern Ontario. The Iroquois were divided into two different groups that fought for supremacy, the Hurons versus the Five Nations confederacy. After the Five Nations defeated the Hurons, they attacked the Ojibway from northern Ontario who had been allied with the Hurons.

This was a big mistake, because the Ojibway won out over the Five Nations and started to occupy southern Ontario. By the middle of the 18th century, the Ojibway inhabited almost all of the lands that had belonged to the Iroquois Five Nations. One of the tribes that came south was from the Mississagi River near Lake Huron. They became known as the Mississauga Indians.

Some of these Mississauga natives wandered along the banks of a river flowing into Lake Ontario and set up a campsite at the river's mouth. In the early 1700s, the French settlers traded with these Mississaugas for furs. Often the natives did not have enough furs to trade for what they wanted from the French, so the owners of the trading post allowed the Indians to take what they wanted on credit. The risk for the traders was very low because the Indians were so honest that their families and friends would assume their debts if they could not repay them the m-selves.

Because of their custom of allowing credit to the Indians, the trading post became known as the "Credit Trading Post." It was a short step to naming the river the "Credit River" and the natives the m-selves as the "Mississauga Indians of the Credit River." ❖



## Rain Barrels from TEAC

Reduce your use of groundwater for gardening! The Town Environmental Advisory Committee will be selling 50 rain barrels on April 26 in honour of Earth Day. These food-grade reconditioned barrels will cost only \$60, which covers costs. Get yours at the Town's Trafalgar Rd. location, and be prepared to take your barrel home with you.

## Friends of Willow Park Ecology Centre

We are delighted to welcome the following into our Friends of Willow Park Ecology Centre program:

### Members:

Leslie Adams and family

### Contributors:

John & Lydia van Rompu

### Donors:

Rotary Club of Georgetown

To become a Friend of Willow Park Ecology Centre, contact Ruth Kuchinad at 905-877-3676 or [ruth@willowparkecology.com](mailto:ruth@willowparkecology.com)



## Summer Camp Programs

### July 7-11, 2003: Flying Machines

Kids aged five to seven can join us for a week of outdoor activities focusing on nature's flying creatures.

### August 11-15, 2003: Water Works

Kids aged eight to 10 can splash in a wet and wild setting as we discover the many uses of water.

Fees: \$120 per program.

For more information, contact Recreation and Parks Department, 905-873-2601 x 2275.

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100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper.

## Celebrate Earth Day Every Day!

The Web site [www.earthday.ca](http://www.earthday.ca) has a long list of ideas for ways to celebrate Earth Day. It also points out that Earth Day events don't have to be restricted to one day of the year. Any day is a good day to work for the good of our earth. With this attitude, every day can be an earth day.

What's particularly encouraging for us in Halton Hills is that our community already implements many of the suggested ideas for celebrating Earth Day. And some of them are followed all year round.

Here is a list of some efforts you can help with locally, for Earth Day as well as other days of the year:

**Community Clean Up** - neighbourhood and ratepayer groups organize trash pick-up days. Watch for a town-wide initiative for the Communities in Bloom judging.

**Eco Festival** - visit the 3rd Annual Halton Eco Festival in Oakville on April 5. For details call 905-849-5501.

**Eco Field Trip** - Take a self-guided tour of WPEC, or plan to visit on Riverfest or one of the other days when community programs are offered.

**Gardening** - To mingle with other garden lovers, get involved with the Georgetown Horticultural Society, the Friends of Dominion Seed House, or the Communities in Bloom committee.

**Info Display** - Many of our community groups provide displays at community information sessions, the Downtown Georgetown Farmers' Market, the Georgetown Fall Fair and other places. They can always use more help.

**Nature Walk** - Take part in outings of the Halton Hills chapter of the Bruce Trail Club.

**Tree Planting** - Help P.O.W.E.R. plant Future Forests.

**Recycling** - Make use of the Region's Blue Box recycling program and/or Wastewise, which takes an astonishing array of materials for recycling.

**Reuse** - Support the reuse centres in town, by donating and buying clothing and goods from places like The Salvation Army and Wastewise.

**Waste Reduction** - Wastewise is nationally recognized as being a leader in the field of waste diversion through reuse and recycling. They can use support through donations of money, materials and goods, and volunteer time.

**Workshops, seminars** - Many groups offer seminars and presentations through the year. WPEC and TEAC are just two that work for community education on environmental issues.

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## Coming Events

**April 5, Halton Eco Festival**, 10-6, Glen Abbey Recreation Centre, 905-849-5501, Adults \$5, students \$3, children 12 and under free.

**April 5, Green Energy Workshop**, 10-4, Dufferin Country Museum & Archives, 1-877-941-7787. Free but pre-register.

**April 8, Naturalist Club presentation on Rattray Marsh**, 7:30, Centennial School.

**April 9, Bruce Trail Information Session**, 7:30, Community Room, Police Station, Guelph St., Georgetown.

**April 12, EEON's 2nd Strategizing for the Future event**, Forest Valley Outdoor Education Centre, North York, [info@eeon.org](mailto:info@eeon.org).

**April 14-25, WPEC display in Georgetown Library.**

**April 26, Town Earth Day.**

**April 27, WPEC Sunday work parties begin**, 10-2, 905-877-3676.

**May 4, Bruce Trail Day**, Limehouse, [www.torontobrucetrailclub.org](http://www.torontobrucetrailclub.org).

**May 24, Riverfest**, Norval, 905-877-3883.

