

THE FREE PRESS PEOPLE

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PHONE 564-0005

WHAT'S ON

► Summer School

The PG Dyslexic Support Society is holding their annual CNC Summer School. It runs from August 12 to 23 and is for teachers and parents working with children who have difficulty reading, writing and spelling. The training is in the structured, sequential, phonetic and multi-sensory methods of the Orton-Gillingham program. One-on-one lessons for children over six to adult are also available. 564-8011.

► Harley Raffle for Bigs

The Big Brothers & Sisters are selling tickets for their annual Harley Raffle. Top prize is a 1996 FLHT Electra Glide Standard Harley Davidson plus a gift certificate (total approximate value \$22,000). Second and third prize will be \$1000 and \$500 in Chevron gas certificates. Tickets are \$20 each, available at Big B&S office, Harley Davidson, and Central Plaza Chevron. All money raised in Prince George stays in Prince George.

► Check out Huble

Huble Homestead is open again! Every spring the historic Huble Homestead opens for viewing. Tourists and locals alike come out to learn about the ways the Prince George area was pioneered. Right now the garden is ready for planting, the animals are enjoying their spring frolics, a game of dominos is always ready, strolls along the Fraser are encouraged, and guided tours are available. It is open every day from 9:30-5:30, admission is by donation, and it is located 40 km north of PG. Drop by for a visit.

► Flying high

The Prince George Airshow is approaching again, with another astronomical lineup. The Canadian Armed Forces Snowbirds will be joined by our national military parachute team, The Sky Hawks. Also this year will be tactical demonstrations by the CF-18 Hornet, a contingent of U.S. military aircraft, many civilian aero acts, and the walls of fire created by Rich's Incredible Pyro.

► Get your ducks

The annual Child Development Centre's Great Northern Duck Race is approaching more rapidly than a Fraser River spring current. The wooden raffle ducks will be dumped from the Yellowhead Bridge on July 1. The duck that floats across the finish line first wins the grand prize of \$3000 cash. Many other prizes are also available. Ducks cost \$3 with family and corporate discounts available. Money goes to the CDC. Call Kim at 563-7168.

Safe from the sun

*Heading into
heat requires
some planning*

What did the Canadian say to the Pillsbury Dough-boy? "Nice Tan!" Especially after being in the deep-freeze for the last six months. Now that the sun is out, though, we're trying to get that deep brown hue.

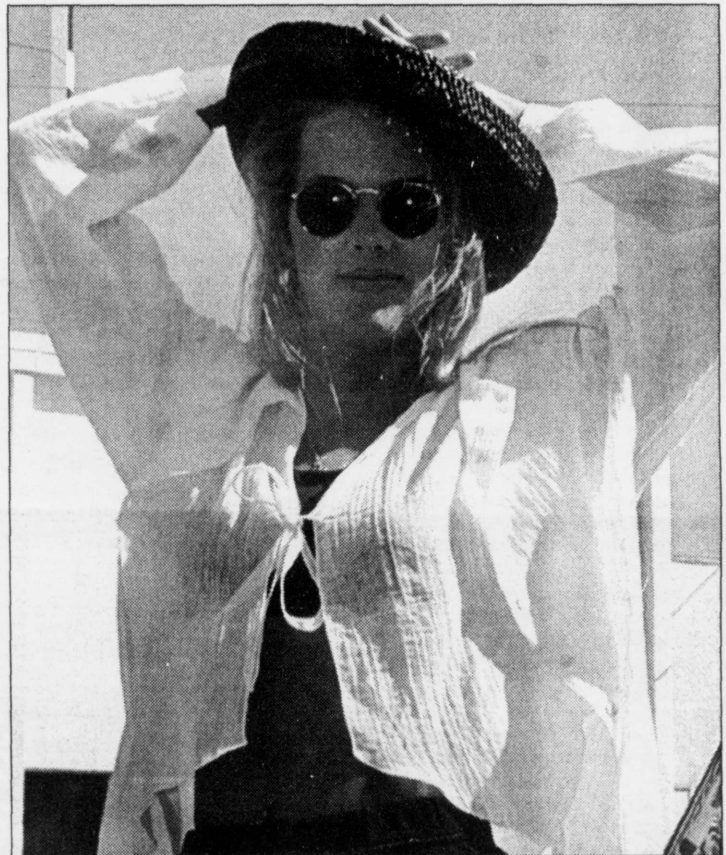
Tomatoes are great when they're sun dried, so are grapes, but people are not. That is the message health professionals are trying to get through to people, but the public is still going down to the lake on the weekend to find a place in the sun. Dermatologists insist that doing so is asking for trouble.

"Getting a tan is basically deliberately burning your skin," says Bruce Gaunt, the chief environmental health officer at the Northern Interior Health Unit. "Ultra Violet (UV) rays are skin damaging radiation. People who think tanning is a good thing really need to re-think that. We don't suggest getting any kind of tan at all."

Since World War II the browning phenomenon has steadily increased. Prior to that, fair skin was healthy skin. At some points in history, in fact, the whiter you were the better your status was. Now, we see the link between skin cancer and those tans we're spreading on our skins.

People are reluctantly taking heed of the health warnings. Sun block sales have increased, and so have visits to tanning salons, to get a protective base tan. But even these tanning beds can be hot beds for risk.

"A lot of people think that getting a base tan is protection," says health nurse Karen Hoskyn. "But that's wrong. It only has a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of four, whereas we strongly recommend an SPF of at least 15. It's a big fallacy. Being out in the sun without protection improves the chances of getting skin cancer, which is the most common form of cancer in Canada. It also contributes to prema-



The sun can seem benign but it doesn't take long for the ultra-violet rays to start doing damage to the skin.

ture aging, eye cataracts and a weakening of the immune system. For kids, getting a blistering burn two times in a lifetime puts you at a higher risk of cancer."

Children are a particular concern to Karen, as 80 per cent of our lifetime exposure to the sun happens before we're 18 years old. Children have less natural skin protection from the sun, she says, and so it is important to keep a sun block on them, especially between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. A hat is essential, and it must shade the nose, neck

and ears. Babies under a year old should not be exposed to the sun at all. Karen also recommends trying out a small patch of sun block on children to check for allergies.

Sun block must be renewed every two hours, and should be applied to all parts of the body including under the edges of bathing suits, behind the knees, on feet bottoms, and ears. Wearing clothing (blue is best, white is worst) is also strongly recommended, especially, sadly, polyester. Hats are also a must.

Ozone layer key to keeping us from ray's harm

Holes in the ozone layer were discovered in the 1980's. The ozone layer is like the earth's skin, protecting the globe - and us - from the UV rays pelted down from the sun. There are three kinds of Ultra Violet - UVC, which are short and rarely make it through the stratosphere; UVB, which are medium strength and causes delayed tanning and burns; and UVA, which are long range rays and cause most tanning, burns and skin wrinkling.

"We've been monitoring the ozone layer since the 50's," says Bill Taylor, a climatologist for Environment Canada. "For the month of May it was actually a favourable situation in the B.C. region, the average was 1.1 per cent above the 1980 mean. We use 1980 as a baseline because it was then we began detecting deterioration in the layer."

A few years ago, the majority of countries signed the Montreal Protocol which

outlawed many of the ozone-destroying agents people were belching into the sky. Since then, ozone levels have been as bad as nine per cent below 1980 levels, but are now improving. It will take over 50 years, however, for the protective layer to fully recover if current trends continue. Until then the rate of skin cancer (it has doubled in Canada since the 80's) and other side effects will continue to be a threat.