

Neighbours

A part of the community since 1965 • Volume 8 • Number 1 • Spring 2004

Durham hits new heights

University, college and OPG forge future for the Region



Dr. George Bereznai, dean of the School of Energy Engineering and Nuclear Science stands above the computer common shared by the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) and Durham College. The two educational institutes at the North Oshawa campus have programs geared to addressing a predicted shortage in skilled nuclear engineers, operators and technicians.

What every community wants is knowledge-based, rewarding employment opportunities close to home to end the commuter rat race and fuel the local economy.

In a symbiotic relationship filled with promise for Durham's future, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) is delivering those opportunities to the residents of this region.

In the fall of 2003, UOIT opened its doors and invited the first 100 students to the School of Energy Engineering and Nuclear Science, within the new research-intensive, high-technology science and business-oriented university. Those graduates will provide the nuclear industry and OPG, with the largest-ever graduating class in Canada of specifically trained nuclear-based engineers. It will provide Ontario with the skilled workers it needs to run our generators and Durham with a significant brain-gain and economic infusion as these students take jobs within our community. And, says the program's dean, Dr. George Bereznai, it will save Ontario taxpayers the cost of training that the government-owned company would have to provide if the university did not. "They're much more job-ready," to begin producing on the job from the day they report to work, he notes.

in this issue

2003 Successes at Darlington

Station celebrates year of achievement

pg. 2

Lifelong learners

Skill and education are key to operator success

pg. 3

Take a break

March holiday events for the whole family

pg. 4

In its conception, the goal of UOIT was to provide an educated workforce of highly-trained "thinkers, leaders and doers" for knowledge-based industry where they are needed most, says the University's President Dr. Gary Polonsky. And at this point in time, one of Ontario's areas of greatest need is the energy sector. Here attrition due to impending baby boomer retirement is expected to cause a shortage of the highly-skilled workers needed to operate our nuclear plants and utilities in the coming years.

According to a recent survey conducted by the Nuclear Energy Institute in the United States, that country is anticipating nearly half of all jobs in the nuclear power generation sector will need to be filled in the next five years. According to Don McKinnon, President of the Canadian Power Workers Union, the statistics in Canada are similar.

The new university hopes to meet that challenge. "UOIT was based on a market study

continued on page 2





25 years and just getting better

In 2003, Darlington Nuclear celebrated 25 years in the community and did so with historic accomplishments both in the plant and as a partner in the community.

The employees here continued to generate safe, clean and efficient power for Ontario while overcoming the unique challenges of 2003 such as the August blackout.

Darlington Nuclear was the first multi-unit nuclear station in either Canada or the United States to return all of its units to high power following the grid failure. It's an achievement that speaks to the systems in the plant and the skills of the people who operate them.

A strong safety culture within Darlington Nuclear contributed to continued outstanding safety results in 2003. In recognition of Darlington's strong record of safety and environmental stewardship in its operations, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (the plant's regulator) awarded Darlington Nuclear a five-year renewal of its operating licence. This is a first for any Canadian nuclear station. And Darlington continues to be ISO 14001 certified for its environmental practices both within the station and on its more than 1,000-acre grounds where habitat protection is given high priority and nurtured by staff and community volunteers. But the strengths and dedication of Darlington employees and management are not contained to just within our borders. Through OPG's Charity Trust campaign, Darlington employees contributed \$180,000 to help support Ontario charities, including many here in Durham Region.

In 2003, Darlington Nuclear was named Corporate Citizen of the Year by the Municipality of Clarington for the second year in a row. Darlington also received the honour of Business of the Year from the Clarington Board of Trade.

As a corporation OPG and Darlington Nuclear hold the value of corporate citizenship very high. It is a commitment we make to the communities we operate in whether it is sponsorship of minor sports, helping the most vulnerable in our society or by ensuring we keep our environment pristine and our employees safe while providing power for Ontarians.

As much as Darlington Nuclear has worked to give back to this community, we are equally thankful for the strong support we have received from you in return. You are our neighbours in every sense of the word. Our commitment to you is keeping you foremost in our minds as we move forward in our quest to be one of the best nuclear power facilities in the world.

To learn more about Darlington Nuclear, our programs and our people, visit our Web site at www.opg.com or call our Information Centre on Park Road at (905) 623-7122 or send us an e-mail at darlingtonnuclear@opg.com.

Gregory OD Smith
Senior Vice President

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of what was needed in Ontario and in Durham in particular," says Dr. Bereznai. "This is the right program, in the right place at the right time."

Working in tandem with the university to address the need is Durham College, which for the past few years has been training nuclear technicians and technologists as well.

"There is so much high-level knowledge work," says Dr. Bereznai, and Durham will be the beneficiary when the supply and demand for those high-skill positions is in balance.

Nuclear report cards issued for fourth quarter of 2003

Ontario Power Generation has released report cards, comparing the performance of its nuclear operations with nuclear industry standards, for the fourth quarter of 2003.

These quarterly documents measure program effectiveness on a number of key indicators, focusing on public and employee safety and environmental and production performance.

At Darlington, the major Station Containment Outage (SCO) last fall impacted on our electricity production as we fell below our year-end production target due to a planned extension of the SCO.

Employees continued to work safely resulting in our safety performance being better than target. Our environmental performance was also good, with no major or moderate spills recorded in the fourth quarter. The radiation dose to the public was 1.1 microsievert, significantly below the regulatory limit of 1,000 microsieverts. The average Canadian receives 2,000 microsieverts from background sources every year. We did, however, experience two events involving equipment impairment that put pressure on the station's safety systems and temporarily reduced the margin of safety.

To receive a copy of the report card, visit our Information Centre or our website (www.opg.com), or have it faxed to you by calling our Fax on Demand number, 1-800-238-7718 and asking for story code – 10000.

News in brief

On Jan. 29, 2004, Darlington employees marked one full year without a Lost Time Accident. Achieving this milestone of excellence does not come by chance. It takes the collective focus of everyone to assess risks and error-likely situations that could impact on worker safety, and apply safe work practices to prevent injury. The one-year period represents about 2.5 million hours worked without a Lost Time Accident, placing Darlington's safety performance in the top quartile of the North American nuclear industry.

A passion for knowledge

Learning is a way of life for nuclear operators



Nuclear Operator Rhonda Rose

When Rhonda Rose was 11, her father built their family a wind-powered solar house in the Niagara Region that fuelled a passion for electricity within his daughter.

Before she had finished high school, Rhonda was already dreaming of taking her experience to working with what she saw as the most fascinating energy generation of all, nuclear power.

"We used to go to Rice Lake on weekends and we would pass Darlington as it was being built

and my dad would say, 'Oh, look there's the nuclear plant,'" Rhonda recalls. Nuclear technology captured her imagination and continues to do so today, 12 years after she fulfilled her dream to begin work as a nuclear operator at the Darlington Generating Station.

The road from dream to reality has been one of lifelong learning for Rhonda who spent two years at the University of Western Ontario studying physics before entering Niagara College for an intensive 18-month course to get her third class stationary engineer licence and college diploma. As a co-op student at the Nanticoke thermal energy (coal) plant, Rhonda was offered a full-time job. But still her sights remained on the nuclear side of the energy sector. "I wanted to become an ANO (Authorized Nuclear Operator)," says Rhonda who continues to work toward the goal of one day standing at command central of the nuclear reactors - the control room. Rhonda's extensive nuclear training has never ended. Like all nuclear operators, she is expected to spend time every five weeks in a classroom, updating her skills. Despite the shift work, the complex demands of her job and the intense in-house training at OPG, Rhonda also completed courses for her university degree in her off-hours. It is all part of her commitment to her job and to herself. For Rhonda, a disciplined regime that nurtures mind, body and spirit are key to excellence on the job and in her life.

Chuck Lamers, 43, was no stranger to the concept of lifelong learning when he became a nuclear operator at the Pickering Generating Station in 2002. With an agricultural degree from Guelph University and a Bachelor of Education from Queen's University, he had spent his life as both a student and a teacher in a variety of capacities before coming to OPG's public affairs department. When his 16-month contract was about to expire, he took an aptitude test to see what else he might be ideally suited for within OPG. "I really liked the company," he relates. His test showed a clear aptitude for an operator position and he has been working and training in the fuel handling division ever since. "I was very impressed with OPG's approach to training," says Chuck, who in his off-time continues to supply teach children in the community. OPG's training is "very hands on, theoretical and practical. You learn in the classroom then immediately apply it in the field. I was very, very impressed. It's linked, it's progressive.

"OPG has a structured training program but I can also direct my own learning program," he adds, noting there are frequent opportunities to learn new skills. "You are only limited by what you set as your own boundaries. The horizon just keeps getting broader."

OPG in the Community

Friendships that last a lifetime.

Our children are our future, which is why Ontario Power Generation is proud to be the lead sponsor of the Bowl for Kids Sake.

Our sponsorship role is just another step in our philosophy of putting our energy to good use in the communities of Durham.

Big Brothers and Sisters not only depend on funds raised through these events but more importantly - the involvement and interaction of committed volunteers.

In Durham there are many Little Brothers and Sisters who are in need of a Big Brother or Sister match or an in-school mentor. If you would like to share some personal time with a child - you may have something special to offer. A valuable friendship and bond may develop that could last a lifetime.

Big Brothers and Sisters of Ajax-Pickering
905-831-3777

Big Brothers and Sisters of Clarington
905-623-6646

Books for Babies @ Your Library™.
Giving our children the gift of literacy

Children with good reading skills learn better and faster. To help fight illiteracy and encourage children at a young age to read, local agencies have re-launched the successful program called "Books for babies @ Your Library."

Spearheaded by area "Friends of the Library" groups, regional libraries, and local sponsors, the program offers new mothers a special reading package at their local library. Tucked inside, parents will find items to encourage early reading by the child, such as a board book, a finger play brochure, library information, book suggestions and a night light supplied by Ontario Power Generation (OPG).

If you are a new parent - see what your local library has to offer!

Need a speaker? Give us a call.

Are you looking for a speaker for your group, service club, professional association or industry seminar?

Darlington Nuclear has a Speakers' Bureau that can help you out. Whether it's a specialized area, technical subject or a general interest topic, there's a speaker for your group. Last year alone, we talked with more than 180 groups.

We're always looking for opportunities to share the Darlington story with the community. If you're interested, please contact Don Terry, Darlington Public Affairs Manager, at 905-697-7443 or send him an e-mail at don.terry@opg.com

Safe and Sound

OPG's commitment to its Neighbours

For more than 30 years Ontario Power Generation has operated nuclear plants in Ontario safely.

Did you know?

- OPG generating stations have a 'defence in depth' system that not only provides the station operation with one back up safety system but several redundant systems to ensure the greatest safety assurance. Even if one or more systems failed concurrently, there would still be adequate protection for employees and our community. These containment systems include a vacuum building that would absorb any radiological release.
- OPG nuclear operators are carefully selected and provided extensive training, including an eight-year mentoring period, prior to getting their full nuclear operator licence. They must also undergo on-going training and write rigorous tests under authority of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, the federal nuclear industry regulator.
- The dose of radiation a person living within the borders of the Darlington Generating Station would have received in 2003 was 1.1 microsievert, which is one one-thousandth of the regulatory limit. In the same year, the average Canadian would have received about 2000 microsieverts from natural background radiation.
- In the long history of the Canadian nuclear industry, there has never been an off-site accident. If an accident ever did happen, the plants are designed to contain any radioactive emissions within vacuum buildings.
- Emergency Preparedness is the responsibility of the Province of Ontario, which works in conjunction with the Region of Durham through the Durham Emergency Measures Office (DEMO), Ontario Power Generation and the Municipality of Clarington. The people, plans and procedures that are put in place, and tested annually, can also be called upon during more common emergencies such as ice storms, train derailments or industrial accidents.

MARCH BREAK MADNESS

Looking for fun, free activities for the whole family this March Break? Join us at the **Darlington Information Centre** and in the community for hikes on the trails, campfire tales, skating parties, movies and more.

Signs of Spring

MON., MAR. 15 9:30AM - 2:30PM
Darlington WaterFront Trail

Dress warmly. Explore the trails looking for signs of spring. Nature activities with **Friends of Second Marsh**. Horse-drawn wagon rides. Yummy treats around the campfire.

ABORIGINAL LEGENDS with Chief Topleaf

TUES., MAR. 16 9:30AM, 11AM & 1:30PM
Darlington Information Centre

Gather 'round and learn about aboriginal life through stories and legends. Limited seating, first come first serve.

MOVIE MANIA

WED., MAR. 17 10AM AND 1PM
Darlington Information Centre

10 AM **Finding Nemo**
1 PM **Spy Kids 3: Game Over**
Limited seating, first come, first serve.

skating party

THURS., MAR. 18 9:30AM - 12:30PM
Oroqo Arena

Put on your blades and helmets and hit the ice for three hours of fun, friends and great skating!

MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL

FRI., MAR. 19 9:30AM - 2:30PM
Purple Woods

A fun day of crafts with **Friends of Second Marsh**, Baked Beans around a campfire with Pickering Museum at the **Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival!** Note: \$5 family admission fee to Purple Woods. All OPG activities are **FREE**.

For more information on our March Break programs, as well as, other Darlington Nuclear Information Centre events, please call **1-800-461-0034** or e-mail darlingtonnuclear@opg.com.

Neighbours

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**ONTARIO POWER
GENERATION**