



Windsor native
Todd Shearon a perfect
fit for Spits' PR job. E1

Green plan victim of its own success: Grits

Duncan blames Hudak pledge for difficulties

DAVE BATTAGELLO
The Windsor Star

Job creation under the Ontario government's green energy incentives has become so attractive that in some cases become a victim of its own success, said Economic Development and Trade Minister and local MPP Sandra Pupatello on Friday.

"We said we were going to add

more green energy jobs," she said. "Facilities are being built in Ontario and that's what we want. We want to attract these businesses to North America."

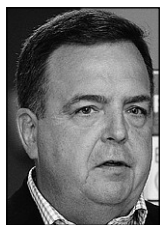
But the skyrocketing growth has come too fast for the province's Hydro One and the Ontario Power Authority to keep pace and get solar, wind and other renewable sources on to the grid, she said.

"The Green Energy Act literally isn't even two years old yet, so it's relatively new as a function of government policy," Pupatello said.

"That means all of our agencies that deal with electricity have gone through growing

pains and are changing how they do business, being responsive to their consumers, including the level of transmission requirements."

Pupatello was reacting Friday to criticism her government is to blame for Silken Canada's decision to lay off about 60 workers in Windsor only weeks after opening. The company, which makes solar panel modules, says the employees will be off the job for a week to a



Dwight Duncan

month because of a slowdown in business.

Ontario's finance minister and local MPP Dwight Duncan echoed getting the new renewable sources on to the grid in a timely fashion has been tough.

"The (incentive) program is so oversubscribed across Ontario that I'm not surprised," he said. "We are going to have some things to say in the next few days about these connection issues, but I view this as a problem of success."

But the local Liberals were also linking the layoffs in part to the promise by Tory Leader Tim Hudak to kill Ontario's green energy incentive pro-

grams if elected into government on Oct. 6.

"The minute the leader of the opposition talked of killing the tariff and gutting the green energy act, we saw a chill in the green energy sector," Pupatello said. "That happened virtually overnight."

Added Duncan: "Mr. Hudak's promise is reckless and will undermine the future of this growing industry."

But Conservative economic development critic Peter Shurman countered angrily against the criticism, saying his government will not kill any existing agreements in the green energy sector.

"The problem with Mr. Duncan and Ms. Pupatello is they take credit for everything they do and then blame everything on others," he said. "They have people standing in line for the grid waiting for someone to accommodate them."

It's proof incentives for the sector are no longer needed, Shurman said. The cost for power could then be lessened and that would attract other business to Ontario in many sectors, he said. "We will cancel the program, but the contracts that are in place will be honoured," Shurman said. "We will create a fertile ground in a number of fronts."

Inflatable behemoths to occupy downtown core

Balloon fest coming July 30

DALSON CHEN
The Windsor Star

A gargantuan Kermit the Frog and a tomato the size of a cube van gave downtown Windsor a preview of the city's newest summer festival: Balloonapalooza, which takes place at the end of the month.

On July 30 and 31, at least 80 giant cold-air balloons will decorate the city's core, courtesy of Windsor company Dynamic Displays.

Virginia Cosco-Pizzuti, chairwoman of the Downtown Windsor Business Improvement Association, said that the festival will be unique in North America.

WANT TO GO?

Attendance is free, but the midway rides and games will be ticketed. For more information, visit the festival's website: www.balloonapalooza.ca.

"An event like this, that has 80 balloons of this magnitude — It's never been done before. So we're happy to be bring it here first," she said at a press conference on Friday in front of the frog and the tomato.

Many other colourful inflatable characters — several more than two storeys tall — will fill downtown streets during the festival weekend.

Cosco-Pizzuti said that in the planning stages, the DWBIA took a walk around the core with Dynamic Displays to figure out how to fit all the balloons. Some of the inflatable behemoths will have to be mounted on rooftops.

"We said, 'Where can we put these guys — They're huge.' And we did it," she said. "It's going to be spectacular."

Super-sized balloons won't be the only attractions on the streets. A ferris wheel and other midway rides will be set up on Victoria Avenue. There will also be a mini-train following a downtown circuit and connecting with the Emancipation Day Celebration at the riverfront.

Live musical performances (featuring members of the



NICK BRANCACCIO/The Windsor Star

Miss Emancipation Danait Asgedom, right, walks with Dema, 4, left, and Furaha, 4, during the Downtown Windsor BIA news conference Friday announcing the Balloonapalooza Festival to be at the end of the month. The weekend will give a big boost to core businesses.

Windsor Federation of Musicians) will take place on an outdoor stage at the Ouellette and University Avenue intersection.

More than 20 downtown eateries and drinking establishments have applied to extend their patios during the festival

weekend.

"The downtown streets are going to be packed full of excitement," Cosco-Pizzuti said. "We listened to our membership, and we wanted to give them something that would provide an economic spinoff for their businesses ... It's a daytime and

a nighttime event. It helps everyone. It's not just a parade ... it's two days of action."

Dynamic Displays first approached the DWBIA with the idea about two years ago. Since then, the DWBIA has obtained an array of sponsors, including CAW Local 444 and WFCU.

Marra to head Dieu foundation

DOUG SCHMIDT
The Windsor Star

After 14 years at the helm of New Beginnings, popular city Coun. Bill Marra starts a new beginning in the fall as the new head of the Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital Foundation, The Windsor Star has learned.

"Someone with his credibility, it's a good thing, it'll be good for the organization," a hospital source said Friday on condition of anonymity.

Hotel-Dieu is expected to formally announce the appointment on Monday.

The foundation, whose mission is to support the hospital by funding priority capital and equipment needs, has been operating under an interim director since Kim Spirou was fired on her first day on the job. Spirou, who gave up her previous position as a hospital vice-president to assume the foundation's post of president and

CEO last December, has since filed a \$3.3-million wrongful dismissal lawsuit.

Contacted Friday, Marra, who represents the city's Ward 8 on council, did not want to comment. Elected five times to city council, Marra is a former

hospital board chairman. He also worked at Hotel-Dieu in the 1980s as an assistant cook in the dietary department to help pay for his university education.

Rocked by a series of recent scandals, Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital has been under the control since January of Ken Deane, a provincially appointed supervisor. Deane was the hospital's CEO when Marra was first recruited to the hospital's board in 2003 immediately following his defeat to Eddie Francis in that year's mayoralty race.

Since 1997, Marra has been executive director of New Beginnings, an open-custody facility that offers rehabilitation programs for young offenders.



Bill Marra

Man charged in assault

Windsor police have charged a 23-year-old man with aggravated assault, after a violent Thursday morning melee outside a downtown Burger King sent an 18-year-old man to hospital in critical condition.

According to police, two groups of males walking on University Avenue near Goyeau Street became involved in a verbal altercation shortly before 3:00 a.m. Tensions rose between the two groups and four of the suspect's friends had to physically restrain him from attacking the other group.

"At some point, the suspect broke free of his friends who were attempting to hold him back," wrote Sgt. Brett Corey in a media release. The suspect, Michael Ondrejicka-Delong of Windsor, punched the victim.

The blow was powerful enough to cause the victim to fall to the ground, striking his head on the cement sidewalk. The suspect and his friends panicked and fled the area.

However, an off-duty police officer who had just finished his shift was in his personal vehicle at the intersection and witnessed the fight. The officer exited his vehicle and followed the group, until he lost sight of them near the casino.

When emergency personnel arrived at the scene, the victim was unconscious and bleeding from the head.

An investigation led officers to a hotel room at Caesars Windsor, where the suspect was identified and arrested without incident.

The Windsor Star

LADY GAGA ON THE MEND

Peregrine falcon Lady Gaga was putting some weight on a newly fixed left leg Friday.

"Lady Gaga is actually standing on the leg," Canadian Peregrine Foundation — Windsor Watch site coordinator Dennis Patrick said Friday.

A day after the falcon's

2 ½-hour surgery, she was doing fine and on her way to a rehabilitation facility in Vaughan near Toronto.

The plan is to have the falcon stay there until the leg is healed enough that she can be released back at the nest site under the Ambassador Bridge.

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