

need to know

CHEAPER GAS

Gas prices in the Ottawa area have tumbled in recent days, hitting lows near \$1.15 per litre over the weekend at some stations around the region. Earlier this month, crude oil futures hit a record high of \$147 US a barrel on world markets, causing local retail gas prices to skyrocket as high as \$1.39 a litre for regular fuel.

On Friday, however, the price of a barrel of oil closed at \$123.26, the lowest it's been in weeks. Officials with the Ontario Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure say fluctuating gas prices are caused by a combination of changing oil market prices and retail competition.



MORE VOLLEYBALL

Players planning for next year's Bump 'N' Smash beach volleyball tournament at Scotiabank Place should get ready to ramp up the firepower. Organizers are considering adding a four-on-four competitive division, making the on-court action even more intense. Organizers trucked in 2,000 tonnes of sand for the annual charity tournament, which raised money for Roger's House, the Ottawa Senators Foundation, the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre and Kids Come First.

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Police overtime

Ottawa police could be faced with more overtime pressure when another defence and security exhibition, this time at Lansdowne Park, is held this fall. The event on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1 appears to be a collection of various security exhibitions happening at once. They include Secure Canada 2008 and the U.S. Embassy Defense and Security Exhibition. During the two-day CANSEC exhibition at the Ottawa Congress Centre in April, city police spent about \$30,000 on security, and most of the money went to paying officer overtime bills. Those costs were not budgeted.

Police watched over protests outside the Congress Centre, as well as at the Elgin St. police station. Officers escorted protesters as they marched through the downtown.

The force is trying to avoid any more financial pressures on its overtime budget. Police executives are already predicting a \$500,000-\$700,000 deficit at year's end in the area of budgeted overtime.

Autopsies awaited

Gatineau police are awaiting autopsy results to learn how two Gatineau women died within 24 hours of each other in the same apartment building.

The two best friends were found dead within hours of each other last week, prompting Gatineau police to launch an investigation at the women's apartment complex.

Neighbours identified the women as Joanne Ayotte and Diane Joannette. While the deaths were still mysterious to residents of 267 Rue de Malartic, Ayotte's brother-in-law said her death doesn't appear to be suspicious. Police said they found no signs of violence on the bodies or any evidence of a break-in.

Drug charges

Police have laid 89 charges against 20 suspects after a two-month drug investigation in Vanier.

The street crime unit and central east district officers handled the investigation, which targeted areas with known street-level trafficking and crack houses. Cops also focused on two residences in the areas of Shakespeare St. and Richelieu Ct.

CULTURE

Turkish Fest offers many delights

More than 5,000 people were expected to have sampled fare such as gozleme, manti, donairs and more as the second Ottawa Turkish Festival unfolded at Confederation Park Saturday and Sunday.

With 3,000 attending last year, organizers were pleased with the turnout for what they describe as both an educational and enjoyable lesson in the cuisine, art and culture of Turkey.

"Thanks to the community support last year, we're able to put on a larger event with a bigger stage and more entertainment," said organizer Kerim Khan. "We have performers from Montreal and Toronto here, there are many booths, and an employment corner with the Canadian Forces, RCMP, the OPP and the Ottawa police. The Turkish community has many new immigrants and many of them are young, so it's good to offer them a chance to discover new career possibilities."

Tahir Ozcan said the festival was a good meeting place for those who would like to do something positive.

"It's a great opportunity for people who would like to join the community and contribute. There are many things people can do to help."

While it's never easy to ignore political strife occurring in Turkey, including the possible fall of the ruling AK Party and continued battles with Kurdish separatists, Ozcan said his efforts were to build bridges here in Canada.

"I wish the best for Turkey, of course, as I do for every country, but as a community we're trying



Sun Media

SNEAKING A PEEK: A girl dressed in a traditional Turkish folk dance outfit peeks out from a tent before performing during the Ottawa Turkish Festival at Confederation Park on Saturday.

to contribute to Canada."

Performances of Turkish folk dances, the Whirling Dervish of Rumi, special Turkish coffee and tea, rugs, pillows, handicrafts and jewelry, as well as plenty of activities for the kids made certain everyone had something to do.

Khan smiled as he watched the

park fill up early yesterday morning. "We simply want to provide and atmosphere of fun for everyone," he said.

— Sun Media

See also:
Let's talk Turkey... page 6

VANDALISM

St. Catharines could provide blueprint for capital's graffiti woes

While city hall staff are keeping busy this summer mailing out graffiti management warnings to residents in an effort to combat vandalism, they might be wise to take a moment and turn their eyes to the southwest.

In St. Catharines, city councillors are trying to wrap their heads around how to deal with their community's growing graffiti problem.

Like most major cities, includ-

ing Ottawa, St. Catharines' proposed anti-graffiti bylaw is expected to put the onus on property owners to get rid of or cover up vandalism, but with a catch: The city will help cover the costs.

If passed, the bylaw will provide refunds of half the cost of each incident to a maximum of \$300 per removal bill, with each property owner in line to get back up to \$900 per year. Mayor Brian McMullan told Sun Media the purpose of the

bylaw is not to cause residents any undue financial hardship but to combat the problem.

"It is not our intention to harm anyone or push businesses out of St. Catharines," he said. "But at the same time, it is a blight on our city and it is the responsibility of everyone to remove graffiti."

Residents of Hintonburg have found their neighbourhood under the microscope in recent days after the city sent out letters to

property owners warning them to remove graffiti or the city would remove it for them and pass along the cost of the cleanup through a bill or tax levy.

— Sun Media

