

## United Way campaign successful; professional groups targeted next



The executive director of the United Way, Arlene Bruce, presented this painting to John Wickens in recognition of his five years of service with the charity organization during the group's recent annual meeting. Mr. Wickens is moving to Parry Sound this summer. (Herald Photo)

Although the United Way of Halton Hills raised \$144,000 in 1989, the level of funds donated by professionals was disappointing, said a volunteer with the charity organization at the group's recent annual meeting.

Graeme Goebelle, who headed up last year's "Leaders of the United Way" and Patron's of the United Way campaigns, raised \$20,000 from commercial and industrial owners and professionals in Halton Hills. But most of the donations came from the commercial and industrial sector and barely any came from the town's professional groups. Most of the area's professionals and commercial and industrial owners were canvassed he said.

It's a matter of education said United Way executive director Arlene Bruce in an interview following the meeting.

Professionals, as well as a lot of other people, are unsure what the United Way does, said Ms. Bruce. The organization has to teach people that money raised through the United Way supports the work of groups such as the Halton Hills Red Cross, the Big Brothers of Halton and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

The United Way announced four more groups to add to the existing 18 it now funds. These include the Halton Sexual Abuse Council, the Open Door Youth Centre, the Grace House, Big Sisters of North Halton and the Halton Downs Syndrome Association.

Less emphasis will be put on the door-to-door campaign said the executive director as more families decide to contribute through their paycheques.

Ms. Bruce said the charity organization will also turn its attention to commuters who live in Halton Hills. There is substantial growth in the commuter area, said Ms. Bruce.

Besides raising the charity group's community profile, the United Way of Halton Hills needs to find out the needs of the community and improve volunteer support, said Mr. Williamson.

The United Way has let the different social service groups come forward to ask for money, but Mr. Williamson wants to see the United Way become more proactive and get out in the community and assess where money is needed now and where it will be needed in the future.

The agency will also have to approach more people to volunteer because "we've relied on too small a core of volunteers," he said.

Overall the United Way is doing well, said Mr. Williamson. The national average of each donation is \$9.67 the Halton Hills United Way average donation is \$4.50 ye said. And Mr. Williamson thinks it's only a matter of time before the average donation in Halton Hills equals the average national donation.

Steve Williamson, the United Way president, said there are plans to recruit professionals to speak to other professionals about the work of the United Way in the hope of raising more funds from this group.

The United Way will also continue to conduct a yearly door-to-door campaign, Ms. Bruce said. This type of campaigning will give the organization a face, she said. Ms. Bruce said its important the United Way volunteer makes personal contact with the public since the organization is relatively young, she said. The United Way of Halton Hills is four years old.

Ms. Bruce pointed out more established United Ways no longer run a door to door campaign.

The door-to-door campaign raised \$28,500 last year.

## Resident wants town to start composting

Local environmental advocate Diane Van de Valk urged town councillors Monday to apply to the provincial government for funding to establish a backyard composting program in Halton Hills.

About 50 per cent of all residential garbage is organic material that could be used as soil nutrients but is currently being "thrown in the dumps", she said.

Ms. Van de Valk is on a task force established to advise the province on composting.

Ironically earlier Monday town council had approved, in principle, \$5,500 in its 1990 operating budget for a composting program. But councillors were receptive to Ms. Van de Valk's idea.

Ms. Van de Valk suggested a backyard composting program would cost the town nothing to establish. The province would supply 50 per cent of the funding and the residents would make up the difference, she said.

She pointed to the Region of Peel and Halton Region municipalities, which either have or are about to set up similar programs.

And according to a survey conducted by Peel Region, 80 per cent of Peel residents who have composters have continued to use them, said Ms. Van de Valk.

The town government has to show a leadership role in promoting composting to illustrate to the public the importance of reducing the waste stream, she said. Residents have to be shown the success of the 3 R's, reuse, reduction and recycling depends on the public acting responsibly, said the environmentalist.

Ms. Van de Valk said, unlike the blue box program, a composting program is a "one-time expense." And if the program is implemented the use of the municipality's composting facility would be reduced and therefore town costs for the service would drop, she said.

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