



Former hockey-playing buddies Al Lawr, left, and Rob Hamilton will fly to India Sunday to receive liberation treatment, an experimental procedure that opens up veins carrying blood from the brain to the heart of MS patients. The procedure, not available in Canada, has proven successful in many patients.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Local men head to India for MS treatment not available in Canada

Continued from pg. 1

St. Joseph's Healthcare.

The treatment is not offered in Canada, and so far Saskatchewan is the only province to fund clinical trials for the promising new therapy.

Hamilton was diagnosed with MS when he was 29 years old, and Lawr, six years ago. The two friends have known each other since they were kids.

Both men have been off work since earlier this year due to the disabling disease that goes through cycles affecting vision, hearing, memory, balance and mobility. Hamilton required a wheelchair for most of January and Lawr often needs one these days.

Both men were intrigued when they heard about the new treatment last year.

"As I did more research I became skeptical until we had a friend, who we went to school with, had it done," said Hamilton.

Hamilton said the procedure helped their friend, who lives in Hillsburgh.

"She's got a lot of relief from some of her symptoms," said Hamilton. "Her quality of life has greatly improved. But it's not a cure and it doesn't work for everyone."

Their friend also had the treatment in India, and Lawr and Hamilton decided to go to India as well, to a different hospi-

tal however, where they have the capability to insert a stent if needed. The cost is \$15,000, which they say they have come up with, and friends are raising funds for them.

Lawr said the cost of the treatment is roughly equal to six months worth of MS drugs.

"I'm cautiously optimistic. I don't want to go there with the hope that I'll come back a new man," said Hamilton.

"As long as it doesn't get any worse," added Lawr.

They will undergo testing in India to determine if they are candidates for the treatment.

Their families are very supportive of them going and they're both hoping for improvement, but they are also looking at it as an adventure, and if there isn't any change, they say they'll have had a holiday in India.

They should be back home at the end of August and will let *The Independent & Free Press* know if the treatment worked.

"If it doesn't work we don't want people wasting their money, if it does work we want people to go," said Lawr.

"We just want to have a shot at being just a little bit normal. We're just trying to get better. Both of us want our lives back," said Hamilton.

Heritage Decks Ltd.

905-873-0368

Heritage Decks specializes in the design and construction of custom cedar decks and built-in spas. Every Heritage deck is meticulously constructed with top quality material and totally original design. Call for a free cheerful estimate. Ask about our lifetime warranty! 'Shop Local' EST. 1984
See customer testimonials and pictures at www.heritagedecks.com

Deck of the Week

Lifetime Warranty

Registered Massage Therapist

ROBIN BANNON, RMT

cell: **416-710-4852**

NOW ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS

Weekend Appts. Available

- Ease Back, Neck, Shoulder Pain
- Carpel Tunnel
- Pregnancy Massage
- Tennis Elbow
- 15 Minute Chair Massage
- "GIRLS' NIGHT OUT" - In Home Parties

108 Main St. S. Georgetown

Mon. - Sat. at Dr. Hassard's Office.

Country Heritage Park

8560 Tremaine Rd., Milton
905-878-8151

Spokes & Slopes Bicycle Festival

August 14th & 15th 10am - 5pm

- Bike trials competition
- Exhibitors & Suppliers
- Free safety check for your bike and helmets
- Demo bikes to try
- Adaptive equipment
- Children's play area
- Wagon rides around the park
- Park exhibits open

American Civil War Re-Enactment

August 21st & 22nd 10am - 5pm

- Authentic military camps
- Battle re-enactment
- Medical demonstrations
- Artillery, cavalry demonstrations
- Expert commentary
- Park exhibits open
- Country Canteen Open
- Kid's scavenger hunt & prizes

Check out our website for all our summer events! www.countryheritagepark.com
Daily admission: Adults \$7, Children \$4, Family Package: \$20 (Some events differ) Programs subject to change.

HASSELL

AUTOMOTIVE SALES & SERVICE

45 Mountainview Road North
Georgetown, Ontario
905.877.7958

e-mail: hassellsauto@bellnet.ca
www.hassellautomotive.com

Warranty

2006 EQUINOX

Low Kms, Loaded, Air, Auto

\$14,200

Warranty

2005 MAZDA 3 HATCHBACK

Air, Loaded, 5 Speed

\$9,300

Warranty

2008 CHEV EXPRESS

Air, Auto, Cargo, Side Windows

\$17,500

CALL *Dave*