

## Acton woman rallies to daycare operators' defense

Lisa Phillips, an outspoken Acton woman with two children in private daycare, made a plea for private daycare operators at Halton Region's health and social services committee Monday.

Approximately 30 private sector daycare owners, workers and parents crammed into a committee room to rebuke the provincial NDP government plan to make private daycare a government run and funded industry.

While councillors voiced support for the problem faced by the private operators, it remains to be seen how Halton will tackle the issue.

Phillips, said she was "somewhat more encouraged" given the committee's largely negative reaction to the provincial agenda. "When you speak as a parent you feel alone." But now, "we have a level of government (Halton) supporting our point of view." As far as getting the Province to back off, "in the short term I'm still hopeful," she said.

Queen's Park is moving to heavily subsidize the wages of public sector daycare operators and convert private centres into publicly run ones. In December the Province announced retroactive salary subsidies of as much as \$2,000 per public sector daycare worker, while the private sector workers will get nothing. In addition, as of this month provincial subsidies for new childcare operations will go only to publicly operated concerns.

Phillips, an Acton mother who uses a Milton private daycare centre, said, "I was angry at this blatant discrimination. I was also afraid. I chose a daycare (centre). I exercised my right as a taxpayers and a parent. Now the government has come along and said I don't know what I'm doing."

"I have two children who have known the staff (in Milton) since they

were four months old," she continued. "They have become an integral part of the children's lives. I don't want to be told I have to yank my children out and put them in the care of people I don't know."

Peter Knoepfli, co-owner of a Burlington daycare centre and a spokesman for the privately-supported Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO) told councillors ADCO estimates the provincial plan will cost each Ontario family \$425 in new taxes a year.

## Ballinafad happenings

Several members of the Jim Dandies Ladies Baseball team met at the home of Coach Jim Bailey this past Wednesday. Here plans were made for the February 15th dance the team is putting on as a means of raising money. In keeping with the Valentine's Day celebrations, the dance is being called a "Sweetheart Dance."

### Ballinafad Aerobics

Ballinafad Aerobics is beginning a new session this week starting on Monday and Wednesday. The session runs for 12 weeks at a cost of \$62. A spring session has been announced at a cost of \$52 for 10 weeks. Classes run from 7:15-8:15 p.m. Both the winter and spring sessions can be purchased at this time for a cost of \$105. It is also possible to pay \$4 per night. Registration is at the beginning of each class. For more information, please call Alice at 519-833-7425.

### Committee appointees

Councillors Anne Currie and Norm Elliott were elected by their colleagues Monday night as Halton Hills' reps on the Credit Valley Conservation Authority for the next three years. Halton Region Conservation Authority meetings will be attended by councillors Rick Bonnette and Pam Johnston, while councillor Marilyn Serjeantson will continue attending Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital Board meetings as Halton Region's rep.

### Week of Prayer

This year's theme for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is taken from Matthew — "I am with you always." These words remind us that the promise of Christ's presence gives us courage to pray for the needs of the church, country and world.

As part of this year's Ecumenical gathering — St. Alban's Anglican Church, 537 Main St., Glen Williams, 877-8323, on behalf of the Georgetown and District Ministerial Association will open their doors for private and corporate prayer from noon to 1 p.m. each day from Monday to Friday, January 20-24.

Community prayers will be offered at 12:15 p.m., various clergy and laity from the area will lead in scripture readings and prayers (approximately 15 minutes).

### Powderpuff registration

Registration for the Georgetown Ladies Powderpuff League takes place Jan. 19, starting at 10 a.m. at Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena. Registrants must be at least 19 years of age; ID is required. The fee is \$50.

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