

Councillor uses birth report to promote anti-abortion views

By BRAD REAUME
Special to The Independent/Free Press

Burlington regional council Ralph Scholtens used a presentation on area birth statistics as a platform to further his pro-life position on abortion, at a Halton Region health and social services committee meeting.

The councillor said a study by epidemiologist Terry Delmore was "excellent" and "a real eye opener."

"It's good news that therapeutic abortions have gone down," said Scholtens, who acknowledged that the figures were for hospital-based abortions only, and did not include those performed at clinics.

"I am dismayed that a province which has done so much to cut services to people feels the need for more free-standing abortion clinics, when there is an apparent decreased need."

Scholtens acknowledged it was possible the number of abortions at clinics may have risen, compensating for the reduced figure at hospitals.

"When I see the figure of 612 abortions in Halton (last year) I can only think two things," Scholtens said. "Lord save the souls of those kids and, forgive them, for they don't know what the are doing."

Scholtens asked regional commissioner of health, Dr. Robert Nosal, if education could "stop this taking of the unborn." He also suggested that although AIDS kills, it claims nowhere near the 612 abortions performed at Halton hospitals last year, and that education efforts should be redirected at abortion.

Dr. Nosal told the committee that sexual health and choices were all part of a greater whole, that education needed to be focussed on the whole issue rather than on individual segments of it.

"We could do more with more money by having longer clinic hours, better availability of contraceptives and more education but medicine can only do so much, we have to empower people to make their own decisions," Dr. Nosal said. "Everything fits together, they're all linked. If you prevent AIDS, you'll prevent abortions, it all goes together."

Scholtens comments served to overshadow the report on birth outcomes in Halton over the last decade.

The report clearly showed the effects of Halton's high standard of living compared with the rest of the

province. Dr. Delmore highlighted several sections of the report dealing with abortion, birthweight and age of mother.

For women under 30 years of age, the birth rate in Halton is significantly lower than the provincial average, while for the 30-34 age group the rate was much higher than the average.

Teenage birth rates were lower in Halton than the province as a whole but there was a major difference between north Halton which

was just under the provincial average, and south Halton, which was far under the provincial average.

Abortion rates in Halton were lower than the Ontario average.

Halton also has a lesser incidence of low birthweight babies defined as those weighing under 2.0 kilograms. Halton maintained favorable comparison with the province in every year of the study and had a significantly better record than the provincial average in seven of the 10 years.



Georgetown Rotary Club president Bill Reid posed for a picture with Neville Worsnop during the club's regular meeting Monday, January 24. Worsnop was surprised with the prestigious Paul Harris Fellowship award in a presentation on stage during the recent performance of Showtime at the John Elliott Theatre. Photo by LAURA SALVERDA

Neville Worsnop receives prestigious Fellowship

The Rotary Club of Georgetown has awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship to Neville Worsnop.

This award, the highest honor of the Rotary International was named in honor of the founder of Rotary, and is presented to members and non-members in recognition of distinguished service to Rotary, the community, and the cause of world peace and understanding.

The surprise presentation took place on the stage of the John Elliott Theatre during the performance of Showtime, a benefit sponsored by the Rotary Club to support the Ralph Ussel Foundation. Worsnop had also appeared in the show.

Worsnop is a longtime Rotarian, first in Brampton, where he was president of the Rotary Club of Brampton South, and recently in Georgetown, where he is the immediate past president.

In presenting the award, president Bill Reid noted Worsnop's particular contributions to the Georgetown Club, including Showtime, Christmas ham sales, and the Annual Golf Tournament in support of the mammography program at the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital.

The award takes the form of a certificate, signed by the President of Rotary International, a medal bearing the likeness of Paul Harris, and a lapel pin which is worn along with the regular Rotary pin. Neville Worsnop now joins an elite company of 400,000 Paul Harris Fellows around the world.

Breastfeeding Connection seeks volunteers

The Breastfeeding Connection is looking for volunteers to provide breastfeeding information to new mothers.

Volunteers must have breastfed at least one baby and have a positive feeling toward breastfeeding.

They will support one woman during her nursing experience, which would involve at least one contact before the baby is born and

daily calls the first week the new mother is home, then perhaps weekly contact for the first three months of the baby's life.

Before beginning their duties volunteers will be expected to attend a half-day training session consisting of education in breastfeeding and counselling.

Anyone interested should call Molly Monahan at 873-9200.

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