



Ryan Blake, right, won the coloring contest sponsored by the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce for the 7 to 9 year olds. He and other winners won a free ice cream cone from the Big Scoop Café and two free games of bowling from Acton Bowling Lanes. The prize was presented by Heather Malcolmson, left. Other winners were Katie Price in the 4 to 6 year old category and Shawna Godin in the 10 to 12 group. All other entries won a participation prize of a free ice cream cone from the Big Scoop Café.

Women's Institute scholarship winner

Jenny Page, RR2 Georgetown, has been awarded the Dr. Ethel Chapman Scholarship by Halton District Women's Institute. Jenny has complete nine clubs in her four years as a 4-H member. In 1992 she attended Provincial Leadership Camp. In the fall Jenny will be studying journalism at Humber College.

Health Centre seeks funding

By JANET DUVAL
Special to The Independent/Free Press

If Halton Hills get provincial funding for a proposed Community Health Centre next spring, it will enjoy a mix of health care and social services delivered in "a different way, a cooperative way a cost-effective way," says Kate Murray.

The member of the Working Group that has been preparing the proposal for two years addressed a small public meeting at the Optimist Hall on Monday.

The present Ontario government has funded three such centres and will soon give approval for four more, in addition to 49 Community Health Centres (CHC's) already set up by previous administrations. Each one is different, geared to needs identified by the local community.

The Halton Hills Centre would be for everyone, says Murray, "but we have focussed on youth and women, including maternity cases and victims of domestic violence, as needing a bit of extra help."

A local CHC would operate on two sites, one in Acton and one in Georgetown, close to the high schools and the GO bus route, with shared staff and programs.

Within roughly 2000 square feet of rented or purchased space accessible to wheel chairs, would be a doctor's office, small and large meeting rooms, reception and office space.

Professional staff would include a doctor, social worker, outreach worker, nurse-practitioner, and midwives.

"We'll have something here that's ours, not parachuted from the south for half a day. We'll get rid of the fragmentation, the lack of coordination between social and health services," Murray vowed.

One audience member was skeptical of any government promise to "spend more money in order to save me more money."

Murray pointed out that all staff would work on salary within a single budget, so there would be no OHIP billings.

Other CHC budgets in Ontario range from \$200,000 to \$2,000,000. In a further cost saving, various agencies would be joined in one location. You would no longer have "a little piece of a social service agency here, another piece there, each with their own office and staff."

CHCs provide preventive, not primary health care.

Right now north Halton has a higher percentage of low birth-

weight babies than the rest of the region. "If we can make a difference through better diet and nutrition, for example, then we can save the health care system a lot of money."

There was audience concern about overlap of services.

"Hospitals and CHC's do completely different things," said Murray. "CHC's don't provide rehab services or surgery."

A CHC is also completely opposite in purpose to a community Multi-Service Agency, also proposed for this area, which would coordinate longterm care service for seniors and the disabled.

Barbara Johnson, chair of the CHC Working Group, reported they have met with 32 agencies and "key informants," including the hospital and its Chief of Staff. They have organized eight focus groups and conducted two community meetings. She predicts many more public meetings if the centre is approved.

Murray figures the Halton Hills CHC has a 50-50 chance of being approved. She thinks there are eight or ten other contenders.

The proposal goes to the Halton District Health Council for endorsement in October, then to the Ministry of Health in November.

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