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Jason Dickinson camping out in Georgetown Pg. 30

Thursday, July 28, 2016

Halton Hills award-winning newspaper serving Acton & Georgetown

64 Pages

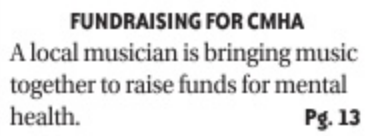
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**JUNE BUSINESS OF THE MONTH**  
The Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce Business of the Month for June was GBA LLP Chartered Professional Accountants. Pg. 19



**ROCK THE HILLS 2016**  
The annual event took over the Georgetown Fairgrounds for another successful year. Pg. 10



**FUNDRAISING FOR CMHA**  
A local musician is bringing music together to raise funds for mental health. Pg. 13

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**ONE WALK TO CONQUER CANCER:** Lydia Sabourin, Paula DaSilva and Michelle Weisbrot of Team ABC BF2 at the One Walk to Conquer Cancer Garage Sale/Bake Sale/Bottle Drive held Saturday on Apple Blossom Dr. Photo by Jan Borgstrom

## Local parents continue fight for more autism funding

By Kathryn Boyle  
[kboyle@theifp.ca](mailto:kboyle@theifp.ca)

On March 29, families living with autistic children received news that would shape their schedules for the following months. In the first announcement, funding for Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) was cut for children over five years old and as such, children would be taken off the multi-year wait list: a detrimental decision that would shape the rest of the child's life. The Autism Coalition of Ontario (ACO) took to picketing and rallies at

Queen's Park, hoping to get the message across the funding was needed. Standing with them were Halton Hills parents Linda and David Galvao, who have three children: Isabella, 10, Toby, 8, and Lucas, 6. Both Toby and Lucas have autism. Our son, Toby, has been doing the IBI therapy for the last year and a half. It's done wonders for him, David said. Luke, he's been waiting for three years (for IBI therapy) and when the announcement originally came out, we were told just a month prior, that Luke was guaranteed a spot to start IBI this coming spring or summer. When Toby was six years old, he

began IBI therapy. At just 30 days, the formal non-verbal child began speaking, reciting songs and the alphabet. But with the cut in funding and the new rules regarding age, Lucas would never get the opportunity. Each passing day that goes by is another lost opportunity for Luke to learn something new. Although not members of ACO, the pair followed the efforts of the group and have attended rallies to get their voices heard. They attended a meeting with Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott, who then took their concerns to Queen's Park during Question Period on May 17.

The voices of so many families were heard. On June 28, Michael Coteau, minister of Children and Youth Services, announced a new agreement: if a child is under five years old and on the IBI waitlist, the child will remain on the list. If the child turns six years old during the transition period, which is August 2017, the child will be eligible for \$8,000 in funding. The Galvaos decided not to travel the direct funding route, and turned down the additional funds. Instead, they have their son Toby under Direct Service Option (DSO).

Continued on page 15

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