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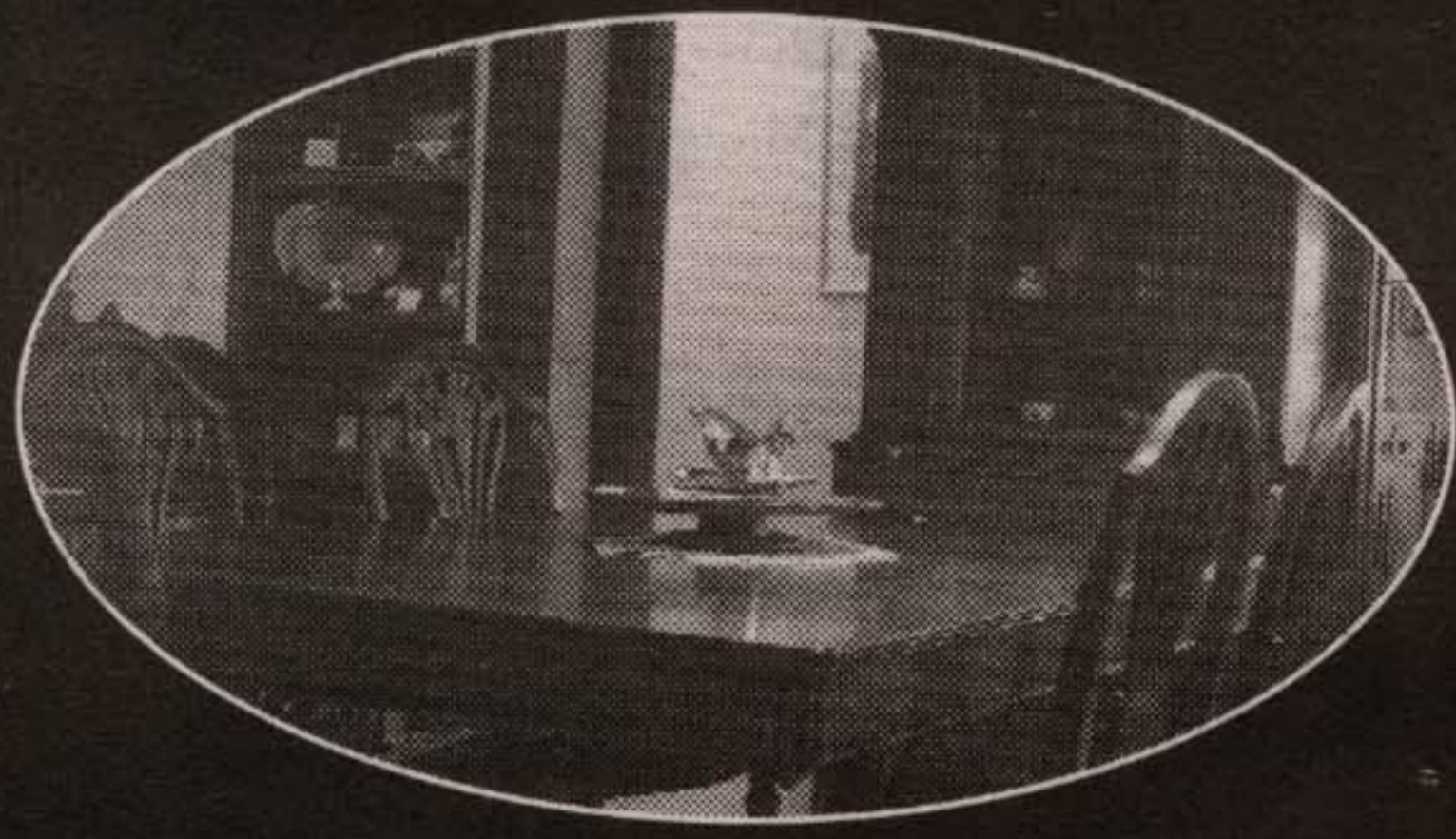
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Everyday Hero

Chris Ford

BY DONNA DANIELLI
THE COMPASS

Acton's Chris Ford has always known that he wanted to be a police officer, following in the steps of his father Doug, who is the Administration Sergeant for 12 division and his brother Bill, a constable in Mississauga. Being an Auxiliary Police Officer takes him one step closer to his dream. An Auxiliary Police Officer donates at least 12 hours of his time monthly as a volunteer. Chris, when not working as a Correctional Officer at Maplehurst Correctional Centre or as a security officer at the new slots at Mohawk Raceway, usually manages to put in those 12 hours and more on ride-alongs and community service events. There are currently 32 Auxiliary Officers in all ranks working with the Halton Region Police Service and they worked a combined 4,375 volunteer hours last year alone.

Chris has always enjoyed volunteering his time to a worthy cause. As a student at Georgetown High School, he volunteered with Halton Helping Hands, doing things like cutting lawns for seniors. In 1992, it was his work as a co-op student with the Georgetown Division Of Halton Region Police that really started him seriously considering a career with the police. He went on to complete a two year course at Sheridan College in Law and Security and a six week Corrections Course. Chris then decided that he needed more volunteer time service to gain a little more insight into his chosen career. After completing 16 weeks of training, he became an Auxiliary Police Officer in February 1998. He will apply to the police force in September, but until then, he's content to continue volunteering his time.

"It's fulfilling," Chris says. "I enjoy it. I feel pretty good after I'm done and you're usually really appreciated by the full-time officers." It can be especially useful to have someone as familiar with local roads as Chris, when patrolling rural areas or responding to calls.

Ride-alongs are only part of an Auxiliary Police Officer's duties. Auxiliary Officers help fill out police ranks at many community events, like Fall Fairs and the M.S. Bike-a-thon. Chris likes to carry candies in his pocket to hand out to children to help assuage any fears they may have of police officers.

"I'm a big kid myself," he laughs, and that often helps him out on the job. At 24 years old, he's closer in age to some of the 16- or 17-year-olds looking for trouble at community events and usually knows the easiest way to talk to them and have them listen. Chris seems to genuinely enjoy his volunteer work and says, "It's good to give back to the community. At every fair, you get at least one child missing and it's good to see them get back together with their parents. That's when this is a thankful job to have."

For those interested in finding out more about becoming an Auxiliary Police Officer, Information and Recruitment sessions will take place on Wednesday, September 1 from 7 to 10 p.m. in the Community Room at Halton Region Police Station in Milton, and Thursday, September 9, also from 7 to 10 p.m. in the Community Room at Georgetown Police Station.



Rose Cherry's Home

A Hospice Centre for Children

BY BETTY BROWNRIDGE
THE COMPASS

One morning in June, 18 members and friends of Ashgrove WI set out in a mini bus on a mystery tour. After a scenic drive in rural Milton, to our delight we arrived at Rose Cherry's Home. Our guide, Maggie Waligora, the founder of the home, met us. She is a registered nurse who has worked tirelessly with chronically ill children.

The home will provide pediatric hospice and respite services to families in Ontario who are coping with the stress of caring for a child with a life limiting illness, 24 hours a day. The whole family circle is affected by the extreme level of care required and the program must provide the necessary physical and emotional support. Rose Cherry's Home is planned to serve over 300 families every year, as well as many

more through their bereavement outreach program.

The Cedarbrook Society was incorporated in 1995 as a not-for-profit children's charitable organization. One of the board members is Cindy Cherry, a daughter of Don Cherry and his late wife, Rose. She encouraged her father the check out the property and assess the merits of the project. He did, and agreed to lend his family name, thus calling it Rose Cherry's Home.

The campaign has been designed to be a partnership of the public and private sectors. The Cedarbrook Society will be responsible for operating the Home.

Rose Cherry's Home was originally a large private residence. It will need alterations to provide specialized health care services while

protecting the home-like environment. A round music room will become a Snoozellen room. That's a stimulation room of soothing lights, soft sounds, and textures that stimulate the child's senses in an absorbing manner. There was a pool already installed. The kitchen will be altered to allow children to participate in activities when their health permits. Doorways will be widened and ramps built. Main floor bedrooms will be added to accommodate 12 children. The upstairs will be used for administration.

The Home is set in 77 acres of woodland. A boardwalk will be built around the pond. There's a barn on the property and it is hoped that there will be a few animals.

Rose Cherry's Home will have its own staff and will contract for additional services as required. Volunteers will assist in the provision of support to families and children, and in some housekeeping duties.

For further information contact the Milton Campaign Office, Suite 496, 420 Main St. E., Milton, ON L9T 5G3. Fax: 905-876-9922. Interested volunteers call 1-877-406-7673. Donations may be made directly through the Royal Bank of Canada at the Milton Mall.



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