

Acton girl gears up for Special Olympics

by Donna Danielli

This summer will be a special time in 18 year old Emily Boycott's life.

The Acton resident, who was born with Down's Syndrome, will be representing Halton as she competes in the Special Olympics.

Emily, who also qualified in swimming, will be competing in the rhythmic gymnastics competition in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan from July 8 to 14. This is the first year Ontario has sent a rhythmic gymnastics team to the event.

"Emily loves all activities," says Mom, Debbie Boycott. "I think this will be very special and we're really looking forward to it. We're nervous though. This is Ontario's first team and British Columbia is very strong and well established in rhythmic gymnastics."

Emily is a part of the Oakville Butterflies, a gymnastics team for



the differently abled as part of the Oakville Gymnastics Club. If Emily wins, she could be headed for the World Championship in Ireland - if she can afford to go. Each athlete provides their own transportation and lodging costs. "It costs about \$1,000 for each athlete to go to

Saskatchewan," says Ms. Boycott. "We'll be sleeping in a converted high school, with 15 cots to a room as a dormitory, but at least we'll be there."

E.C. Drury High School, where Emily is a member of the Life Skills Class, will be presenting Emily with a cheque at its Energy Challenge Day in May, and recent fundraising events have included a bowl-a-thon to help cover expenses for the 18 area athletes who will compete.

Anyone interested in finding out more about fundraising for the Oakville Special Olympics Team, can contact Linda Hickson at 905-827-5359.

Campbellville unlikely candidate for GO Transit

by Donna Danielli

As more and more people move into the area the transit issue becomes a growing concern.

A February 2001 IPSOS Reid Survey identified transportation/traffic concerns as Halton residents' number one priority. Two recent developments from GO Transit and the Region of Halton seem to be looking at solutions to some of Halton's transit woes.

GO Transit recently announced its intentions to increase service to Milton. Although the study, currently underway by GO Transit, is looking for land in Milton to build a new train layover facility, Campbellville's Bert Walton would like to see GO Transit cast its eye a little further to the west.

"There has always been considerable local interest in having GO service in Campbellville," said Mr. Walton. "Such a facility would serve the Toronto bound people coming from the area to the west of Campbellville."

"If people boarded GO trains at the Junction, rather than in Milton, there would be a significant reduction in the traffic on one of the most hazardous stretches of Highway 401. The highway, between

Campbellville and Milton traverses the incline of the Niagara Escarpment."

Mr. Walton called for GO Transit to conduct a feasibility study that would look at the possibility of extending GO service to Campbellville.

Although Mr. Walton has not received a response from GO Transit at press time, local Councillor Cindy Lunau expressed her doubt that such a study would be done.

"At this point, I don't think it would be economically feasible for GO Transit to come out to Campbellville," she told a local rate payers group.

"If the money isn't there for them, they won't do it. They may however look at Campbellville as a stop on the line in five or ten years when they extend service to Cambridge. That would be more practical for GO."

Approximately 1200 people use the Milton GO Train station on a daily basis and ridership is expected to increase 80 per cent in the next 30 years.

In a presentation to Milton Town Council on April 15, GO Transit's Greg Ashbee was clear that there are no plans for westerly extension of service at this time. However, GO Transit will be increasing the number of trains that service Milton from five to eight, once a new layover station has been built.

There are four sites under consideration for the new layover facility: an expansion of the existing Campbellville site, Tremaine Road and Steeles Ave., Parkway Belt West Corridor between 4th and 5th Lines, and the Parkway Belt West Corridor between 5th and 6th Lines.

Once a site has been identified, an environmental assessment study will commence and public open houses will take place in early Fall. The Environmental Study Report is expected to be completed in October and after the design stage, construction will begin in 2003 with a completion date of 2004.

Throughout GO Transit's expansion, the Region of Halton will be looking at the services GO Transit brings to Halton as part of its new \$100,000 Strategy for Transit Investment.

The new strategy will address the need for strong local transit with a high level of service, continuous improvements on the GO Transit system and a new inter-regional transit network connecting Halton to other communities in the GTA, Hamilton and Niagara.

"Transportation, economic prosperity and quality of life are closely related, which is why it is such an important part of our planning process," said Chairman Joyce Savoline. "It is critical that we be proactive in developing a strategy now to create a solid transportation network that reflects the needs of the people who live and work in Halton and its neighbouring communities."



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