

Use grant to hire staff

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

At a time when budget constraints forced Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI) to cut rides for needy moms with handicapped kids and eliminate staff benefits, a \$170,000 Trillium Foundation grant prompted a "mixed celebration," according to HHCSI executive director Rosslyn Dowell.

"The thing that's hard to explain to a client is that money that we receive is for very specific things," Dowell, who also took a pay cut to offset dwindling dollars from the Province and Region, said on Monday.

"When you say to a client who needs a ride that they've given us money to build a sustainability plan, I mean, what does that mean? It means we're trying to find ways to support the client by building capacity," Dowell said, adding it's hard for

HHCSI staff as well.

"They've taken a significant (benefit) reduction as well, and I'm saying, 'Look, we just got this big grant, isn't that wonderful,' but I can't use a penny of it to pay benefits or salaries to existing staff."

The grant, spread over three years, will allow HHCSI to hire a fund raiser and a database design consultant to devise ways to pay for its unfunded programs, including community support, youth programs and information services, which have an annual cost of approximately \$172,500. HHCSI got a United Way grant of approximately

\$33,000 last year brought in \$129,000 through fundraising and donations.

"The hope is that using this money to purchase the expertise of two staff for three years and that what we'll be left with is something that's more efficient and easier to maintain to sustain our unfunded programs," Dowell said.

Last Thursday night, five Halton groups, including HHCSI and Heritage Acton (\$75,000), received their grants. In 1999-2000, the Foundation will award 82 grants in Halton-Peel for a total of \$6.9 million.

Town Digest

Earth Day

There will be cheap trees, tree talk, free compost and wood chips and a door prize on Saturday as the Town cel-

brates Earth Day at the central works yard on Trafalgar Road.

Beginning at 9 a.m. 10 varieties of trees - priced at \$4 and \$5 - will be for sale while supplies last and someone will win a 70-mm red oak that the Town will plant for free.

Anyone wanted compost of wood chips should bring their own shovel and container beginning at 9 a.m.

No divots for deaf

There was nothing but praise for the Bob Rumble Association for the Deaf proposal to build a driving range and club house on the north west corner of Highway 25 and Five Side Road at a public meeting on the proposal last week.



EDIBLE THANKS: The volunteers who make Acton blood donor clinics as fast and painless as possible were thanked for their help at last Thursday's clinic. With their thank you cake (which they graciously shared with the 60 people who donated blood) were, left to right: Alana McCoig, Christine Van Opstal, Eva Cutting, May Hoare, Fritz de Haan, Julia Roehrig (clinic chair), Em Finally, Bette Footitt and Joyce Buchanan. - Frances Niblock photo

Discuss skate park plans

A good turnout is expected at tonight's (Wednesday) meeting to discuss plans for a skateboard in Acton. That meeting is at 7 p.m. at Acton High School.

One Acton mom, Julia Roberts, knows there's a lot of interest in the suggestion, especially since a well-used homemade ramp behind the Scout House was vandalized and burned to the ground.

Her seven-year-old son Dayne, has had his skateboarding confined to the front porch since that ramp burned.

"He's been bothering me to drive him to Georgetown, but I don't want to drive him that distance all the time, so I think it's great that there could be a park built here in Acton," Roberts said on Friday, adding she's ready and willing to help with fundraising.

Stacey Green, the Town's recreation supervisor, said Georgetown facility was built following complaints that skateboarders ignored a town bylaw prohibiting them on the street.

Initially, a community group known as SIBAHH (Skateboarders, In-line skaters, BMX bikers Association of Halton Hills) attempted to raise all of the money for the park, but after raising just \$18,000 in two years, Town Council stepped in and paid the difference.

Skateboard parks are not cheap with a high-end facility costing \$200,000 and a portable ramp about \$25,000.

The Georgetown skate park by Alcott arena is a \$75,000 base level facility that Green said is already too small for those who have mastered it and is crowded, but it works.

"It really moved the majority of kids off the streets into the park and all the complaints stopped."

Different options will be

discussed at the meeting, including a portable trailer with ramps, "a more affordable goal" for Acton, for now Green suggested, like was done in Georgetown. The portable facility hasn't had a lot of success in Kitchener or Waterloo where it been tested, Green said, because of problems with the ramps, need for its own truck and trailer and set-up crew.

Burlington and Oakville recently built \$200,000 facilities.

Benefit planned in memory of Emma

Had Emma Darlene Hunter lived, it would have been her sixth birthday party that drew her Acton family and friends together next Saturday (April 29).

Instead, in Emma's memory, that same group will attend the second annual fundraising concert to benefit cancer research at The Hospital for Sick Children.

Emma's 14-year-old sister Cassie, is credited with naming the family coffee/house concert "Songs for Hope 2" and mom, Wendi Hunter, says music was, and is, a big part of their lives. The Hunters also have a son, Mac, 11.

"I'm in a folk band and

have always had satisfaction from music, especially since Emma died, and the concert is a good thing for us as a family because we all get involved - all doing something together in her memory," Hunter said on Friday, outlining plans for the event at St. Paul's Parish Hall in Norval.

Each of three acts will include music for kids and it's very much a family show. There will also be door prizes and light refreshments.

Hunter said Emma liked music, but on her own terms.

"She didn't like anyone else singing. She was funny. You put on her favourite movie or tape and you'd want to sing along and she'd yell, 'No singing!' Hunter remembered, adding they spent a lot of time listening to music in the car on their trips back and forth to Sick Kids.

Emma, who lived in Crewson's Corners, (the family now lives in Acton) died Jan. 3, 1997 and the Hunters knew they wanted to do fundraising in Emma's memory.

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