

Faster ambulance response times in Acton

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Staffing the Acton ambulance depot around the clock has shaved 1:04 minutes off emergency response times and further service enhancements are expected when Halton takes over responsibility for land ambulance services from the province on August 16.

At a meeting yesterday (Wednesday), Halton Council was expected to endorse a committee recommendation to hire 28 more

paramedics with an annualized cost of \$1.4 million, in addition to the 108 being offered jobs with the new Halton ambulance division. Forty of the new employees will have advanced care training – a level of service not now available in Acton, Georgetown and Milton.

"Now we'll have equality across the Region in level of service to help improve response times," said John Pereira, Halton's manager of land ambulance services, adding legislation requires Halton to meet 1996 re-

sponse times of 13:07 minutes for urgent, high priority calls.

"With the introduction of the additional 12 hours (of ambulance service) in Acton, there was a reduction in 1999 to 12:03 minutes, so actually, of all the communities in the Region, Halton Hills has succeeded to reduce response times," Pereira said.

Over half of the new ambulance recruits will be full-time, 38 part-time and 21 volunteers positions will be available to recognize the importance of the volunteer ambulance

attendants who work in north Halton with Halton Hills Ambulance Services.

Halton is still waiting to hear if the province will pick up 50 per cent of the ambulance costs, which would be over the \$3.4 million budgeted by 17 per cent with the additional 28 paramedics.

Pereira said Halton is still "actively working" with the Town and other agencies to find a new home for the existing Acton ambulance depot, located at the back of the Becker's store.

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What's Inside



A VIA Rail train derailed in Rockwood blocks the CN tracks and delays passengers. See Page 8.



The Royal Canadian Dragoons again held their annual reunion at the Acton Legion. See Pages 6 and 7.



WOW! This 2-lb 15oz bass caught by Tracy Slater was the top winner in Saturday's fishing derby. See Page 9.



Knights and damsels in distress, a jousting tournament north of Acton hosted by ex-Actonian Shane Adams is on tap this weekend. See Page 9.

Acton detour for big trucks



OFF THE WALL OPENS: Cutting the ribbon to open youth centre were (front from left) Halton Hills Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson, Heather Moon, HHCSI board chair Anna Spiteri and Halton chair Joyce Savoline. Back: Councillors Clark Somerville, John Day and Rick Bonnette.



TIMELESS TREASURES: As Halton Hills Community Support and Information executive director Rosslyn Dowell (left) looks on, Acton's Elly Tuitman places symbolic items in a computer case for a time capsule at the official opening of HHCSI's Off The Wall youth centre. *Frances Niblock photos*

Expect more of them for four months

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Acton can expect four-months of additional truck traffic beginning July 17 when an "ugly" detour reroutes traffic while Trafalgar Road is closed for reconstruction from the Silvercreek - Highway 7 intersection, north to Ballinafad/32 Side Road.

Heavy trucks heading north on Trafalgar will detour to Acton and use Wallace Street to get Highway 25 to head north to Highway 24 and then back to Trafalgar Road.

Local traffic will detour to the Eighth Line between 27 Side Road and 32 Side Road.

Motorists can expect additional delays in early August as the province begins the multi-million dollar reconstruction of the Highway 7-Trafalgar Road interchange to improve safety.

Halton's project

Several knolls will be flattened in a 3.4-kilometre section of Trafalgar Road from just north of the Highway 7 intersection to Ballinafad/32 Side Road.

Halton construction supervisor Gord Robbins said traffic safety would be improved on the road that hasn't had major repairs for 25 years.

Total reconstruction includes basically taking all the dips and hills away so the

Officially open Off the Wall centre

A dream officially became a reality in Acton on Tuesday when the Off The Wall youth centre officially opened its doors on Mill Street.

The drop in, beside Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI) office, has been hugely popular since its unofficial opening in June, and the ribbon cutting is the culmination of three years of hard work.

As she greeted guests to the official opening, HHCSI executive director Rosslyn Dowell said no one can help

your make dreams come true if you don't share them and recounted how HHCSI staffer Elly Tuitman had come to her with the dream of a youth drop in.

Tuitman said the drop in idea started with a meeting of Acton parents concerned about drug use.

"I looked around the room and said someone should start a youth centre because the parents were having trouble dealing with their teenagers and the teens didn't have anything to do themselves and were acting out."

Tuitman said, adding it took a lot of community partnerships to make the centre a reality.

In an interview before the opening, Dowell said HHCSI now offers cradle to grave or "womb to tomb" service in Acton with addition of the youth component. Dowell said the centre was built by the community of Halton Hills "brick by brick."

"More than 90 individuals donated more than 1,300 hours of volunteer time just to renovate the space," Dowell said.

Acton teen Heather Moon, 15, helped Halton chair Joyce Savoline, Halton Hills Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson and HHCSI president Anna Spiteri with the ribbon-cutting honours and said kids like the casual atmosphere.

Savoline noted with the opening of the Halton Health Department sexual health clinic at the centre, Acton youth now have access to the same services as other Halton residents, including pregnancy testing, contraceptive

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