

# EDITORIAL

with Ted Tyler

## Can Acton Compete?

Acton is fortunate in having three dedicated, overworked doctors...Dr. Vanderbent, Dr. McWilliams and Dr. 'Nather'. These doctors are continually trying to attract other doctors to help with Acton's serious doctor shortage. It appears that this effort is not enough.

The Belleville Pioneer newspaper reported recently, "The Quinte Health Corporation has active recruitment drive and one of their newly recruited doctors, Dr. Julian Harriss, 38, is one of the newly recruited doctors from Peterborough, England." The Quinte Health Corporation announced 12 new physicians are being recruited to fill their serious shortage of doctors in the area.

Here's a summary of what other communities are doing. Recently, the Hamilton Spectator reported on meetings held in September with the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, the medical officer of health, city councillors, various municipal officials and faculty from McMaster University Medical School. It was noted that northern communities in need of physicians have access to \$40,000 per doctor from a provincial program to help lure medical help north.

Some southern communities have access to \$15,000 per doctor through a similar fund.

The CEO of the Glengarry Memorial Hospital in Alexandria said, "between us and the government we have \$100,000 in incentives."

The City of Brantford is using money from its charity casino; along with Brant Community Health Care System have made \$500,000 interest free loans available to doctors.

Elliott Lake City Council gave a local ad-hoc health committee \$126,000 to attract two doctors. Money can be used for accommodation or a signing bonus.

Pickering Lake is offering \$186,000 along with a house and a car for young doctors willing to move to an area accessible only by plane.

Saugeen Shores, a Lake Huron community, with a new \$1.4 million community medical centre helped lure five new doctors in the last two years. The building holds 15 examination rooms, a lab, a reception centre with a children's play area, central administration and record keeping area.

The City of Sault Ste. Marie has set aside a one-year allocation of \$350,000 from its casino revenue for recruiting doctors, including financial incentives, moving expenses, household subsidies, interest free loans and signing bonuses.

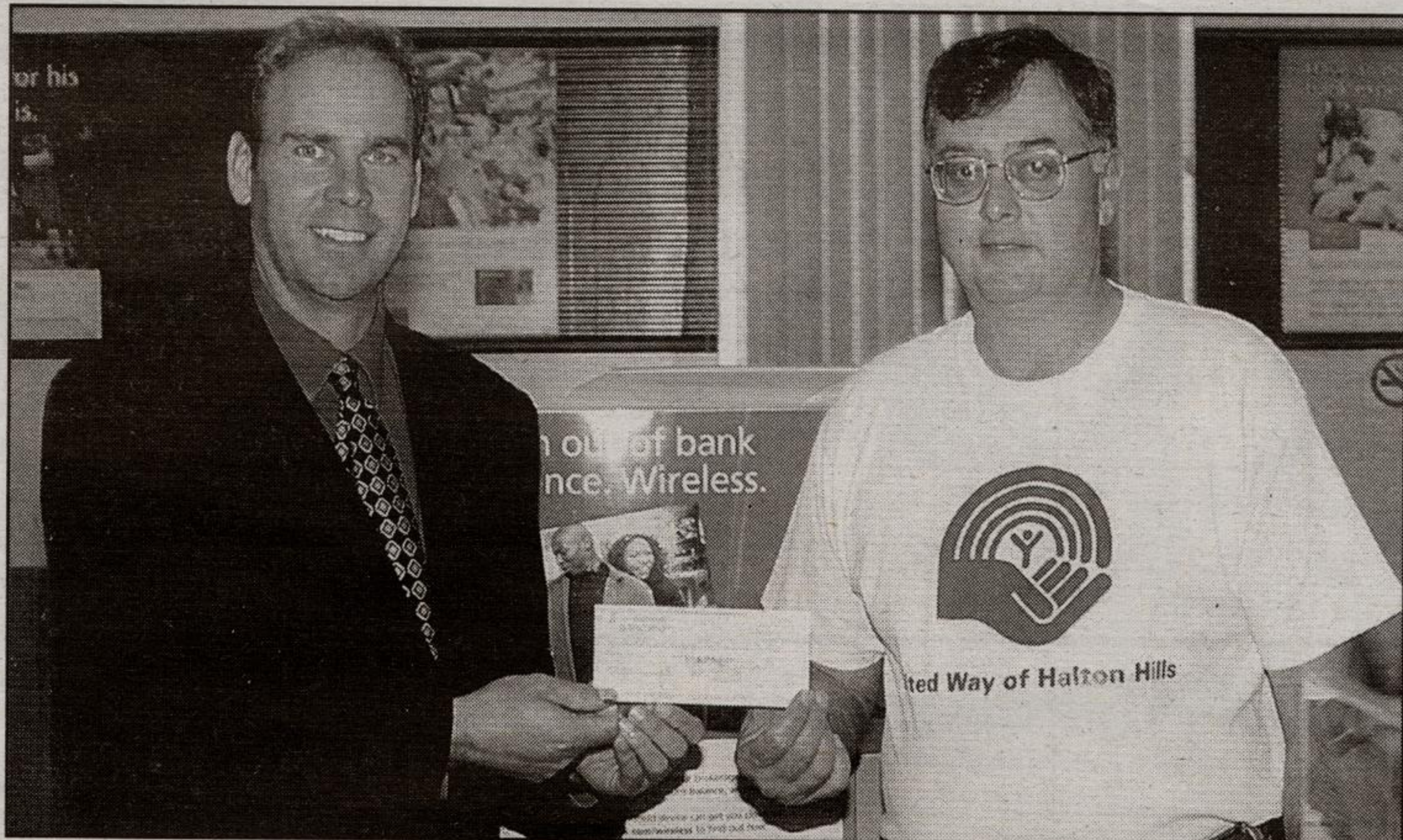
Thorold is offering \$50,000 cash over five to seven years to each doctor who establishes a family practice there.

Wallaceburg has a new clinic in a former department store and is in a private/public partnership with Med-Emerg International Inc.

Like many communities in Ontario we are not advocating a bidding war for doctor services, however, perhaps we could take a page out of the Wallaceburg book and perhaps utilize the former IGA store in downtown Acton as a medical centre.

Acton has many benefits such as its convenient location to other cities such as Toronto, Guelph and Kitchener, a new arena, great all year around sports programs, it's own lake with boating, fishing and swimming, two local golf courses including a PGA course, dedicated service clubs, good schools and friendly people.

Acton needs a more aggressive approach for doctor recruitment as other communities have learned.



**CAR RALLY CASH:** Harry Asbreuk, branch manger of Acton's Scotia Bank, presents a \$525 cheque to United Way Campaign Chairman for Acton, Dean Haughie. The money was raised last Saturday October 5, at a car rally/scavenger hunt, organized by Scotia Bank employees. *Danielle McIsaac photo*

## Sister vs sister evening out

A couple weeks ago, I asked a 10-year-old girl I know how her weekend was. In frustration she responded, "My little sister was bugging me."

A topic I know so well being the younger sister. "Well you know that's what little sisters do...they bug older sisters", I explained to her. My little friend was still unsure. My mom was nearby so I told her to ask her if I bugged my sister. My mom shot me one of those mom looks and frankly agreed, "Yes, she's very good at it."

For years my dad would remind me that I have this knack of setting my sister off in a tangent. Sometimes I could do it with one mere word. I've lost track of the times he would tell me not to bug her or try to restrain myself. Lately, though, the trivial opportunities have made way for much more calculated events.

The year before her big monumental birthday I told her I was already planning for it. It seemed like every month she would give me a list of "can't do's" such as nothing in the newspaper or signs on her lawn. With each instruction I would twist the opportunity a little more and keep her won-



By  
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dering what I was plotting.

For that birthday (part of the can't do's is put how old she is in print) it sort of backfired on me. I decided to decorate her driveway with her new age. My friend's daughter suggested sidewalk chalk but my evil mind went to the ball diamond chalker we use at the Trunk Sale.

At 3 a.m., dressed in black, I completed the task like I was an international spy. It worked wonderfully until I found out ball diamond chalk was composed of chalk and lime, which completely wrecked her driveway.

This year I took a new approach...sincerity. That was until her birthday and I realized it was Thursday/newspaper day.

When my sudden inspiration struck, Marie happened to be in the office and overheard my early morning telephone call to Tracey when I first wished her a happy birthday then asked her if she had her paper yet, full knowing that she hadn't.

Half asleep, she replied no.

Then panic hit and in her stressed voice she asked me what I had done. In the meantime I had Marie drop a paper off to her and within seconds she was tearing it apart, page by page looking for an embarrassing greeting. About 10 minutes later she called and told me there was nothing in the paper for her birthday. I told her I knew that and I never said there was. She was frustrated with me, but I could barely contain my smile as I thought to myself "success".

A couple of weeks ago for my birthday Tracey had a theme for me, all of which seemed to revolve around the toilet. First a birthday card that actually included the word bowel. Next was a rose bush named Angela, perhaps for me being a thorn in her side? Then there was a ceramic statue of a man holding his nose, his pants around his ankle, a toilet paper holder in his hand and a toilet plunger for a hat to hold extra roles.

A friend had a good observation. As he looked at my toilet paper holder he said, "It's funny" then continued, "did you ever think she is finally starting to get you back for all the stuff you've done to her?"



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