

Off The Wall Youth Centre a hit with teens...

continued from page 1

"You can relax here and you know you aren't going to be hassled on the street by anybody else," Pike said.

"The police don't like people hanging around on the streets and I was one of those people who was not allowed to hang out, so I had no where to go."

Both the Acton and Georgetown youth centres and programming are provided by Halton Hills Community Support and Information that wants teens to have a caring, non-judgmental, safe and friendly environment.

There are two qualified youth workers in Acton who supervise programs, provide a sounding board with guidance, support and resources.

The programs - karaoke and wacky kraffy nights for the juniors and sexual health

information and a tour of Blue Springs Funeral Home for the seniors - later this month, are designed to help teens develop positive strategies to deal with challenges.

Child and youth worker Claire Langridge said the clearest expectation they have for teens who come to the centre is that they show respect for others, including no swearing, name calling or bullying.

Langridge said now that they have two youth workers in Acton, they also offer individual support for teens and for their parents outside of program hours when teens can receive information, referral and support.

"Individuals who are having issues with decision making, conflict with peers, behaviours in the family,

having a difficult time with their parents come to get support," Langridge said, adding they also gets kids coming in with drug and alcohol concerns who they would refer to a qualified agency.

An increased demand from parents and caregivers looking for support and information led to parent support workshops and regular access to a youth worker who can do family assessments and make referrals for guidance and support.

Joan Barham, executive director of HHCSI, said the centre is a success because of the relationship that has built up over the past five years between staff and local teens.

"That's key to where kids come when they need help,"

Barham said, teens looking for help know they will get a professional, confidential response.

Barham said on going funding for the centres - \$155,000 annually - does not exist, so they gratefully rely on the United Way, the Town, local service clubs and the Ontario Trillium Foundation for money. She said the Board of Directors is also committed to raising funds for the youth centres.



FUN&FRIENDS: Acton's Natasha Pike, 17, (left) and Amanda Williams, 18, love to hang out at the Off The Wall youth centre on Mill Street where they find friends, programs and fun. - Frances Niblock photo

Halton District School Board to get \$80,000

The Halton District School Board will get \$80,000 in extra provincial money to support rural schools because of provincial changes to the definition of a rural school.

The number of rural schools in Halton doubles to four, with Pineview and Limehouse now classified as rural, joining Brookville and P.W. Merry.

Halton's superintendent of business services, Carla Kisko said because the Board receives so small a portion of rural school funding, the change is "not going to make a heck of a lot of difference in the way we operate in Halton."

"It will support administration in small rural schools that don't generate the kind of base funding that would entitle it to principals, vice-principals and clerical staff," Kisko said recently.

Halton received \$78,000 in 2003/04 for a distant schools grant introduced by the former Conservative government last year. The new funding is in addition to those grants, and will be provided annually.

TOWN DIGEST

Until now, the rural classification was based on the distance to the next school. The new definition uses Statistics Canada data and postal codes to identify rural schools.

YMCA UPDATE

YMCA owner Mike Caputo said the conversion of the Mill Street building into rental apartments is proceeding "as fast as we can."

The exterior building has been stripped and cleaned and new windows installed,

but Caputo, a partner with Boyd Brearley in Glenrock Properties Inc., of Glen Williams, would not even guess when the luxury upscale apartments and a ground floor commercial development will be ready.

I don't even want to speculate anymore, because no target works out, so we play it week-by-week and we'll hope for the best," Caputo said last Thursday, adding all that was stopping them from closing up the building with drywall was final approval

of the plumbing and electrical services.

"Then it is just painting, floors and kitchens - that stuff goes quick," he said hoping to be marketing the upscale apartments by the beginning of December. Caputo expects the main floor commercial space will be listed with a realtor by next week.

The Town built the

YMCA building in 1934, with a \$25,000 bequest from former Storey Glove salesman A.J. Murray.

It was a recreational and social centre hub, hosting all of the YMCA programs. It also housed municipal offices, the library, police station, the Acton Citizens' Band and various community groups and has been vacant since 1986.

LOOK FOR YOUR HOME HARDWARE FLYER IN TODAY'S ISSUE!
519-853-1730
Acton Home Hardware

Success Conference

Thursday, Oct. 28, 2004
8:30 am to 3:30 pm

IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS SUCCESS

Marcia Barhydt, Willowtree Customer Service
Turn Your Customers into Your Sales Force

Anne Peace, People at Peace
What Colour is Your Entrepreneurial Style?

Theresa Syer, Hospitality Solutions
Successful Marketing

Wendy Hue, Partners in Progress
When is it Time to Hire?

Keynote address by Norma Gamble, recipient, 2003 Athena Award

Blue Springs Golf and Country Club, 13448 Dublin Line, Halton Hills

Regular Registration by noon Tues., Oct. 26 Chamber Members \$80.00
Non Members \$95.00

Registration fee includes continental breakfast, lunch, snacks & workbooks
All prices include tax
Please call 905-877-7119
or visit www.haltonhillschamber.on.ca to register.

HHWiB RBC Royal Bank TVCOGECO

ACTON HIGH SCHOOL

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE

Will be held on..

Friday, November 5, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.

If you are a graduate and have not received an invitation, please contact the school at 853-2920