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NICE WORK: Acton's Christine Davies took advantage of a home maintenance program offered by Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI) and had her windows cleaned by local handyman James McCallum. HHCSI acts as a broker between seniors who need to have work done around their homes and workers who are contracted to do odd jobs at reasonable rates. - Frances Niblock photos

Seniors matched with handymen

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Acton senior Christine Davies has a crystal clear view of her rural gardens and property, thanks to the elbow grease of James McCallum, a handyman she contracted to clean her windows through the Halton Hills Community Support and Information (HHCSI) Home Maintenance program.

Davies, 93, used a HHCSI worker to do the job, knowing that she'd get a reputable workman who had passed inspection with the agency, and that the work would be done at a good price.

For McCallum, the job was work that he didn't have to spend time drumming up on his own, and he knew that he came well recommended to a client who wanted his services.

HHCSI spokesperson Mary Shier said the Home Maintenance program is one they wish more seniors would use.

After completing a home visit and determining what work the senior needs done, HHCSI finds a workman who can do the job and puts the two together.

"We interview all home maintenance workers, we do reference checks and security clearances and once they've gone through that process, we match them up with clients who need work done," Shier said, adding the seniors pay the workman directly after HHCSI sets a fair price for the job.

"The program is not related to income at all - it is for seniors over the age of 60 who are unable to do whatever job they want done - it usually costs about \$15 per hour," Shier said.

Shier said they have a stable of home maintenance workers capable of doing wide range of jobs, including McCallum, who learned about the program while volunteering with the Meals on Wheels program.

"I saw a posting for the Home Maintenance program and thought that it would be interesting because I work shifts and have time, and am able to do pretty well any home renovation projects," he said on Friday, adding he's looking forward to future jobs.

Davies said while her son does a lot of the work around her house, he's very busy and she was glad to have it done through HHCSI with just a phone call.

"It was easy and I got good service," Davies said.

Shier said the Home Maintenance program is not used enough by seniors and is one program that would allow some to stay in their homes longer.

For details of the program call Mary Shier at 853-3310.

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