

Halton CAS employees agree to unpaid time off

By **TIM WHITNELL**
Special to The Independent/Free Press

Management and union personnel with the Halton Children's Aid Society are confident the threat of layoffs within the social service organization has been minimized.

An impending wave of job losses, affecting as many as 11 unionized workers, seems to have ebbed in the aftermath of recent consultations between the union and its members.

The union should avoid a rash of layoffs after many of its members agreed, on an individual basis, to take voluntary, unpaid time off.

Christine Periard, a

Hamilton-based representative of Local 2501 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), said certain Halton CAS members have indicated a willingness to take off blocks of time of varying lengths.

Periard pointed out, however, even if the offers of unpaid time off are accepted by management, there could still be layoffs.

The Halton CAS announced a couple of weeks ago that, because of provincial funding cuts, the society needed to reduce its expenditures. Management staff decided to revert to a four-day work week, thereby taking a 20 per cent pay cut.

The CAS's complement of

about 75 full-time workers was given a choice of a similar arrangement or accept up to 11 job cuts.

The restructuring will take place Oct. 11.

A union steward with Halton CAS, who didn't want to be named, said there wasn't a formal vote on the cost reduction issue but, "people were encouraged to make their own personal decision on what to do. There was no pressure to volunteer or not to volunteer."

The Halton CAS provides services such as counselling and shelter to children and youths who are victims of physical, emotional or sexual abuse.



Rotarians at work

The Hospice program of the Victorian Order of Nurses is \$500 richer thanks to the Rotary Club of Georgetown. Rotary president Sarah Cornett (left) presented the cheque to Linda Shaver RN, VON Hospice Volunteer coordinator for north Halton and Anne King RN, VON program manager for Halton Region.

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