

Acton woman honored

Acton resident Dorothy Allen was one of four Halton women who received a Women of the Year Award in Oakville last week.

Allen's longstanding work with the Tough Talk program largely earned her the award, which was presented by Ontario Lieutenant Governor Hillary Weston at the ceremony hosted by the Women's Information and Support Centre of Halton at Glen Abbey Golf Club. Twenty women were nominated.

Allen said she was "highly honored" to receive the award. She knew she had been nominated but said she had no idea she'd win.

A former teacher in Acton, Allen has spent 14 years administering the Tough Talk program, first as a volunteer at Guelph Correctional Centre where the program was run by psychologists, then soon after when she and her husband Ken began offering it in the community.

Tough Talk is a five-step program designed to help troubled people turn their lives around. It teaches family members of a troubled loved one how to make them aware of how selfish their actions are and how they are affecting others, and can directly affect the troubled person if he or she goes through the program.

Allen became involved with the program after some problems in her own family and remains involved because, "we never want to see anyone go through the pain we went through in our family experience."

She and Ken offer the free program monthly at Dublin St. United Church in Guelph and participants have come from all over. The Allens, who together now run a seven-step program in the correctional centre, have also appeared on national television promoting the Tough Talk group concept.

"When the programs Dorothy managed were threatened with dwindling dollars, Dorothy became a part-time child care worker at the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre, using her salary, in part, to supplement the budget," said Melvina Walter of the Women's Centre and a nominee for this year's award.

"Her humanitarian and selfless style find Dorothy 'walking her walk' with troubled youth, young single moms, the moms or parents of children going into foster care, and seniors living alone," said Walter.

Allen is also a long-time volunteer with the Halton Children's Aid Society.

An open house to honor Allen's recent award will be held at the Boathouse in Prospect Park in Acton Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m. For more information call Eileen at (519) 853-0493.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer



Women of the Year award recipients, from left, Dorothy Allen, Dianne Banks, Kathy Douthart and Lottie Grant at Tuesday evening's gala at Glen Abbey Golf Club. Photo by Peter J. Thompson

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WINNERS

Winners of the Early Bird Draw for a round of Golf for two c/w cart at Granite Ridge is Paula Cassin of Milton. The winner of tickets for the production of "Cake Walk" is Margaret Palmer of Georgetown. Tickets were drawn by Chris Ladd member of Brain Child from Montreal on Sunday May 2 at the Delta Meadowvale Resort & Conference Centre at the Brain Child Conference.

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