

Healthy Living

Doulas return to the birthing room

By LISA TALLYN
Staff Writer

In this era of high tech childbirth, an age-old concept is re-emerging, having a doula present to help the woman and her partner throughout labor and birth.

The word doula comes from ancient Greek and refers to a trained and experienced woman who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support to a woman before, during and immediately following childbirth.

In order to raise awareness of doulas May has been declared International Doula Month. Two women in town, Samantha Leeson-Gardiner and Karen Boothroyd, are trained doulas and are both members of the Labour Support Association Registry. With a doula a woman is never left alone during labor and birth.

The benefit of having a doula's support in labor has been recognized by the World Health Organization, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada, the Institute for Health Care Improvement (Boston) and the Medical Leadership Council.

The doula's encouragement, reassurance and practical knowledge of comfort measures and labor enhancing techniques can decrease pain and anxiety for the laboring mother. The doula works together with the family and medical staff to meet the individual needs of her client and her family. Fathers present in labor appreciate the guidance and assistance of doulas.

Studies show that attending to women's emotional and psychosocial needs during childbirth not only contribute to women's satisfaction and self confidence, but it is also associated with improved birth

outcomes and less need for medical interventions. Studies reveal that women who are accompanied by doulas in childbirth are more satisfied with their birth experiences, feel more confident, are more likely to interact closely with their infants and less likely to have postpartum depression. They are also more likely to initiate and continue breastfeeding and fewer newborns have complications.

For more information on how a doula can enhance the birthing experience contact Boothroyd at 877-0496 or Leeson-Gardiner at 702-8675.

Quick tips to being active

Mixed 3-pitch

Mixed 3-pitch baseball pick-up games Fridays at 7 p.m. at Ballinafad Park. Minimal charge. Call Donnie 873-7125 or Margaret 854-0755.

Touring Friends can help

Would you like to travel to place but need support or assistance with personal care? Touring Friends Assisted Travel Association can help. Pick up a

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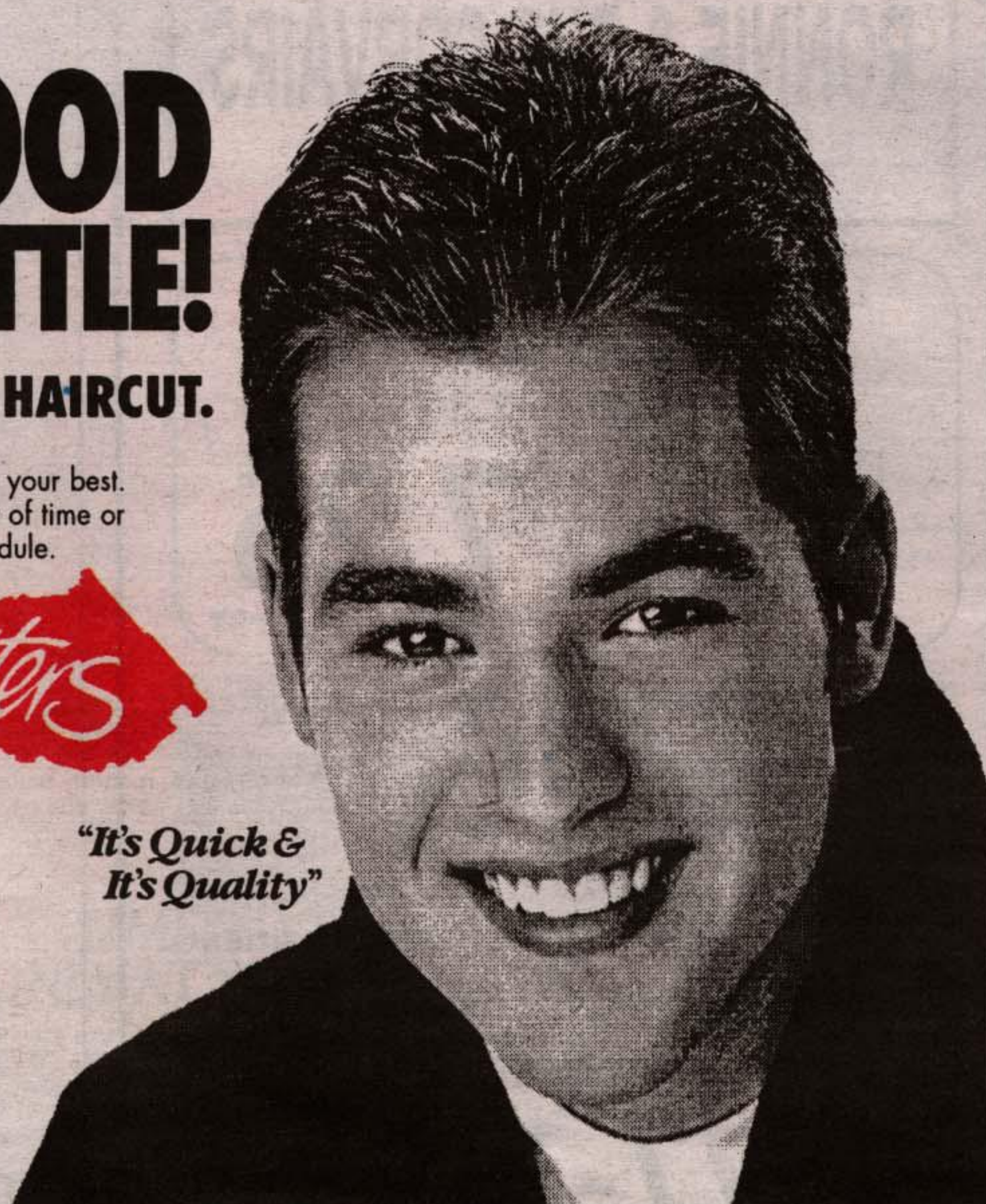
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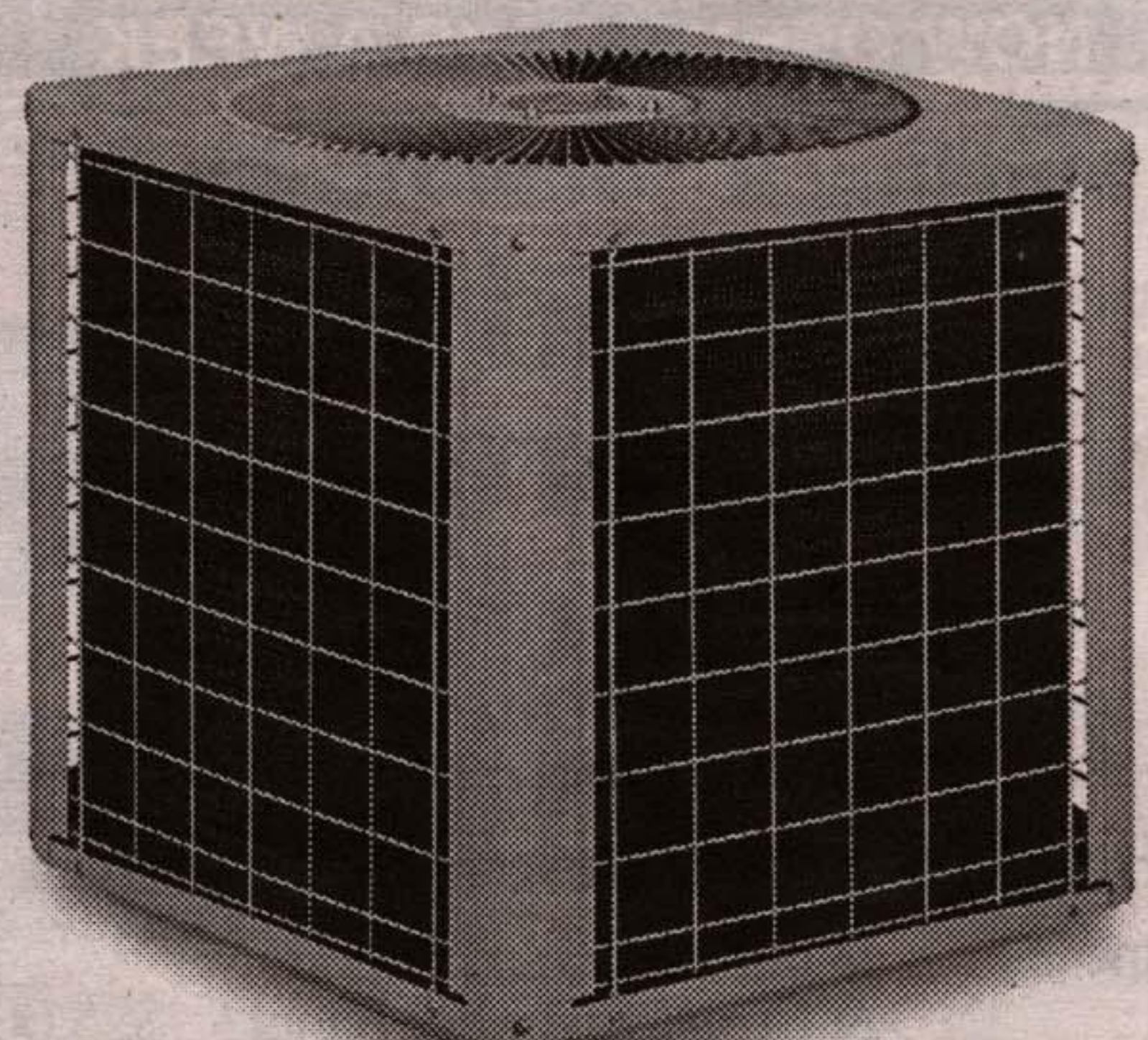


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