

# Hospital transfer to HHS goes smoothly

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She explained the program will “enhance local decision making and create hospital services that are more aligned to the needs of the community today and for the future.”

Within the next couple of days a physician leader will be named at the hospital, she said.

A Physician Task Force consisting of WOHC and HHS physicians reviewed all clinical services at the hospital to determine where support for the services would come after the transfer.

“There are some clinical areas where the referral patterns and ongoing support will stay the same, and some that will change to HHS right away, or sometime in the future,” said Dr. Don Trant, a Georgetown family physician and member of the task force.

He said they wanted to ensure that after the transfer, the town’s residents continued to have access to a full range of healthcare services.

HHS has also been working to re-establish the Georgetown Hospital Volunteer Association and Georgetown Hospital Foundation which, as part of WOHC, operated on a centre-wide basis.

Oliver said the start-up board of the foundation has been formed, with Paul Armstrong as the chair, and while the board will likely



**Halton Healthcare President and Chief Executive Officer John Oliver congratulated Cindy McDonnell, Chief Operating Officer and Program Leader for Georgetown Family Practice Program, as they checked out the new sign at Georgetown Hospital. Halton Healthcare official took over operation of the Georgetown facility from William Osler Health Centre, effective January 2, 2006.** Photo by Ted Brown

receive support from HHS staff it and the hospital auxiliary will operate locally.

“If they (area residents) give to the foundation there’s no question where the money will be used. It will be used at this hospital site,” said Oliver.

He added the foundation will be recruiting board members in the near future.

Also in coming weeks, the HHS

Board of Directors will be adding two new members from the Halton Hills community.

Oliver said for patients of the hospital, they hope the transfer to HHS will appear “invisible,” but in the longer term they will see a difference.

He said as Halton Hills grows HHS intends to grow the programming at the hospital.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

# First all-candidates’ debate will focus on rural issues

An all-candidates debate and question forum focusing on agriculture, food and rural issues will be held at Hume’s Auction Farm 7 p.m., Monday, January 9.

All Wellington-Halton Hills federal election candidates— Mike Chong (Conservative Party of Canada), Rod Finnie (Liberal), Brent Bouteiller (Green Party) and Mike Wisniewski (Independent)— have confirmed their attendance at the meeting hosted by the Halton Hills agricultural community.



The Halton Federation of Agriculture is sponsoring the debate.

The debate and question period will take place between 7:30 and 10 p.m. and the format will combine debate questions from the moderator, Kurtis Andrews, (selected from e-mail and written submissions from area residents) and from residents directly from the floor.

Questions dealing with agriculture, food and rural communities should be e-mailed to kurtis@farmstart.ca or dropped off at Andrews’ Scenic Acres at 9365 10 Sideroad, Halton Hills.

Hume’s Auction Farm is located at 9313 Fourth Line, between 5 and 10 Sideroads.

# RIDE charges double

Halton Police laid more than twice the number of impaired driving charges during the recent Holiday RIDE program compared to the previous year.

Seven impaired driving charges were laid across the region between December 1 and December 31, compared to three the previous year. In 2003 police laid three impaired charges and seven were laid in 2002.

In total, during last month’s blitz, four impaired charges were laid in Burlington, two in Halton Hills and one in Oakville.

Police stopped approximately 35,000 vehicles during the recent program compared to 41,149 in 2004, 32,365 in 2003, and 34,344 in 2002.

Sgt. Trevor Hay of Halton Regional Police Regional Traffic Unit said while there was a dramatic increase in the number of charges laid during the most recent program there is no trend emerging that shows impaired driving is on the rise.

The increase could have a lot to do with where the officers set up their program, he said.

“There is no direct correlation between the number and the problem in the community,” said Hay.

He said even though the numbers increased, “I hope we are getting the message out that drinking and driving is not appropriate.”

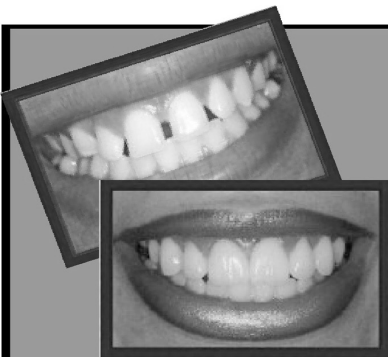
Hay said the main focus of the RIDE program is not enforcement, but a way to raise public awareness of the consequences of drinking and driving.

Along with the impaired driving charges, the most recent blitz resulted in 34 12-hour licence suspensions, 228 Highway Traffic Act charges and 26 other charges.

# Fire damage limited


No one was injured in a fire at the Dollarama store on Guelph St. Tuesday at noon. A store employee discovered the fire in the main retail area and tried to put it out, but was unsuccessful. Staff and customers quickly evacuated the building and the fire department was called. “The sprinkler system was a major factor in reducing the amount of fire damage and fire spread,” said Chief of Operations John Martin. With the exception of smoke migration into the adjacent store, The Pita Pit, damage was contained to the Dollarama. At press time the cause of the fire was still under investigation, and no damage estimate was available.

Photo by Ted Brown



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