

The new Chamber office is beginning to feel like home and everything is in its place. So now it's time for us to roll out the red carpet and give our members the grand tour. We will be hosting the next Business of the Month on January 25. This BaH's is called "A Taste of the Chamber" and we will be featuring food from our many Chamber members.

While it's tempting to take advantage of a great deal, I encourage everyone to think twice when making your purchases of goods and services. I have spoken with many members, who are becoming frustrated with people that come in from out of town, set up a temporary business, and then as quickly as they arrived, are gone. Often they are leaving behind unhappy customers with substandard products or services and no recourse. It can't be said often enough – **SHOP LOCAL!** Local businesses are here year round. Dollars spent with Halton Hills owned and operated businesses stay in the local economy. These businesses support your children's sports teams; donate items to local school/church fundraisers and add to the quality of life you enjoy in Halton Hills. Local businesses employ your friends and neighbours. They pay local taxes to support the community. If you are a local business, please introduce yourself to the Chamber. We receive many inquiries from local residents looking for referrals. Often they have a specific business they are seeking information on. If we haven't heard about your business, they don't feel confident using your services.

Know an exceptional business in town that deserves to be recognized? There is still time to send in your nominations for the 2005 Business of the Year, Entrepreneur of the Year, Employee of the Year and Civic Pride Awards. Deadline for

**General Manager's Desk**



**Sue Walker**

nominations is January 27. Please take a moment and let us know who you feels deserves this special recognition.

Don't forget to take a copy of BusinessLink with you if you are heading south or to the slopes. We'd love to feature you on the cover of our April issue reading this newsletter on your holiday.

Work has begun on the 2006 Chamber directory. Our phone book is delivered to all residents in Halton Hills through the Independent Free Press and is also available year round through the Chamber office. Only Chamber members are featured in the yellow pages. How good is our book? Call our office and we'll deliver 10 copies to you, for you to put on display and watch how fast they disappear!

If your business accepts VISA, MasterCard or debit cards as payment, are you receiving the best possible rates from your bank for these transactions? Did you know that members of Halton Hills Chamber receive a preferred rate? For many of our members, that savings more than pays for their annual membership fee. If you require more details, please call Mary at our office.

## Spotlight on Volunteer

by Barb Kay, Absolute EA

When one thinks about Junior Achievement in Halton Hills, the first name that comes to mind at our Chamber is Jamie Schumacker. It comes as no surprise, as Jamie has been involved with JA activities for the past 25 years.

Jamie's encounter with JA began as a student participating in a high school program in Sudbury. The experience there gave him an appreciation of the business world and motivated him not only to continue his education but also to start his own business. During his third year at Laurentian University, Jamie started a management consulting firm which he ran for another two years after graduation in 1988. Since then, he has served as the Chair of the Board of JA in Ottawa-Carleton, Burlington and Halton. Through this tenure, Jamie was also a director on the board of Junior Achievement of Canada. He is committed to work with the youth in our community and the next generation of business leaders to "give back to the community," a comment often heard from our volunteers.

Jamie moved to Georgetown with his wife Cydney in 1996 and a close relationship with the Chamber developed at that time. In 2003, he became a Chamber member.

The programs are offered free of charge to students and are funded by local businesses in the form of corporate sponsorship. The cost per student to participate in an in-school program is \$20, a modest sum in itself, but with 1,000 students involved annually, funding continues to be a challenge.



Jamie Schumacker

This past year, Jamie experienced his biggest challenge (and achievement) yet, when he was able to keep the JA program running in Halton Hills despite JA South Central Ontario ceasing operations in June. "Without the Chamber's support," he stresses, "and their commitment to put an agreement in place with JA Canada and JA London, these programs would not have been available this year in Halton Hills." When he became a Director of the Chamber in September, he formed and chairs the Junior Achievement Committee whose responsibility now includes program delivery in Halton Hills.

Other volunteer activities include work for many charitable organizations, which include the Juvenile Ride for Diabetes, canvassing for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and participating in a number of United Way events.

Spare time? Jamie enjoys being with his wife and three children and being a part of their after-school activities. These days, that includes getting them out to the slopes for down-hill skiing. The key thing that keeps Jamie going is the support of his family, and he is very conscious and appreciative of this support.

In 1990, Jamie joined the RBC Financial Group, where he now leads the strategic planning process for RBC Global Technology & Operations as the Senior Manager, Performance & GTO Strategy. Jamie can be reached at 905.877.4304.

**"There has always been a tremendous amount of support for JA activities in our community."**

In addition to these efforts, Jamie also volunteers in the classrooms, delivering at least two in-school programs per year. JA programs consist of two types: an after-school program where high school students create their own company under the direction of volunteer business advisors, and several in-school programs from Grades 3 - 12 covering various business topics. JA programs were delivered to over 1,000 students in Halton Hills last year.

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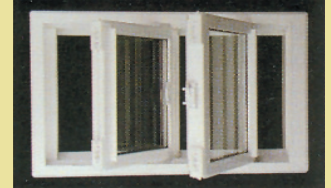
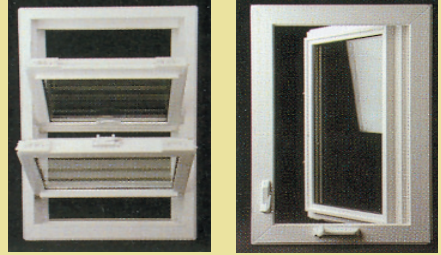


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