

E-mail support service set up for teens

A recently launched e-mail support service provides area youths with a place to voice their opinions, discuss issues and get information on a wide range of topics.

E-Peer to Peer, offered through Halton Hills Community Support and Information, provides youth with a direct line to trained mentors who are supervised by a youth worker.

Since the program began in January, co-ordinator Laura Demeester said they have received e-mails from youths on a wide range of topics including bullying, self-harm, drug and alcohol use, relationships, bereavement and birth control.

There are seven mentors in the program, all of them Acton or Georgetown high school students who have gone through an eight-week training course in active listening and giving support. The mentors do not give personal advice or counsel the youth.

"They're not *Dear Abby* and they're not crisis workers," said Demeester.

She said the mentors are well versed in the resources available on a wide range of topics and provide that information to those who e-mail them. All the e-mails are treated confidentially and answered in three to four days.

Demeester said the youths get together once a week under her supervision to respond to the emails. Currently they are receiving about 10 each week.

"I supervise everything that's being done. They use their own words."

"They're very capable mentors. They really encourage kids to take care of themselves, to explore what their choices might be without being judgmental."

Demeester said the program, which she believes is the only one like it in Canada, is currently funded through the National Crime Prevention Board, and funding beyond this year has not yet been secured.

The e-mail address for E-Peer to Peer is

p2p@hhcsi.ca.

Anyone interested in becoming a mentor should enquire at the guidance counsel office in Acton or Georgetown High Schools.

For more information call Demeester at 519-853-3310.

Residents offered chance to discuss MPAC April 13

Got a beef with MPAC—the Ontario provincial corporation responsible for setting the assessment on your home?

Join other like-minded folks with ongoing issues and concerns at a meeting of the Halton Hills Home Owners Assessment Association on Thursday, April 13, 7:30 p.m. at the Acton Legion. Local residents, led by chair Mac Sprowl, formed the group several years ago in response to unfair assessments of their homes.

Meanwhile, Halton Hills council applauded the recent Ontario Ombudsman's scathing report on MPAC, which called for a complete overhaul of the organization. Over the years, the Town has sent many resolutions to the provincial government calling for a review of MPAC's actions.

"I'm very pleased with the response of the Ombudsman," said Mayor Rick Bonnette, "It basically verifies what our citizens and taxpayers have been telling us for years, and the Ombudman really and truly gave them (MPAC) a public spanking."

Good Friday holiday results in changes to ad deadlines

Independent & Free Press advertisers are reminded that deadlines will be pushed ahead next week because of the Good Friday holiday.

Classified and display ad orders must be made by noon Wednesday, April 12 for the Friday, April 14 edition.

The *Independent & Free Press* office will be closed Friday, April 14 for the holiday but will reopen at 8:30 a.m. Monday, April 17.



LAURA DEMEESTER

Georgetown Bach Chorale

"Lacrimosa" Music for Good Friday

Georgetown Bach Chorale and guests

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Friday, April 14, 2006, 8:00 p.m., Knox Presbyterian Church, Georgetown
Tickets: \$20.00

Gala Concert

Georgetown Bach Chorale and Chamber Orchestra

Kantata BWV 79 "Gott, der Herr, is Sonn un Schild" ~ J. S. Bach
Piano Concerto No. 14 in E flat major ~ W. A. Mozart
Water Music Suite No. 1 in F major ~ G. F. Handel
Mass BWV 233 in F major ~ J. S. Bach

Saturday, May 6, 2006, 8:00 p.m., St. John's United Church, Georgetown
Sunday, May 7, 2006, 3:00 p.m., St. James Anglican Church, Caledon East
Tickets: \$25.00

Tickets may be purchased at two locations in Georgetown
Foodstuffs, 89 Main Street South, 905-877-6569
or The Freckled Lion, 56 Main Street South, 905-873-1213
or by calling 905-877-8321.

for more information visit www.georgetownbachchorale.com



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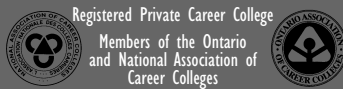
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