



Hundreds turn out to bid farewell to outgoing police chief

HOWARD MOZEL
 Special to The IFP

Although the crowd that bid farewell to retiring Police Chief Ean Algar last week was a large one, it still only touched on the breadth of respect with which he's regarded clear across Halton and beyond.

After all, even though there were police officers, politicians, representatives from non-profit agencies, spokespeople for faith and multicultural groups, senior citizens and teenagers, it was obvious Algar's impact on his community could not be encapsulated in an hour's worth of heartfelt presentations—but they certainly tried.

"You are loved and cherished ... in this community," Laila Eiriksson, speaking for

the Halton Multicultural Council and the Bahá'is of Oakville, told a visibly moved Algar, who became chief in 1999.

During the event— held Friday at regional headquarters on Algar's last day as chief after 38 years in policing— the word most often repeated was "leadership," made in reference to both his style of discharging his duties as well as the substance.

The theme of leaving Halton better than Algar found it was a recurring one throughout the hour.

This, said Sansar Singh Rai, of the Halton Gurdwara, was proven no better than by the "vital role" Algar played in ensuring toler-



EAN ALGAR

ance in the post-9/11 era. This legacy, he maintained, "made a real difference."

Algar was also lauded for his tireless efforts in making Halton as safe as possible for its most vulnerable citizens, as voiced by Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services (SAVIS) executive director Jacqueline Benn-John and Janette Mitchell of the Halton Justice Prevention Council. Jean Clipsham of the Halton Organization for Pride and Education (HOPE) echoed these sentiments.

"Chief Algar, you are a champion of human rights," she said.

When it was time for Algar to speak, he

was clearly overwhelmed by emotion and said he was "humbled by your comments today."

"It's been an emotional day. It's been a great day," said Algar, the first Halton chief to rise through the local ranks. (He joined the old Oakville Police Force in 1968.) "I should be standing up here thanking you."

He then did thank everyone for their "tremendous support" of his efforts then addressed those officers in attendance.

"It's been a wonderful time," said Algar. "I can't tell you how fast 38 years have gone. It's a career I have enjoyed immensely."

Algar then said he plans to spend more time with his family and his garden and, after some thought, volunteer in some capacity in his community.

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