

SALUTE TO VOLUNTEERS

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Halton Hills Award Winning Community Newspaper

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Special pullout section

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Volunteers— Ordinary people doing extraordinary things

"According to the 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, more than half of Canadian non-profit organizations rely solely on volunteers to fulfill their mission. Canadians volunteer more than two billion hours a year, equivalent to more than one million full-time jobs. They have an enormous impact on civil society."

—Marlene Deboisbrian, president of Volunteer Canada

The examples are far-reaching from the hockey coach who gets up at 5 a.m. to coach a 6 a.m. practice to the woman who talks calmly to a suicidal person on the Distress Line at midnight.

That's what makes volunteers so special—they help create memories for our children and help people live a little easier. Whether it's passion for a cause or seeing a need in the community and filling it, volunteers are the thread that binds every community. April 15-21 is Volunteer Week, with the theme for the second straight year— Volunteers Grow Communities.

"I can't thank our volunteers enough. They are the backbone of our organization: organizing special events, ensuring funds are appropriately allocated to local agencies and working to raise awareness about the need that exists in Halton Hills," said Kim Robinson, executive director of the United Way of Halton Hills. "They do it all and the United Way of Halton Hills wouldn't exist without them. So to all of you who help United Way of Halton Hills in your own special way— thanks for making a difference in our community."

But often volunteers provide more than just muscle behind an organization, they are its heart.

"Volunteers help to provide all the services of organization, but they also build acts of kindness and caring into everything they do," said Marlene Beitz, Links2Care co-ordinator of volunteers. "They elevate service delivery into the compassionate contact that so many need. They bring joy and fun too!"

With one in five adults struggling with their basic literacy skills, Literacy North Halton runs classes year round and volunteers come from all walks of life. These community-minded individuals give up three hours per week for a minimum of one full year to help another adult upgrade their basic reading, writing, spelling, math and computer skills.

Here is what LNH students have to say about



Acton residents Diane and Bill Spielvogel, longtime volunteer organizers of the Acton Santa Claus Parade, have been named the 2007 Acton Citizens of the Year. The couple has been organizing the event for more than 25 years. They will be feted at a special dinner on Saturday, May 5 at Blue Springs Golf Course. Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. with dinner to follow at 6:15 p.m. Tickets are \$35 each and are available at Halton Hills Furniture and Alexanian's Carpet in Acton or by contacting Brian Robertson, dbrobert@sympatico.ca. Deadline for tickets sales is April 30.

these great volunteers:

- "My volunteer tutor helped me become a great volunteer."
- "I want to say that I have learned a lot of math, grammar and typing. I really came a long way. ... Thanks to my tutors for the wonderful work that they've done."

But the LNH volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes are just as important, agreed LNH administrative co-ordinator Sharon Foster. In order to raise funds for programs, there are some very busy volunteers out in the community running fundraising events.

"Our agency office could not survive without



Georgetown Citizen of the Year for 2006, Louise Brown volunteers more than 2,000 hours of her time each year for the past 25 years with local Catholic schools, Canadian Cancer Society and especially Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills. Above she helps drive cancer survivor Janet Tellier to a hospital for treatment. Brown will be recognized at a special dinner hosted by the Georgetown Lions Club on April 24. It will be held at the Georgetown Lions Hall and tickets, \$30, are available at the Carpet Barn or by calling Lion Doug Penrice, 905-873-8469.

our great office volunteers, our computers would fail without IT support, our posters would not be placed in prominent positions throughout the community without our outreach volunteers and board members create our guidelines, strategically plan our activities and sit on sub-committees in order to successfully run programs," she said.

Volunteers also are the grassroots army behind the finding a cure for a myriad of diseases and conditions, as well as making lives a little bit better for those afflicted.

"Almost 40% of Canadians will develop some form of heart disease or stroke over their

lifetime. With our aging population, it's critical to understand the underlying causes of these diseases. Through the vital support of our volunteers, we're gaining and sharing knowledge that allows for earlier diagnosis and better treatments while providing Canadians with critical information on how to protect their health," said Shawn Keba, Peel Region area manager of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, which represents Halton Hills.

"During National Volunteer Week, we would like to thank Heart and Stroke Foundation volunteers for putting their hearts into it to improve and save lives."

Thank you Volunteers!

Volunteers are a treasured resource, delivering and serving meals, providing friendly visiting, telephone assurance, or community support, assisting at children's or youth programs, giving administrative assistance, advising on committees, and governing the Agency as members of the Board of Directors.



Links2Care

For information on Volunteer opportunities, please call 905-873-6502 or 519-853-3310



Support our local Volunteers!

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