

Shining a little light

The 12-year Buy a Bulb Campaign is in its seventh year of lighting up the Tree of Caring.

Donors of \$10 or more can buy bulbs to honour lost loved ones and light up a large tree on the Milton District Hospital grounds.

The Milton District Hospital Foundation fundraiser is underway for another year.

Donors of \$10 to \$49 will be responsible for lighting a single bulb on the tree and will receive a fluffy ornament.

Donors of \$50 to \$149 will light a small string of lights and receive a red

and gold poinsettia-shaped ornament.

A donation of \$150 or more will light a large string of bulbs and the donor will receive the seventh ornament in a limited-edition series entitled 'The 12 Days of Christmas.'

The campaign has raised about \$220,000 over the last six years to help fund hospital equipment. Donations this year will help purchase a \$300,000 cardiac monitoring system.

Cheques should be made payable to the Milton District Hospital Foundation and forwarded to the foundation at 30 Derry Rd. E., Milton, Ont., L9T 2X5.

Halton Region looking at facelift for Martin House

By BRAD REAUME

The Champion

In one of its last actions of the term Halton's health and social services committee agreed to consider renovating Martin House.

The region will study a refit of the 100-bed long-term care facility, the last vestige of Halton Centennial Manor at Allendale.

Committee has struggled over just what to do with the aging building, which has room to house a total of 150 residents.

Several councillors support the economies of scale associated with maintaining the building and keeping the facility near Allendale.

Others have pushed for a new complex to be built in Oakville or Burlington, where most of Halton's population is located.

The committee agreed to apply for capital funding of the facility and include the project in 1998 budget considerations.

Recommendations on the refit include \$3.3 million in construction options.

Many of the issues involved in the refit appear to revolve around phasing. One suggestion would have the first floor of the building refitted initially and residents moved to free up the second floor to renovate. Third floor residents would be moved to the second floor when it is completed.

However the first floor space is currently being leased to Milton Community Information Services (MCIS).

Pat Heroux, president of Local 261 of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, representing about 300 Allendale and Martin House employees, said the report has been favourably received by union members.

She said there was some concern among her group that the renovations would proceed without government guarantees of funding for the additional beds.

Regional social services commissioner Bonnie Ewart said funding announcements are expected by the province next April.

Ms Heroux added that the proposed first phase is



Pat Heroux



Bonnie Ewart

not costly compared to the total project and stressed the need for immediate building improvements, as well.

The proposed list for initial improvements includes: Hot water controls, outdoor lighting, new kitchen equipment, fire alarm upgrades, additional washrooms, safety grills on windows, and enclosing existing balconies.

Glenn Goldstraw of the Allendale Family Council said his group supports the redevelopment plans.

He said a survey of residents and their families revealed no consensus on what aspects of the building should be addressed first.

"Generally cosmetic things trailed requests for functional needs," he said. "Lets get on with it and start right away."

Ms Ewart said capital funding approvals from the province are very slow. In some cases they come only after the facility has been in operation for several years, she noted.

"If some of these groups had waited to secure funding before proceeding they would be 4 or 5 years down the road and still be without a facility," Ms Ewart said.

Burlington Councillor Jack Dennison said the bulk of the funding for the project will perhaps not be necessary until 1999. He said he was confident funding

• see FUNDING on page 12

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