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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Sippin' with Santa

Three-year-old Storm Way enjoys a cool beverage with old St. Nick during the first annual Lunch with Santa at Don Cherry's Grapevine Saturday. Proceeds from the event support Rose Cherry's Home.

Halton to take over ambulance service

Ambulance workers "delighted" by Region's decision to go in-house

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

That loud noise heard Wednesday night was probably the joyful sound of area paramedics cheering.

The celebration was the result of a decision made by regional council to take the recently downloaded ambulance services in-house.

Council also approved, at least in theory, a series of enhancements to beef up Halton ambulance service.

Both decisions were arrived at after a grueling nine-hour meeting, attended by several paramedics.

A regionally-managed service — which would make ambulance workers Regional employees -- had been the desire of most paramedics from the start.

Contracting the service out to a for-profit company, as was the original plan, didn't provide adequate job stability, it was stated at a series of meetings earlier in

"I'm delighted. I'm going to celebrate all night now. Morale will be sky high as soon as I make a phone call."

GORD ARMES

the year.

"Morale is below the floor," said Gord Armes, president of the Local 207 of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union representing Halton paramedics before the decision came through.

But that all changed when the region altered its previous stand at approximately

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• see a related story on page 5

Woman charged in thefts

A Campbellville woman has been charged in connection with a Remembrance Day-related theft spree in Oakville.

The 23-year-old faces eight counts of theft under \$5,000, relating to an in-depth police probe that found a suspect had entered several Royal Canadian Legions and removed poppy donation boxes.

A Halton Regional Police press release stated that investigating officer Constable John Ophoven was able to obtain security videos of one of the thefts. The tape provided a picture of a suspect and a car.

The woman will appear in Milton court January 18.

NEWSLINES

Man injured

A Halton Hills man suffered severe injuries to his head and right arm as a result of a work-related mishap at Micro-Tech Machine on Hannant Court Monday.

Steve MacDonald, 20, sustained his wounds after becoming entangled in a metal lathe at about 4:30 p.m.

He was taken to Milton District Hospital and later airlifted to Toronto's St. Michaels Hospital, where he remains in serious condition.

The accident is being investigated by the Ministry of Labour.

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