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# Region launches new, revamped web site featuring a modern look

By ANGELA BLACKBURN

Special to The Champion

As Halton residents go surfing this season, Halton Region staff want them to make a pit stop at its web site — [www.region.halton.on.ca](http://www.region.halton.on.ca).

To entice visitors to tour, last Friday the Region launched a brand new look and feel to its site.

Regional Chair Joyce Savoline was on-hand at the launch to extend a personal invitation to surfers.

### More modern feel

The site boasts a new, more modern look and a new navigation system that also links to the web sites of Halton's four municipalities.

"It's a one-stop shop. It makes our government more transparent and definitely more accessible," explained Ms Savoline.

The man at the helm of the new venture is Halton's director of technology services, Ralph Blauel.

He expects the web site's new design to bump its 800 daily hits to 1,000 "user visits."

"Ours is the most visited web site in Halton," said Mr. Blauel, who noted other regions, such as Peel, don't yet offer links to area municipalities.

Halton Region surveyed users last fall as it prepared to update its web site, which dates back to 1995.

"We found that people were interested in more e-government," said Mr. Blauel.

He also noted the prevalence of computers, both at home and in businesses in Halton, as a reason for the Region to update its operation.

### Getting lots of visits

"I get e-mails from a lot of people, sometimes those that are sent in the middle of the night, so there are a lot of night-owls out there," said Ms Savoline, noting computers allow people to do business at any hour of the day.

The update was also needed to keep the Region "up-to-speed" with provincial and

federal government web sites, said Mr. Blauel.

Some provincial and federal government information is now available through Halton's new web site and more should come on-line in the future, explained Mr. Blauel.

Halton's web site now offers a more user-friendly alphabetical index of its services for surfers to search.

"Halton is committed to improving customer service," said Corporate Services Commissioner Jane MacCaskill.

### Latest info on site

The latest news, announcements, media releases, as well as Ms Savoline's recent speeches and newspaper columns are on-line.

Council documents are also available on-line.

Agendas for upcoming meetings have always been available on-line, but now an archive of council agendas, staff reports and decisions are available.

E-payment and e-delivery of bid documents should be welcomed by local businesses looking for regional contracts.

A heritage service promotes Halton's history and connects visitors to the Halton Region Museum.

An 'About Us' category provides information about Halton's history, population, economics and job opportunities.

"With more people using the Internet to do business or to find information, we felt the time was right to provide added value to our site," said Mr. Blauel.

The Region's new web site went on-line April 30.

## Attention

Previous news article about Richard Sykes on Feb. 20 and advertisement on May 1, 2001 concerning him, about being a Shaman in a traditional sense is not true. I wish to make perfectly clear that a traditional Shaman under goes initiations and heals through plant medicines and is full native indian, for which I am not. I am though a gifted energy healer, clairvoyant and tarot reader, with these gifts, I help to heal people through spirit and creator for which I am able to call myself a Shaman in a pure non traditional sense. I apologize for any inconvenience I have caused amongst the true Shamans in this community and others. This comes from my heart with love, respect and honour.

Richard Sykes.



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At the Family Visiting Centre, volunteers are needed to assist with supervising visits between non-custodial parents and their children, monitoring exchanges for weekend visits, setting up and cleaning up the visiting area and helping to create a warm and friendly environment.

Orientation and training are provided.

For more information, call (905) 637-5256.



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