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A Metroland Community Newspaper Vol. 142 No. 48 Friday, August 31, 2001 32 Pages \$1.00 (GST included)



Steamy weekend ahead

Local collectors of classic antique tractors and engines are putting the finishing touches on their equipment as they get ready for the biggest annual exhibition in Ontario — the 41st annual Steam-Era Show. The four-day show, which opens today, will be held at the Milton Fair Grounds all weekend. Here, Holly Diamanti, 8, sits atop her Kilbride grandparents Alex and June Sutherland's 1957 Minneapolis-Moline 445 tractor while older brother Bradley, 11, cleans up the front tire. Minneapolis-Moline will be one of dozens of manufacturers featured in Steam-Era parades Saturday, Sunday and Monday at 4 p.m. Admission to the event costs \$5 for adults and \$1 for children 12 years of age and under.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Hospital obstetrics closing, again

By FANNIE SUNSHINE
The Champion

As of October 1, babies won't be delivered at Milton District Hospital (MDH) until next summer.

Dr. Sandy Sharma, the sole obstetrician at the hospital for the past two years, announced yesterday he's unable to continue providing obstetrical care at the Milton site due to personal reasons.

He said that an insurmountable workload and excessive demands have taken a heavy toll on him personally.

"To maintain this pace, I would be heading for physician burnout," Dr. Sharma said in a press release.

Although he will continue to provide prenatal care at MDH, his current obstetrical patients will deliver at Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital

(OTMH), where he's part of the obstetrical on-call roster for the Maternal Child Program.

"We value Dr. Sharma's contribution over the past two years and recognize the demands of providing sole obstetrical coverage are not sustainable indefinitely," said Dr. Marion King, associate chief of staff at MDH.

"We will do everything possible to support him in providing quality obstetrical service to the community."

The arrival of a new obstetrician is scheduled for the summer of 2002 and on-site services are expected to be reinstated.

Taking effect October 1, Dr. Sharma's office will remain open at the MDH site and he will still provide gynecological procedures, however some emergency services may be referred to the OTMH site after hours. Regular gynecological surgery

will continue at the MDH site.

"The hospital remains committed to ensuring continued access to quality obstetrical care," said John Oliver, president and CEO of Halton Health Care Services. "While we regret the disruption to the present obstetrical service at this time, we are looking forward to a return to full-service in the summer of 2002."

Maternity ward nurses at MDH will be re-assigned to different units at both MDH and OTMH, said Cindy McDonnell, chief operating officer at MDH.

"I want to make clear Dr. Sharma is still Milton's obstetrician, he'll just be delivering (babies) in Oakville," she said.

The maternity ward previously shut down temporarily in 1997 after obstetrician Dr. Sushil Suppal left the hospital.

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