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## Event organizers told to go regional or funding could be cut next year

By **ROBB SWYBROUS**

*Special to The Champion*

If the organizers of the Carousel of Nations want to continue applying for funding from the Halton Regional Police Service, they'll have to make sure the event becomes a regional one next year, says the service's board of directors.

The fourth annual event to promote diversity is set to go Saturday in Oakville at St. Ignatius of Loyola Catholic Secondary School.

Event organizers secured \$2,500 from the board at its September meeting, but the board cautioned that funding from the regional police might not continue next year unless the event encompasses a more regional presence.

To date, it has been staged only in Oakville.

"It's got to go regional, especially if it's taking from regional funds," board member Sandy Martin said at the meeting. "I'll support it with the understanding that next year, it's broader."

Board member and Burlington resident Jeanne Hay agrees with Ms Martin.

"(Right now) it's an Oakville event. That makes it difficult for people from Burlington and the north to get to it," she said.

Carousel of Nations provides multi-cultural groups in Halton a chance to show off their diversity through presentations, cooking exhibits and entertainment during a three-day event. To date, it has been staged at various facilities in Oakville.

This year, Carousel of Nations is being scaled down to one-day at one facility.

Carousel co-organizer and Oakville Councillor Kevin Flynn addressed the meeting saying the group intends for this to be the last year the event will be localized. He said since Carousel of Nations is heavily supported by the Oakville United Way, it has to be staged in that town. But he assured the board there are plans to broaden it.

"We are looking at this as a bit of a transitional year," he said.

"If we move to an independent program we can go to any corporation in the region (to ask for funding). It's been a good relationship with the United Way but it's time for it to stand on its own two feet."

Prior to the funding approval, board member and Oakville councillor Keith Bird questioned some of the costs associated with the event, namely an \$18,000 salary for a project manager.

Chief Ean Algar, who helps co-ordinate the event, said most of that cost is picked up by the United Way. When, and if, the relationship between the United Way and the event is broken, added Chief Algar, project manager's costs will have to be paid through fundraising and any revenue generated by subsequent Carousel events.

The estimated total cost of the Carousel of Nations is about \$36,700.

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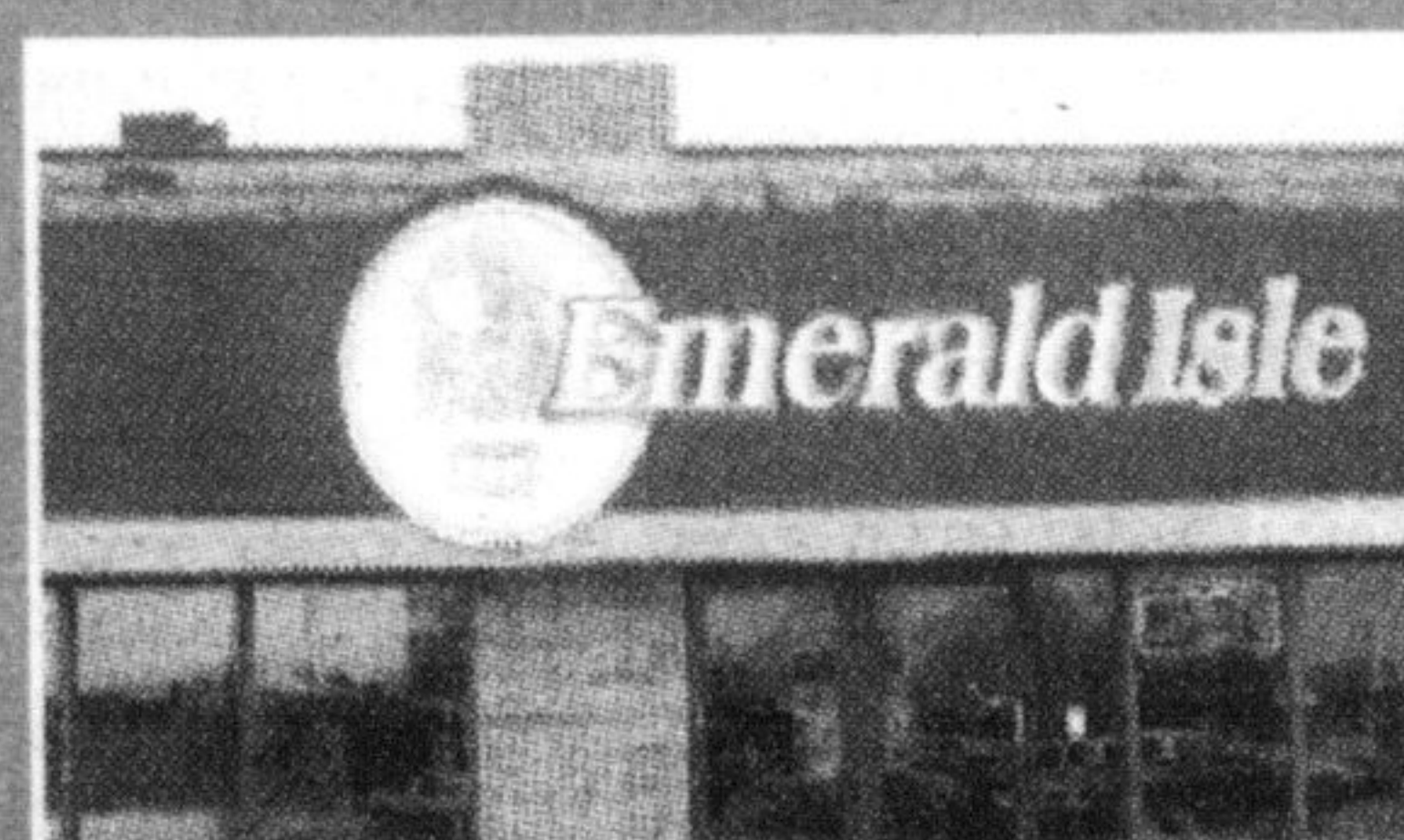


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