



# Champion COMMUNITY Page

## Martindale Gardens assisted living facility — a miracle in the form of a building

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**  
*The Champion*

It was a building that — according to common sense — would never become a reality. The mountains were just too high, and the valleys too low.

To put it bluntly, the money wasn't there.

But then Karl Reichert, chair of Milton Millennium Community Residences (MMCR), never was one to trust common sense.

Today, as Mr. Reichert gazes at the nearly completed Martindale Gardens assisted living facility on Martin Street, he looks upon what he sees as God's divine intervention and proof of the power of prayer — a miracle in the form of a building.

He also sees the coming end of a journey he's been on for the past seven years, ever since MMCR decided Milton needed an assisted living facility and embarked upon meeting that need.

Mr. Reichert said the facility should be open by September.

"We're pleased at how well it's coming together," he said. "Monday (yesterday) they'll start building the roof — finally!"

About 64 reservations — mostly seniors — have already been made for the 76-suite facility, although Mr. Reichert said some of those seniors might not opt to move in immediately. So, he said, there's still about 25 spaces in the non-profit retirement/assisted living facility.

The building will serve as a midpoint between independent living and long-term care facilities such as Allendale, Mr. Reichert said. It will house seniors — and even some non-seniors — who need some help with tasks like meal planning and preparation, laundry and taking medication. It will also provide social interaction. The suites in the four-floor facility will range from 327-square-foot studios to 731 square-foot two-bedroom suites. The cost to live at Martindale starts at \$2,100 per month, but Mr. Reichert said financial assistance is available to those who can't afford the rent.

MMCR is an all-volunteer, non-profit charity that started in 1996 with the sole purpose of building Martindale, which won't be operated for profit.

Mr. Reichert, who has a background in engineering, said it was formed by a few people who realized that Milton had no accommodation for people requiring assisted living care.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Martindale Gardens, currently under construction on Martin Street, is expected to open this September.

"Until it opens, people who need (assisted living care) leave town and have to leave their families and friends," he said.

The journey hasn't been an easy one, he said. From the beginning, things haven't gone exactly as anybody planned — even the weather, with winter's below-normal temperatures and spring's large rainfall, delayed construction.

But God intervened along the way, Mr. Reichert said.

The very purchase of the Martin Street site is a bit of a miracle, he said. After it was sold to MMCR, the vendor expressed surprise at ever entering into the agreement, saying he never did development with non-profit groups.

"That was one of the interventions," Mr. Reichert said.

Then there were the vandals who seemed to gain pleasure from creating havoc. What to do about the obstacles? Lots of prayer.

"We open every construction meeting with

prayer. And every time there's a problem, we seem to get them solved. Issues look different after prayer."

At one point, a number of problems combined with an unsuccessful fundraising drive caused the entire project to become temporarily "stuck," Mr. Reichert said. Then a new construction firm entered into the picture offering its help, and a new business plan was created.

Next, after turning down the MMCR, the bank decided to give the group a six-month extension deal. But that wasn't enough.

"The six months ran out, and we were trying to find the money," Mr. Reichert said.

Somehow, the six-month extension became an 18-month extension, and last year, the facility's entire mortgage was paid off.

"We did it," Mr. Reichert exclaimed, adding, "Talk about spiritual intervention. This has become a bit of a journey — there's been all the stumbling blocks, but none of them have stopped

us. It hasn't all come together as humanly envisioned, but it has in God's time and way."

Miltonians have been generous, and proof of that generosity is the \$500,000 MMCR has collected in donations or promises to donate to assist in the project and help out residents who can't quite afford the rent. Halton Region gave the MMCR \$168,000 to be used specifically for that purpose.

Miltonians who are interested in moving into Martindale Gardens, or who know someone who would benefit by living there should call Donna Sakuta at (905) 693-8592. To reserve a suite, a future resident can make a refundable deposit of \$500.

"We have in Milton people who have lived here all their lives — they need to come forward and tell us they want to live here," Mr. Reichert said.

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Keeping North Halton turned



COGECO 14

Programming Schedule — Tuesday, July 22nd - Monday, July 28th, 2003

[www.cogeco.ca](http://www.cogeco.ca)

NORTH HALTON STUDIO  
Laurier Plaza  
500 Laurier Avenue  
Milton, ON L9T 4R3  
905-878-9306

Tuesday, July 22		Wednesday, July 23		Thursday, July 24		Saturday July 26		Monday, July 28	
5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Early Week Edition	5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Early Week Edition	5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Early Week Edition	11am-4pm	Fergus Truck Show	5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Late Week Edition
8:00pm	Halton Hills Council (July 14)	8:00pm	Milton Community Fund (July 7)	8:00pm	Halton Region Council (July 9)			8:00pm	Main Street - Rockwood

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