



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Mayor Gord Krantz (left), Regional Chair Joyce Savoline and Halton EMS director Jim King celebrate the official opening of the new EMS station on Childs Drive.

Halton's eighth EMS station officially opens

By STEPHANIE THIESSEN

The Champion

With Mayor Gord Krantz leading a boisterous chorus of "Milton EMS is officially open," and then snipping a ribbon, Halton's newest emergency medical services station was introduced to the community Thursday afternoon.

Celebrating the station, located at 492 Childs Dr., with Mayor Krantz was Regional Chair Joyce Savoline as well as local and regional councillors, EMS personnel and members of the public.

In his address, Mayor Krantz emphasized the importance of an effective EMS.

"It's like insurance for your car," he said. "You hope you never have need for it, but it's nice if it's there."

This is Halton's eighth EMS station. A ninth will soon open in Oakville.

Ms Savoline said it was important for Halton EMS to continue improving its response times, and that was one of the reasons the new station was needed.

"There's no mystery in how to do that. It's with more personnel and stations," she said.

Two vehicles will operate out of this station — one providing 24-hour coverage, seven days a week, and the other being operational 12 hours a day, seven days a week.

The location is more convenient than its previous one on Nipissing Road — it has better access to Regional Road 25, and there's more room so ambulances can exit the facility quicker and easier.

Two factors make a more efficient Halton EMS necessary — an ever increasing Milton population and a population that's aging, said Jim King, director of Halton's EMS. In the year 2000, less than 3,000 calls were received. Last year that figure jumped to almost 7,000.

A new feature of the station is an exterior public telephone that immediately directs the caller to 911 in the case the ambulances are already out responding to calls.

One of the reasons for the chosen location was its close proximity to Allendale, from which EMS receives frequent calls, Mr. King said.

Special guest Don Miller, travelling from Wasaga Beach to attend the ceremony, took time to reminisce about the changes

that have come about in the past several decades. Mr. Miller was an ambulance supervisor in 1969 when it was stationed at Milton District Hospital.

Back then, there wasn't the luxury of ambulances packed full of equipment. In fact, EMS personnel had little more than first aid training, he said.

"We just scooped them up, put them in and drove like (mad)," he said, laughing.

Halton Region assumed responsibility for the delivery of EMS in Halton in 2000.

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Motorists injured in crash

Two Miltonians were sent to hospital after their cars collided at Commercial Street and Parkway Drive Thursday afternoon.

At about 4 p.m. a 46-year-old woman was turning off Commercial Street to enter a med-

ical building — the former Optimist Club — when she was hit by a car in the oncoming lane being driven by an 80-year-old man.

"She was hit on the passenger side and it was pushed in to the driver's side — that's how hard she

was hit," said firefighter Steve Ellis, who was at the scene.

He added that the roads were slippery at the time.

The two drivers sustained non-life threatening injuries.

No charges were laid.

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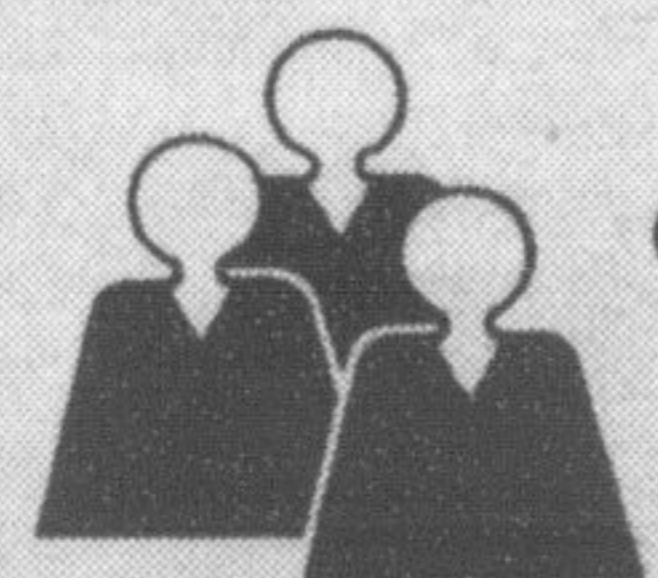


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