

Fundraiser to help support children struck by tragedy

By Stephanie Thiessen
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Two bizarre and tragic incidents — a disappearance and a death — coming just months apart have left two local babies without their parents and in the care of family members.

And though nothing can be done to change the circumstances, a local woman wants to do her part to help the children and their new caregivers.

On March 31 at 7 p.m., a fundraising event will be held at the Milton branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, 21 Charles St., to raise money for 10-month-old Dakota and 22-month-old Jayson. They're the children of Jason Way, who passed away February 22 at Hamilton General Hospital after complications surrounding reconstructive arm surgery.

The children's mother, Cory Lee Way, 26, went missing December 29, causing concern over her well-being and sparking an investigation by Halton and Toronto police.

Jason Way's father, Randy, said his son already had legal custody of the children when he died.

Fundraiser organizer Sue Pinsent said, "I just want to do something extra (for the family)."

She said Way's children were his life. "He devoted himself to those kids," she said. "They were all he talked about. It was all about them. He was a great man."

Tickets to the event cost \$10 at the door. Included in the evening will be musical entertainment from four bands, which will begin performing around 8:30, Pinsent said. There'll also be a raffle, door prizes, a 50/50 draw and a poker table.

It'll be a time for family and friends to gather and remember Way, who had many friends in Milton, Pinsent said. It'll also give people who didn't know him a chance to help two babies and enjoy a fun night, she said.

"He was a great man. He touched so many in this town. Everyone has a story about Jay," she said.

Way's sister will be caring for Dakota and Jayson, Pinsent said, and has her hands full since she also has two children of her own. Money raised at the event will be given to the children's aunt, who can put it toward what she

sees fit, Pinsent said.

"From two kids to four kids... that's a lot of diapers and Pablum," she said.

Since the legion facility holds only 170 people, Pinsent is encouraging family and friends to arrive early to make sure they get in.

As for Cory Way, Det. Sgt. Peter Hodgson of Halton Regional Police said she continues to be missing, although her mother, Brenda Clement, told The Champion "everything's fine."

She wouldn't comment further on the whereabouts of her daughter.

Det. Sgt. Hodgson said Way was recently spotted in Toronto, but the investigation is currently at a standstill.

"We're still looking, but we've run out of places to look," he said. "We'll continue to look for her until we're absolutely convinced she's safe."

A trust fund has been set up for the two Way children at Prosperity One, 44 Main St. E.

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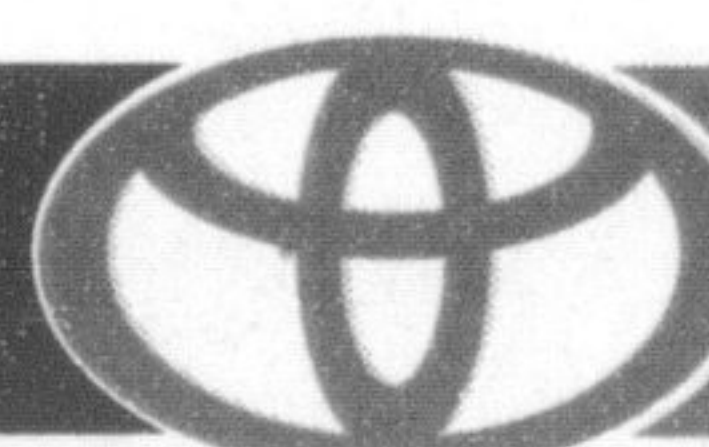
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