

Volunteer report ready

By **Melanie Hennessey**
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

After more than a year of public consultation and research, a community plan that supports Halton's non-profit and voluntary sector is ready.

The initiative, which received support from the Region's health and social services committee last Tuesday, was crafted to help move the sector from potential crisis mode to long-term sustainability.

Created by the Chairman's Roundtable on the Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector, the plan contains 15 recommendations that respond to current trends and issues, ranging from raising awareness about the importance and value of volunteerism to reducing the competitive environment around fundraising.

Regional Chairman Joyce Savoline applauded the document, calling it a "made-in-Halton solution."

"It is truly one-of-a-kind," she remarked. "I think it (the plan) was a real passion for all of us. It was really a hands-on group."

Burlington Councillor Joan Lougheed spoke about the public forum recently held to present the roundtable's findings and recommendations to the community — an event that was attended by over 300 people. "I was overwhelmed by the number of people there. I think that speaks to the need and importance of the report."

In addition to endorsing the plan, the committee also supported having Savoline request meetings with applicable federal and provincial ministers to review the plan and seek support for the actions within it.

The matter will go before regional council tomorrow. If everything's approved, another community forum will be held November 1 to launch the plan.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Nothing surprising: chair

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iors, rental housing, medium and high-density residential development and one-person households.

- Milton has the highest proportion of residents participating in the labour force and highest percentage of housing needing major repairs.

- Halton Hills has the youngest population, oldest housing stock and lowest level of unemployment.

- Both Milton and Halton Hills are ethnically the least diverse.

In an interview with The Champion, Regional Chairman Joyce Savoline said she didn't think anything surprising came out of the atlas.

"But every document we produce is a base for learning," she said. "I think that we've been a community that always looks at every aspect of where we're at. It's another way Halton is a leader."

The information is based largely on data gathered during the 2001 Census. Savoline emphasized the fact the atlas will change in the years to come as the community grows.

"It won't just be a stagnant document — it will be active," she said. "It's an evolution."

Once the 2006 Census information is released, staff plans to update the social profiles for Halton's communities.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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