

## Downtown is for kids

Kids will be the guests of honour at the Farmers' Market Saturday.

The annual Kids' Day Downtown event will be held during the market on Main Street from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

Organized by the Milton Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA), the event will include traditional kids' games such as balloon toss as well as face painting and special guest Ronald McDonald. Most of the action will get underway in front of Knox Presbyterian Church, rain or shine.

"If it rains, we'll carry on regardless," said Sandy Martin, executive director of the DBIA.

Kids' Day is free, but the DBIA is asking participants to bring a jar of peanut butter which will be donated to the Salvation Army food bank.

## Swimmers scarce

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of Milton, says he has only once before witnessed such undesirable summer weather. "I can only remember one other year that is as bad as this."

The Town's lone public outdoor swimming pool has been nearly empty since it opened for the summer June 29, says Mr. Page.

Attendance at the Rotary Park pool has been cut in half to about 50 people per day on average compared to last year, he adds.

Campbellville's popular Kelso Conservation Area doesn't appear to be any better off. While attendance by this time of year has usually reached 70,000, only 44,000 people have used the park since the spring, according to Halton Region Conservation Authority spokesman Sandy Bell.

The swimming and picnic area does most of its business on the weekends and many have been plagued by rain. Lower attendance means less funds for the facility, says Mr. Bell.

"When our revenues are down, we don't have the same amount of money to spend," he warns. But the optimistic Mr. Bell isn't panicking. "We've still got some good weeks left this summer," he says.

# 'Deborah's Home' for disabled adults vies for government funds

By ROB KELLY  
The Champion

Paul Lingen is hoping he can get his hands on enough government money to save the government money.

Mr. Lingen is a member of the board of directors for Deborah's Home. The ambitious project spearheaded by a group of community volunteers is focussed on building a small residence in downtown Milton that will house four disabled adults. One of them would be Deborah Scott — hence the name.

Ms Scott, a woman in her early 20s, suffers from cerebral palsy and currently lives in the chronic care wing of Milton District Hospital. If community fundraising efforts are successful, and if the requisite provincial funding comes through later this year, Ms Scott could be free of the hospital ward in favour of the relative independence of her own home.

Setting aside the deep emotional commitment many undoubtedly have to seeing the project through to fruition, it makes sense from a taxpayers' point of view, according to the outline provided by Mr. Lingen. And in a world of vigorous competition for government funding, any proposal must rely heavily on an economic rationale.

It costs roughly \$300 a day to provide for Ms Scott at Milton District Hospital, Mr. Lingen pointed out. That's approximately \$110,000 a year, or \$440,000 for four severely disabled adults. But Deborah's Home, if all goes according to plan, will run on a largely government-funded budget of \$250,000 or so a year, Mr. Lingen noted.

There will be no trouble finding people anxious to live in the facility, according to Stephen Obermeyer, a consultant walking the group through the provincial bureaucracy. The board has already identified 15 disabled people in north Halton

who would be willing to move in.

While Mr Lingen and his colleagues anxiously await word on government funding approvals, "the irony of it is that this is a very cost efficient way to provide accommodation to severely disabled adults," he noted Monday night prior to a board meeting.

So far the group has raised \$13,000 through community fundraising events — a drop in the bucket for a project that is expected to soak up \$350,000 in capital costs, to say nothing of the annual operating budget. But Mr. Lingen views it as an important contribution, both financially and because it raises community awareness for the proposed home. On an emotional level, he says he has been "overwhelmed with the response."

Mr. Lingen hopes to tap into that grassroots support for volunteers if, or when, building begins. He'd like to see people with construction expertise, for example, donate some time or materials. It could make a substantial difference in that the sought-after government funding isn't expected to provide for more than the bare building necessities.

Should the province come through with the money, the group is expected to buy land, build and have the home ready for occupancy by December, 1993.

There are several variables. The home is supposed to be close to the downtown core so residents on motorized wheelchairs can get to services. But while the group is eyeing some properties, no site has been chosen. And the location could make a big difference in the overall cost.

The board would prefer a vacant lot to one with a home on it, since the house might not be suitable and renovation of an existing home can be as much as 40 per cent more expensive than building from scratch, ac-

ording to Mr. Obermeyer.

If the lot is such that a two-storey home must be built instead of the preferred 1,800 square-foot bungalow, \$30,000 will be added to the construction bill for an elevator, Mr. Obermeyer noted.

Another complication is that the volunteers are dealing with two provincial ministries. The Ministry of Housing will, they hope, provide the capital construction grant, but it's contingent on a commitment from the Ministry of Community and Social Services to fund the annual operating costs for the home.

Although the Ministry of Community and Social Services supports long-term community care as opposed to hospitalization for people like Deborah Scott, the provincial agency is not giving any indication as to how the project is perceived yet.

Representatives from the Ministry of Community and Social Services have made it clear that the facility must in no way involve duplication of a current area service, Mr. Lingen said. As far as the group has been able to determine, it does not. "Deborah Scott is residing in a hospital," Mr. Obermeyer said pointedly. "If there was an existing service she would not be in a hospital."

Jason Copas, a program coordinator from the Ministry of Housing who attended the meeting, said only one in 20 projects put before his ministry are funded, and the situation is if anything getting more competitive.

Mr. Obermeyer said the Milton project has two advantages in the struggle to obtain provincial dollars. First, it's small. Second, many Ministry of Housing projects are solely taken on by that arm of government. But since the Milton plan is a joint venture with the Ministry of Community and Social Services, if the latter approves operating funds, the former will spring for capital costs, he believes.



# Milton Farmers' Market

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