

# A centre simply for women to gather and grow



Joan Woodall

By KAREN SMITH  
The Champion

The Women's Information and Support Centre of Halton isn't a feminist lobby group made up of "man-haters," contrary to what some may believe.

In fact, WISCOH isn't a feminist group at all, says a centre volunteer. It's also not a shelter for battered women.

What it is is a place for women to meet and share concerns specific to the female gender, and provide support.

"It's a place for women to come and be heard," notes Joan Woodall, a long-time Milton resident and WISCOH volunteer.

The Halton facility first opened in the basement of an Oakville church.

*It's not a feminist group, it's not a shelter, it's just a place for women to meet*

But then workers decided the centre needed to be more visible as well as accessible.

Seven months ago, suite 230 of Hopedale Mall, at Third Line and Rebecca Street in Oakville, became WISCOH's new home.

"Already we're finding that we don't have enough room," says Ms Woodall. As popularity of the centre grew, workers came to the decision that some Halton women, specifically those in the north, were being left out.

"We realized we really weren't serving all of Halton," she says. Lack of public transportation be-

tween the region's municipalities was a barrier.

WISCOH rented a meeting room at Milton Community and Information Services (MCIS) in the Optimist Centre to start a support group for women to meet other women going through separation or divorce.

The program, which was to begin October 5 in Milton, was also being offered at the Oakville centre and at a meeting place in Burlington, where it has been successful.

In Milton, however, lack of advance publicity resulted in a poor turnout, says Ms Woodall, and the program was cancelled.

The space rented at MCIS is now being used by WISCOH for a drop-in program every Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. During the next few weeks, the topic is "What is a Women's Centre."

On November 30, the centre presents a workshop on the topic, "Re-think the Holidays — Must we Spend Big Bucks to Enjoy Christmas?" The event is free.

Once north Halton women are aware of the centre and understand its purpose, response to the drop-in program will determine if they want such a facility here, Ms Woodall states openly.

Services offered by the centre are best summed up by looking at its goals. According to its mandate, WISCOH will:

- Be women helping other women in a caring, non-judgemental, supportive environment;
- Promote wellness through self-help, support groups and peer counselling;
- Provide information and resources to empower women to make informed decisions about their lives;
- Address issues of concern to women through public education and community awareness.

While a membership isn't needed to use the Oakville facility, those who buy one can borrow books, and receive a monthly newsletter highlighting upcoming events.

Memberships cost \$10, which goes toward covering centre operational expenses, says Kathy Lepatourel, program co-ordinator and one of two paid staff for WISCOH.

"They're kind of buying part of what the centre is all about."

She says it's currently an exciting time at the centre, which is in the process of hiring three part-time employees — an administrative co-ordinator and bookkeeper, and an outreach worker for north Halton.

For more information, contact the centre at 847-5520 or call 876-4756.

## Greeting cards for sale

Once again, the Halton branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association is selling holiday greeting cards as a fundraiser.

This year's design, a reproduction of 'The Red Snowsuit' done in egg tempera, is by Burlington artist Julie Donec and depicts a little girl playing in the snow.

Cards come in packages of 10 for \$7 and include taxes and envelopes printed to allow 36 cents postage. As well as for personal use, the CMHA suggests purchasing them for businesses or community agencies.

For more information, call Vicki Roy at 845-5044.

**YOUR LOCAL CHEVROLET • GEO • OLDSMOBILE DEALERS**

## WHEN EVERYTHING IS GOING UP IN PRICE, WE'RE LOWERING OURS.

Chevy Lumina Van comes with a restyled front end and dash

- 7 passenger seating • 3.1L V6 engine
- Air conditioning • Driver's side air bag
- 4 wheel anti-lock brakes • 24 hour Roadside Assistance, and more



**1994 CHEVY LUMINA VAN**



**PURCHASE ONLY**

**\$16,999\***

**SMARTLEASE**

**\$269**

**PER MONTH/48 MONTHS\***

**1994 CHEVY ASTRO**

Chevy Astro comes equipped with a 4.3L V6 engine • 8 passenger seating

- 4 wheel anti-lock brakes • Air conditioning • Rally wheels • AM/FM stereo cassette • Power locks • Reclining captain's chairs • Tinted windows
- Driver's side air bag • 24 hour Roadside Assistance, and more.



**PURCHASE ONLY**

**\$17,499\***

**SMARTLEASE**

**\$279**

**PER MONTH/48 MONTHS\***

**Goodwrench Service Plus**

Special discounts, available through Petro Canada retailers for SmartLease customers

THE GM 3-YEAR/60,000 MILE NO DEDUCTIBLE TOTAL WARRANTY WHICHEVER COMES FIRST

**Roadside Assistance** Available 24 hours a day. Professional help is only a phone call away. 365 days a year.

**THE NEW FINANCIAL VEHICLE.** Earn 5% on the purchase of a new GM car or truck. Applications available at your nearest dealer or TD Bank branch.

**YOUR LOCAL CHEVROLET • GEO • OLDSMOBILE DEALERS**

*Home of everyday value pricing!*

\*Based on 48 month leases for Lumina Van and Astro respectively, equipped as described. Total down payments of \$3,863.55 and \$4,332.74 are required. Security deposits of \$325 are included in total down payment. Freight (\$745) included in lease price. Some mileage conditions apply. Prices for Lumina Van and Astro equipped as described. Freight (\$745) not included in selling price. Licence, insurance and taxes not included. Offers apply to 1994 new or demonstrator models. Dealer may sell/lease for less. Offers apply to qualified customers only. These limited time offers may not be combined or used with any other offers. Vehicles may not be exactly as shown. Dealer trade or factory order may be required. See Dealer for details. \*Some charges may apply. See Dealer for details.

**The PREMIER MILTON Cinemas**  
121 CHISHOLM RD., MILTON  
W. OF HWY. 25 • S. OF 401-876-3333

**NEW LOW PRICE!**  
all seats \$4.25 MON. to THURS.

- STARTS TODAY**  
**LOOK WHO'S TALKING NOW!**  
FRI. & SAT. 7:00 & 9:00 p.m.  
SUN. TO THURS. 7:30 p.m. only.
- STARTS TODAY**  
**COOL RUNNINGS**  
FRI. & SAT. 7:00 & 9:00 p.m.  
SUN. TO THURS. 7:30 p.m.
- STARTS TODAY**  
FRI. & SAT. SEPARATE ADMISSION  
**7:00 P.M. BEVERLY HILLBILLIES**  
**9:00 P.M. FATAL INSTINCT**  
SUN. TO THURS. 7:30 p.m. - FATAL INSTINCT