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"Serving Essex and Community Since 1896"

Wednesday, January 31, 2007



**SNOW SLIDE** – Five-year-old Madison Hamilton, of McGregor, gets a welcome push from her step-dad, Dan Van Mackelberg, while tobogganing at Bridlewood Park in Essex, Jan. 26.

## Essex Area Food Bank wins social justice award

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

Essex Area Food Bank founder Eileen Clifford was notified last week that the charity will be receiving the Centre for Studies in Social Justice's project of the year award.

The centre operates out of the University of Windsor and each year honours a person or project that best represents an effort to improve the lot of marginalized or oppressed people.

Clifford, who has been providing healthy foods to needy residents for almost 11 years, said news of the food bank winning the award caught her by surprise.

"I am very honoured," said Clifford, who will turn 80 next May. "I knew my name had been submitted but I didn't think I would win because there were so many worthy applicants."

Howard Pawley, acting director for the Centre for Studies in Social Justice, said the award evaluation committee did have a tough choice to make with applications coming in from as far as Ottawa, but in the end decided the Essex Area

Food Bank was the most worthy project.

"The food bank project has done so much insofar as working to help the less fortunate," Pawley said. "We received letters from people in the community telling us about how much it is a part of the social fabric of Essex. We were very impressed."

One of the people who nominated the food bank was Fr. Dave Boutette, the priest at St. Mary's Parish in Maidstone and St. John the Evangelist in Woodslee.

Boutette was introduced to Clifford and the food bank through a church parishioner and was immediately taken in by the hard work and compassion of the project.

When he first visited the food bank in the summer of 2005, Boutette said he was amazed at the number of people lined up out the door waiting to be served a healthy diet carefully selected by Clifford.

"She's kind of a spark plug the way she can motivate people and touch their hearts," Boutette said. SEE COMPASSION, PAGE 3

## Storm of protest gathers over local wind power development

BY ANDY COMBER

Well over 100 people, mainly from the municipalities of Amherstburg and Essex, attended a meeting at the Malden Community Centre Jan. 28, to hear concerns over proposals for wind power developments in this region.

"These are not wind parks or wind farms - they are wind factories," said Bill

Anderson, a rural Amherstburg resident who co-organized the meeting, with his wife Maureen, to highlight the negative aspects of wind power.

"I've been an environmental activist my whole life," said Anderson, who encouraged residents to "weigh their own opinions" and do their own research on wind power development.

SEE WIND, PAGE 5

## Future of small libraries questioned

BY ANDY COMBER

The future of small libraries was identified as a "key issue" in a draft consultation report examining the Essex County Library system released last week.

The "political sensitivity" of the small library issue was noted in the report, along with information from "key informant" interviews, conducted with senior library staff and board members.

"While few of the key informants were strongly in favour of eliminating the small branches, many saw

this as inevitable," states the report by Mississauga consultant, dmA Planning and Management Services.

The report noted that some respondents argued that small libraries "were no longer a necessary feature of the Essex County system" because they were not large enough, open enough hours, or were not equipped with enough computer, reading, working or program areas. Small library facilities were not considered cost-effective, and the cost of upgrades in some cases was seen as prohibitive.

SEE SMALL PAGE 3

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