

# Long term care association petitioning province

By DANIEL SCHWAB

Residents and families represented by the Ontario Long Term Care Association are calling on the province to provide more funding in the upcoming budget, "to stop staff from being run off their feet and begin providing residents with access to the same standards of privacy

and dignity."

Locally, Iler Lodge Long Term Care Centre executive director Cheryl Labute will be teaming up with administrators from Woodslee's Country Village – The Willows and Kingsville's Royal Oak Long Term Care Centre to present Essex MPP Bruce Crozier with a petition to take to the Ontario Legislature when it

resumes sitting March 19.

The campaign is being spearheaded by the OLTC, and the province is being asked "to fund 30 more minutes of care for each resident and address food and other funding pressures in all long term care homes by increasing operating funding by \$390 million in 2007 and \$214 million next year." In addition, they are ask-

ing the government to introduce a capital renewal and retrofit program for older "B" and "C" homes – facilities that exceed the two-bed per ward room standard used in newer homes – with a commitment of \$9.5 million in 2007 to upgrade an initial 2,500 of 35,000 beds. "Our staff now has less than 10 minutes to get a resident up, dressed, to the

bathroom and to the dining room for breakfast," Labute said in a media release. "We need more funding for more staff so that we are not rushing just to provide the essentials and residents don't have to wait to get the daily care and support they need." The petition also asks that three- and four-bed wards be eliminated.

Karen Sullivan, executive director of the OLTC, said the government has said "these were budget, not legislation issues." "Residents, families and others are now looking to the upcoming budget for government to respond to their pleas." According to Sullivan, the increased operating funding would increase average care levels in the province's long term care facilities to three hours per resident a day. Jane Keller, administrator at Country Village – The Willows, said the petition began circulating around the home over the weekend. Judy Wyllie, administrator of Royal Oak, said she expects the petition to circulate to residents and staff members around the Kingsville home over the next two weeks.

## Organizers gear up for Chili Fest

Brian Pepper, one of the organizers of the 2007 Essex Chili Fest, said this year's event is an opportunity to invest in the future of the community – our children. Proceeds from the Chili Fest will be split between the Essex Fire and Rescue Service and the OPP's annual Cop Camp.

The camp is open to 11 and 12-year-olds and teaches team building skills, self-defence methods and crime scene investigation tactics. The OPP have already held several fundraising events for the camp that runs during August.

Last year, the camp was held at Camp Cedarwin on County Road 23 and included activities such as bowling, fishing and a trip to Colasanti's Tropical Gardens.

Pepper is a former OPP officer who still contributes to the force part time.

Last year, the Chili Fest raised \$1,200 for a new Essex arena. About 500 people attended the event.

Pepper said 35 batches of chili have already been entered for this year's event, which will be held at the Essex Legion on March 11 from noon to 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$6 per person or \$20 per family and include hotdogs and hamburgers. Door prizes, including NHL hockey memorabilia, will also be given out during the event.

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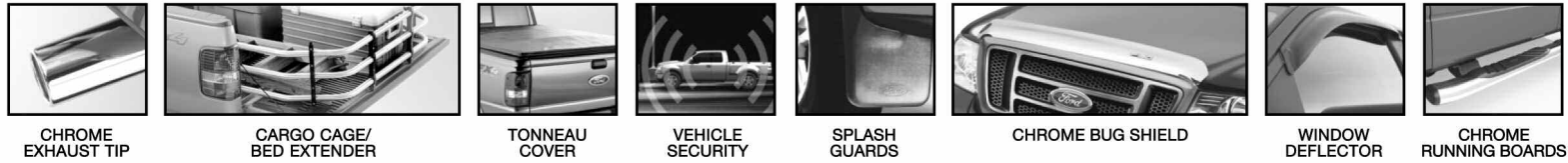
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