

Giving 'catalogue' shows how you can help hospital

Southlake launches drive to raise funds for new equipment

BY CHRIS TRABER
Staff Writer

York Region residents and businesses are being presented with an exceptional investment opportunity, guaranteed to pay major life-long, life-saving health dividends.

The Southlake Regional Health Centre Foundation has launched its equipment fund, a program intended to raise \$10 million to buy new, state-of-the-art medical equipment as part of the Newmarket hospital's \$180-million expansion and redevelopment initiative.

The Gearing Up campaign has published an innovative gift guide listing departmental equipment descriptions, photos and costs.

Akin to a retail catalogue, the guide enables contributors to designate how their donations will be used, be it for a cataract surgery machine worth \$94,050, a maternity ward birthing bed for \$20,900 or a mammography machine valued at \$130,625.

"People don't realize how much medical equipment costs," said Neila Poscente, the foundation's director of marketing and communications. "People want to know their gift is making a differ-

ence in health care in their community. The guide gives people the opportunity to direct their gift for a specific piece of equipment or a department at Southlake."

The Ministry of Health expects hospitals to raise money to replace and upgrade medical equipment, she said. "We're counting on the communities we serve to help."

The guide will be inserted into the Stouffville Sun-Tribune and The Era Banner today and next week's edition of the Georgina Advocate. The guide, complete with a donation form, is also available at Southlake's main entrance.

Tax receipts are issued for all contributions to the campaign, which is enjoying early success.

Gary Lester, president of Glenway Country Club in Newmarket, has pledged \$85,000 from the club's charity classic golf tournament for cardiac rehabilitation equipment.

An anonymous donor has contributed \$300,000 to buy a mobile cardiovascular ultrasound machine.

Individuals, businesses and service groups are being encouraged to start fundraising programs to support the campaign.

For information or to contribute, look for the special Gearing Up guide in the newspapers or call 1-866-793-1690. Visit www.southlakeregional.org online for additional details.

Rent bank program approved

York Region will join Ontario's rent bank program to gain access to one-time funding of \$639,133 for homeless programs and social assistance.

The funds will be allocated in 2005 and 2006. Seventy-five per cent will go to expand the existing homelessness prevention program operated by the Salvation Army.

It provides one-time assistance to people who are at risk of losing their home and individuals who are homeless or residing in a temporary shelter.

The remaining 25 per cent will be used to complement Ontario Works discretionary benefits for clients with extraordinary expenses over and above their basic needs.

This can include funds for rental arrears to prevent an Ontario Works recipient from eviction.

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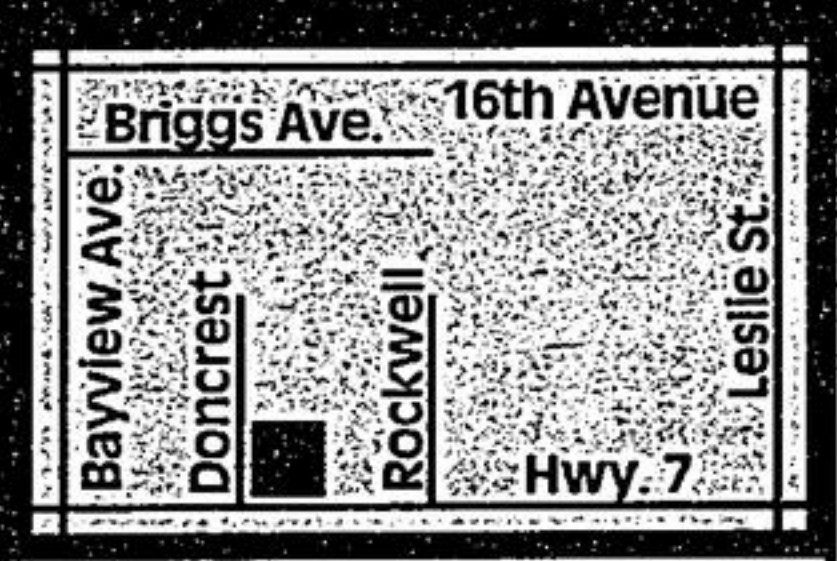
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Grocery store teaches finer points of label reading

Learn how to read the nutritional claims on some of your favourite food products and how to make healthy food choices.

A registered dietitian will conduct a tour of Longo's at 3085 Hwy. 7 at Woodbine Avenue in Markham Monday from 7 to 8 p.m.

The Toronto Branch of the Canadian Diabetes Association offers the Healthy Eating is in Store For You tour.

To register, visit the personal touch service counter at Longo's or call 416-408-7147.

Transit ridership up again

For the fourth consecutive year, ridership on York Region Transit has increased by at least 10 per cent. Overall transit ridership has risen to 7.8 million passengers as of July, an increase of 11.6 per cent over July 2003.

The region continues to post increases among the highest in the GTA.

The numbers demonstrate a continued demand for transit, according to regional chairperson Bill Fisch. "It proves that when we offer a viable alternative to cars, people will use that alternative," he said.



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