Catholic board approves balanced budget

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board approved a balanced budget for 2009-10 at a special meeting held June 16 at the Catholic Education Centre. The budget reflects the commitment of the board to balance student needs with prudent fiscal management.

The budget aligns with the board's System Direction and the Ministry of Education's objectives for student achievement. It also enhances the board's ability to execute the Board Plan to Improve Student Achievement.

Facts and highlights of the 2009-10 budget include:

- total (operating & capital) budget $828,767,929;
- salaries and benefits comprise 89% of the board's total operating expenditures;
- Includes reductions in expenditures for textbooks, computers and staff development as a result of constraint measures in the Ministry funding;
- Reflects a 3.9% increase in grants over 2008-09;
- Includes provision for funding of Provincial Framework Agreements

"While the board would have liked to reinvest more significantly in the system," said board chair, Mario Pascucci, "trustees are well aware that resources are finite. Our challenge is always to balance our limited resources with the wishes of parents/guardians, faculty, staff and trustees in providing the best possible conditions for students to achieve success in the classroom, while providing them with the tools they need to achieve success in life."

Added Mario Pascucci, "Trustees are committed to a transparent budget process that allows for stakeholder input and ensures that the board adheres to sound fiscal management of its resources."

The board's budget consultation process is an extensive one which seeks input from parents/guardians and the unions and associations that represent the board's 10,000 employees.

"We heard from a wide range of Catholic stakeholders and were able to address some of the items that were raised during the consultation process," noted John Kostoff, director of education. "Our ability to produce a balanced budget is the direct result of responsible decisions made at the board table. Our bottom line is to maximize student achievement in a fiscally responsible manner. I believe this budget is right on target, in this regard."

Photo/DAN PELTON

ROYAL CHEVROLET-CADILLAC was the site of an autograph session involving National Hockey League legends who took part in the Dale Hawerchuk Classic golf tournament to raise funds for Headwaters Health Care Centre. Signing for the fans were (back to front) Pete Mahovlich, Dale Hawerchuk, Brad Park and Gerry Cheevers.

Dufferin wins more broadband funding

By Wes Keller
Freelance Reporter

Dufferin County has been awarded nearly $600,000 under the provincial government's "rural connections broadband program" to bring it closer to providing high speed internet service to as many residents as possible.

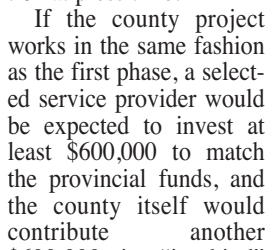
The funding is under the second round, and falls somewhat short of the county's hoped-for $1.-million. But Mono has gone its separate ways and has its own application filed for funding under the same program. Information was not available on Mono's application at press time.

If the county project works in the same fashion as the first phase, a selected service provider would be expected to invest at least $600,000 to match the provincial funds, and the county itself would contribute another $600,000 in "in kind" funding such as providing access.

Few details of how this second phase will progress were available immediately. CAO Linda Dean said the first step in the process would be to issue a request for proposals (RFP) for a consultant.

Ms. Dean could not say how quickly the project might get under way. But it would be intended to provide service to some of the areas missed for whatever technical reasons in the first round.

The family of
SARA DEVINS



Invites you to celebrate her
90th Birthday
Sunday July 5, 2009
Open House
2:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Caledon Seniors Centre
(Rotary Place)
7 Rotarian Way, Bolton.
"*Your presence is your gift*"