

THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

WEATHER

High: +1

Low: -7

Breezy with a mix of sun and cloud. Tonight, cloudy and cold.

Full details: **Go 2**



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2007 ♦ THESPEC.COM ♦ THE VOICE OF OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1846

SPECIAL REPORT: PART 1 OF 3

Who has your private health data?

Ontarians are unknowingly sending personal data to a company that helps family doctors boost their income. No one tells patients a corporation is involved. That raises questions about transparency.

BY DANA BROWN and JOAN WALTERS

Hundreds of thousands of Ontario patients are unknowingly sending personal information to a private-sector company by signing up for extended coverage fee plans offered by their family doctors.

Nearly two million letters asking patients to participate in annual pay-

ment plans for uninsured services have been sent out over the signatures of 1,000 doctors, an investigation by Metroland West Media Group has found.

The doctors, whose rosters include patients in Hamilton, Halton, Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge, Niagara and other areas, have contracted for the letters with a Toronto company set up to increase physician revenue.

IS THERE A DOC+OR IN THE HOUSE?

Healthscreen Solutions Inc., a publicly traded medical management firm, says it can garner an average of \$18,000 in extra revenue per doctor a year.

The money comes from charging patients for services such as sick notes, phone advice, insurance forms and faxing and photocopying not covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan.

The letter explains that by paying one "block fee" or lump-sum payment annually, patients can avoid being billed individually for services delivered by the doctor outside of medicare.

It encourages patients to pay the fee even if they don't think they will need the services. But patients are not told that the letters asking for up to \$140 a year per family or up to \$95 for singles are part of the operation of a Healthscreen service called CallerMD.

The company says it is following all federal and provincial privacy laws. **Continued on A6**

Anglican realignment inevitable

BY SHARON BOASE

BURLINGTON ♦ A breakaway Anglican group opposed to gay rights says schism in the Anglican Church of Canada is inevitable, but it's the mainstream national church that must shoulder the blame.

About 275 clergy and lay Canadian Anglicans, from as far away as Newfoundland and Vancouver, began meeting in Burlington yesterday to pray and plan strategy around how they will survive their church's festering controversy over gay ordination and the blessing of same-sex marriages.

Key among their arsenal is the heartfelt conviction that the national church is responsible for any parting of ways and that church property and assets will be divided accordingly.

"We don't call it separation but realignment," said Cheryl Chang, a member of the board of directors of the Anglican Network in Canada, a branch of the conservative group Anglican Essentials.

"It's actually the Anglican Church of Canada that's leaving Anglicanism," said Chang, a Vancouver-based lawyer and mediator. "We're not leaving but staying — and we intend to defend that position."

News that a second retired Canadian Anglican cleric, Bishop Malcolm Harding of Brandon, Man., has defected to the ranks of a conservative Anglican province in South America brought the crowd to its feet for a standing ovation.

Harding has relinquished his licence to minister in the Anglican Church of Canada.

Continued on A5

Maddie's dream fulfilled

Teen who died of cancer raised money for well in Africa. Mom made it happen



PHOTO COURTESY SUDDENLY SEEMORE PRODUCTIONS/CBC TELEVISION

Sharon Babineau has made good on a promise to her crusading daughter Maddison, who died in May after a three-year battle with cancer. Maddie, as she was affectionately known, had raised money to build a school in Africa but realized the kids couldn't attend because they had to fetch water for their families. Hence the plan to build a well.

▶ RELATED STORY: A3

CFL grilled over flapjack fiasco

BY JOHN GODDARD

TORONTO ♦ A teeny bit of snow shut down the Calgary Pancake Breakfast yesterday, a Grey Cup street spectacle since 1948.

"I think that's pretty wimpy," said Saskatchewan Roughriders fan Evan Heidinger, on a bare stretch of Front Street West, where flapjacks and sausages were supposed to be grilling.

Nearly 60 years ago, Calgary Stampede fans cooked pancakes in front of

Toronto's Union Station from batter they brought with them on the train. One fan rode a horse through the lobby of the Royal York Hotel opposite.

They were wild, those Calgarians. They showed Toronto how to party and Calgary continues to sponsor breakfasts wherever the Grey Cup is held.

Until yesterday.

Along with 70 volunteer cooks, Calgary has sent the Stampede cheerleaders, the queens and princesses of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede,

and a country-and-western band.

Darson Simair, originally from Yorkton, Sask., now living in Thornhill, said he saw Calgary cooks setting up early under ice pellets. "They had actually made a few pancakes," said Simair. "But the CFL shut them down."

Did the Calgarians wimp out or did Toronto league headquarters make them leave? At press time, the answer remained unclear.

Toronto Star

Last call for Pinball? SP 7



Port CEO stepping down

Keith Robson put city on the map during five years at helm of Port Authority. **A16**

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