

BUSINESS

Silver Cross keeps down the cost of health care equipment

By DOREEN HOOVER
Chronicle Staff Writer

If the high cost of health care equipment has placed restrictions on your life then a new area business may be able to help increase your mobility.

Silver Cross, based out of Simcoe, offers recycled health care equipment at 30-50 per cent of the retail price. If the business does not have a desired product in recycled equipment then it will guarantee the lowest price on new equipment. Joannie Rell saw a need for recycled health care equipment while working at in-home respiratory therapy.

"A lot of seniors want to remain in their homes and remain active," she said. "Many people are also concerned about the cost of new equipment."

Silver Cross began in Oakville four years ago and then branched into London, Toronto and Hamilton. The newest location in Simcoe, owned by Rell and her husband, Mark, services Haldimand-Norfolk, Brant and Oxford.

Along with selling recycled and new equipment, Rell offers the service of buying and trading recycled equipment. She has found during her first month of operation that many people have equipment they no longer need or are looking for upgrades. Silver Cross offers them an economical alternative to health care equipment while providing specialized equipment tailored to their individual needs.

"There is a trend into home care," Rell said. "People want to stay in

over the phone, sources the equipment and then personally delivers it. Rell expects Dunnville residents to quickly become familiar with the sight of her Silver Cross van driving through town as she delivers or picks up equipment.

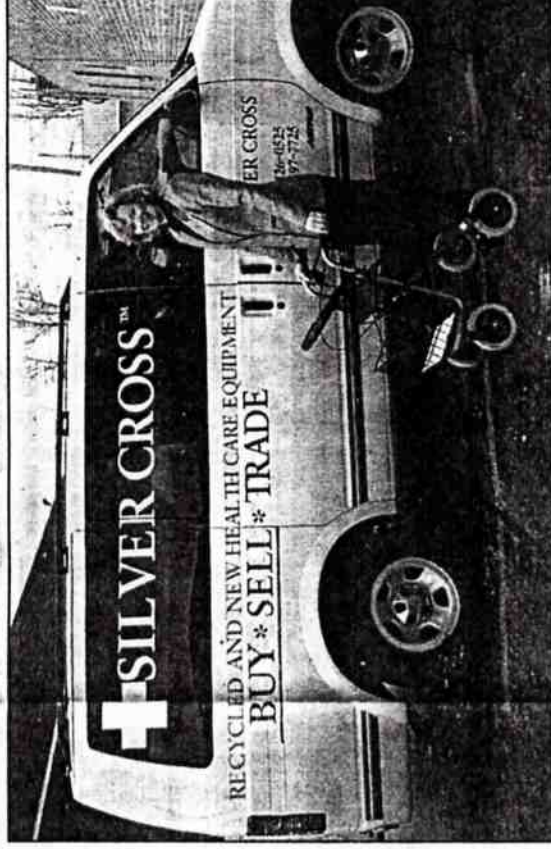
"We offer a whole service, not just the products," Rell said. "We help service the client and keep them mobile."

Products provided through Silver Cross include stair lifts, porch lifts, lift chairs, scooter lifts, manual and power wheelchairs, specialized seating, three and four-wheel scooters, ramps, travel chairs, hospital beds, siderails, overbed tables and bathroom equipment.

"People are very happy to be buying recycled for it saves them money," Rell said. "Many never looked at some equipment before for they felt they couldn't afford it. It's great when you supply something that is perfect for someone."

A constant challenge for Rell is finding the proper equipment to meet clients' needs. All the Silver Cross franchises work together to find needed equipment. She also works closely with home care workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, hospitals and nursing homes. A three-month warranty is offered on recycled equipment and new equipment comes with a manufacturer's warranty.

Rell wants to continue expanding her business and is always looking to buy equipment. She encourages people to call Silver Cross at 1-



JOANNIE RELL stands by her Silver Cross van which she expects to become a familiar sight in Dunnville.