

# OLS continues to grow



**IT'S OPEN!** - On-Line Support (OLS) president Ross Beattie (front) kneels down to cut the ribbon that officially opened the company's second location in Pembroke at its grand opening Thursday. Also taking part in the ribbon-cutting ceremony were (left to right) Derek Perry and Geoff Oakie, OLS employees; Pembroke Mayor Ed Jacyno; Fred

Blackstein, chair of the transition team; OLS personnel manager Kent MacPhee; Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski; Renfrew County Warden Bob Sweet; Lenny the Lobster (AKA Paul Newman of OLS); and CFB Petawawa commander Lt.-Col. Dave Rundle. (Observer photo by Peter Lapinskie)

## Call centre opens newest facility

By **PETER LAPINSKIE**  
Managing Editor

**WANTED:** Two hundred and 30 energetic self-starters who work well with people and enjoy being part of a successful, team-oriented environment.

In the midst of the games, exhibits and lobster-eating that were part and parcel of the grand opening of On-Line Support's second location in Pembroke Thursday evening, company president Ross Beattie gave notice that OLS is ready to grow again.

During his remarks to the crowd gathered at the former Eddy Match site in west-end Pembroke, Mr. Beattie said he had an "open order for an additional 230 people that could start tomorrow." That news was greeted with enthusiastic applause and provided a fitting conclusion to a remarkable day in which the call centre expanded its work force in Pembroke to more than 500, with the full intent of growing to a staff of 750 in the immediate future. As Renfrew County Warden Bob Sweet noted, in a little over a year OLS has

become the largest private employer in the entire county.

With the new site added to its original location in the West End Mall, OLS has taken on two new major corporate telecommunications companies as clients and shows no signs of slowing down.

"You have something magical here and I'm glad nobody discovered it before us," Mr. Beattie said during his remarks.

The grand opening capped off an afternoon that featured games for the kids, tours of the facility, a barbecue and a celebrity lobster-eating competition that was a big hit. Well-known local dignitaries including Pembroke Mayor Ed Jacyno, MPP John Yakabuski, Jamie Bramburger from Algonquin College, Lt.-Col. Dave Rundle from CFB Petawawa, Daily Observer advertising manager Larry Graham and Chamber of Commerce president Dave Fisher put their biceps on and tackled two large lobsters with the intention of seeing who could finish them first.

...Continued on page 3



**RIGHT FROM TRAILER PARK BOYS** - Looking suspiciously like two refugees from the cult TV hit Trailer Park Boys, Pembroke Mayor Ed Jacyno (right) and city councillor Dave Henderson teamed up for the celebrity lobster-eating contest that was part of the grand opening of On-Line Support's new Pembroke location Thursday. While the mayor did the eating, and also wore the best costume in the event, Coun. Henderson served as his 'trainer' and moral support. (Observer photo by Peter Lapinskie)



**DIG IN** - Local dignitaries dug into lobster as part of a celebrity lobster-eating competition during the grand opening of On-Line Support's second Pembroke location Thursday. Left to right are Pembroke Mayor Ed Jacyno, CFB Petawawa commanding officer Lt.-Col. Dave Rundle, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski and Renfrew County Warden Bob Sweet, who is trying

to get into a claw with a hammer. Lending moral support are OLS personnel manager Kent MacPhee (back left), Lenny the Lobster (Paul Newman, back centre) and Pembroke city councillor Dave Henderson (back right).

(Observer photo by Peter Lapinskie)

## On-Line Support continues to grow in Pembroke

...Continued from page 1

After five heats and a final, the winner was Derek Perry, a staff member at OLS. It was not immediately clear if he was given the rest of the night off after devouring four large lobsters in about eight minutes of frantic feasting.

A constant stream of visitors from the community took advantage of the pleasant day to attend the event and enjoy the festivities. Guided tours of the facility were held on an ongoing basis, and one of the areas that made the biggest impact was the child-care centre. Touted as the county's first workplace child-care centre, it received numerous inquiries and registrations during the festivities. While children of OLS employees will get first dibs, the child-care centre will eventually be able to accommodate children from families not connected to the call centre.

"People are what make the difference at OLS, and the more we can do to make our facility user-friendly to our people, the better for everyone," Mr. Beattie said.

Master of ceremonies Fred Blackstein, the chair of the volunteer transition team that helped bring OLS to Pembroke, kept the opening running smoothly throughout. He began by saying the company has "fulfilled all our hopes and expectations of being solid corporate citizens" and made note that in its first year, OLS was named the Chamber of Commerce's employer of the year. He also singled out Dan Bedard and Pat Sandrelli, owners of

the building, for their co-operation in the process that enabled OLS to open a second call centre in Pembroke.

In his remarks, Mayor Jacyno said OLS has "shown great faith in Pembroke and has put a lot of people to work from every community in the county."

MPP John Yakabuski said one can sense the "community spirit" in the people at OLS.

"From the president to the newest employee, they put the community front and centre and that is why OLS is valued for its significant contribution to the city and county."

During his remarks, OLS president Ross Beattie said Pembroke reminds him of his Maritime roots.

"The values of a small community are evident, and Pembroke reminds me of home, a small village where we had more cattle than people," he joked.

"You can't beat the work ethic, pride and community spirit in small communities."

Mr. Beattie also praised the efforts of Kent MacPhee, personnel manager with OLS, for his diligent work with the transition team and other community leaders in "smoothing the way" for the company to establish itself in the Ottawa Valley.

"We were looking at five different locations in Canada in which to expand, but when Kent and I first saw Pembroke and met the people, we knew we had to come here and we haven't regretted it for a minute," Mr. Beattie added.

After all the speeches were made,



**CONGRATULATIONS** - Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski (left) was a busy man during the grand opening of On-Line Support's second Pembroke location on Thursday. Here, he presents a certificate of congratulations to OLS president Ross Beattie

(right) and personnel manager Kent MacPhee (centre) during the opening ceremonies. Yakabuski also sang the national anthem to get the festivities started, and later took part in the celebrity lobster-eating contest.

(Observer photo by Peter Lapinskie)

An official ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to launch 'Pembroke 2,' as the new site is called. The 30,000-

square-foot call centre has the capacity to expand to 100,000 square feet and can do so rather

quickly - depending on how fast Mr. Beattie's call for 230 new employees is answered.