

Teens tutoring young students with learning difficulties

Service groups back The Club
By Claudia D'Souza
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

St. James Catholic School has joined 'The Club,' an after school tutoring program that started in November at the Morden Road elementary school.

The Oakville Big Sister Association in partnership with the Rotary Club of Oakville North and Big Brothers of Halton, offers the Club at no cost, thanks to a \$23,000 new initiative grant by the United Way.

The Rotary Club of Oakville North made an additional donation of \$7,500 to ensure the program continues.

"Big Sisters was looking to do a pilot project and our school was chosen," explains St. James principal John Susi. "It's an excellent opportunity for some of our students to get the one-on-one attention they need."

Held after school on Monday's and Wednesday's, the program is offered until the end

Rogers Video recalling popcorn

Rogers Video has voluntarily recalled specific batches of its 100 gram and 300 gram packages of 'Rogers Video Lite Butter Microwave Popping Corn', after an Ottawa, Ontario, customer claimed to have found small fragments of glass in the 100 gram bags.

The product bar code numbers are 305976 and 305978, in batches OCT2101N3, OCT2101N4 and OCT2101N8.

These batches are known to have been distributed in Nova Scotia and Ontario, and may have been distributed in Western Canada.

After being advised by Rogers Video, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is investigating the complaint and working with Rogers to monitor the effectiveness of the recall.

While Rogers Video believes this is an isolated incident, it is asking customers to return any 100 gram or 300 gram packages from these batches to their Rogers Video store for a full refund.

Distress Centre lines open

The Oakville Distress lines will be available every day throughout the holiday season, including Christmas Day.

Many people feel very lonely or sad at this time of year, while others feel overwhelmed and stressed by the extra demands on time and energy.

Whatever the problem, the telephone volunteer counsellors are available to lend a friendly ear, whether it be simply to chat for a while or to offer some emotional support and encouragement.

All calls to the distress line are free, confidential and anonymous. Call any day between noon and midnight at 849-4541.

of the school year.

Volunteers recruited and screened by Big Sisters, assist 50 children from Grade 3 to 8 with their homework and educational games for each hour and 20 minute session.

"Big Sisters provided specific criteria and we chose the children," says Susi. "They may need extra help because English is their second language or they're struggling academically or are at risk due to low income. Their parents may be willing to help, but there are barriers such as language, academic background or because of their work schedules."

As the program co-ordinator, Amy Obendorfer is responsible for recruiting, training and interviewing volunteer tutors and matching them to youth.

"We'd like to expand The Club into a public school this year, and eventually other schools in the community," she explains. "The goal is to raise the students' self-esteem and improve their study and organizational skills, and with our enthusiastic volunteers, we will make a difference."

Andrew Caird, President of

the Rotary Club of Oakville North views The Club as the beginning of a great partnership.

"Our focus is projects pertaining to youth," he says, "We raise money through fundraisers such as the annual T.V. Auction and then ensure the money is well spent within the community. The Club is right up our alley."

Rotary member Gary Busted has been a part of the organizing committee from the start and we're really excited about it."

"It is such an honour to be able to offer The Club to our youth in Oakville," adds Big Sisters executive director Marilyn Markow. "We see this as an important program that not only benefits our youth academically, but provides a volunteer opportunity for high school students 16 years of age or older to complete their community service commitment. It's an excellent opportunity for youth to help youth."

The advent of The Club is supported by research that shows the most resilient youth are those whose families, schools and communities provide caring concern, have high expectations of them and create opportunities for involvement and participation.

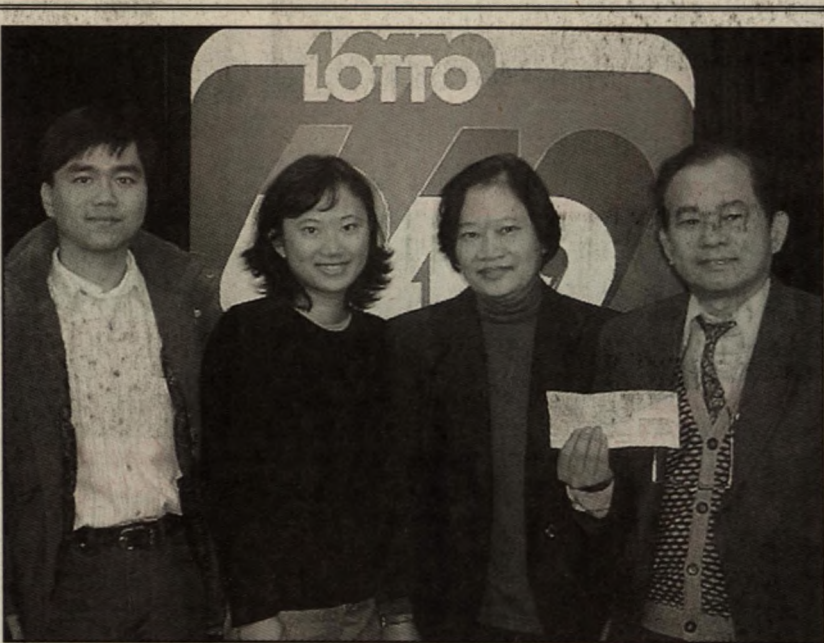
The need for peer tutoring programs in Oakville is high. A January survey of 40 schools in the community showed 35 don't offer peer tutoring although teachers give students extra help after school.

The Club compliments the Big Sisters Resource Centre that opened at its 61 Lakeshore Rd.W. office a year ago. Twenty-three children assisted by 13 trained volunteers participated in the study hall, receiving help with homework using computers and the Internet for school projects.

After seeing the success of the Resource Centre, the United Way allocated a grant to get The Club off the ground.

"We invite the public to join The Club by volunteering or by making a donation," says Markow.

For more information about The Club, call Amy Obendorfer at (905) 338-0238 or e-mail bigsis@web.net.



Lottery win worth \$540,000 to local family

Playing the lottery together as a family paid off big for four Oakville residents. Tran Buu Phan, 26, split \$540,507. 50 — the second prize in the Dec. 13th Lotto 6/49 draw — with his uncle, Duc The Vuong, 52, his aunt, Mai Vuong, 52, and cousin Anne Vuong, 25. The four have been buying lottery tickets together for the past three months. Their plans for the lucky windfall include traveling, education and a new car. The winning lottery ticket was purchased at Rabba Foods on Marlborough Court.

Halton MPP's bill would see flags fly at half-mast when officers killed

By Irene Gentle
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

According to Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh, it's just a matter of respect.

So he has introduced a bill requiring all provincial buildings to fly flags at half-mast whenever a police or corrections officer is killed in the line of duty.

Currently, the decision to lower the flag is made by officials at each individual facility.

"I was shocked to find out that flags don't have to be lowered at provincial buildings when police or correctional officers are killed in the line of duty," said Chudleigh, whose riding includes Oakville residents north of Upper Middle Road. "This legislation, if passed, will remedy that situation."

The issue came to his attention following the death of Sgt. Rick McDonald, who was killed during an attempt to slow a fleeing vehicle in northern Ontario.

"The Milton court house didn't lower the flag then," said Chudleigh. "I figured I'd fix that. And since correctional offi-

cers also risk their lives for us, I thought I'd add them in."

He said he considered adding fire fighters to the list, but stopped since they aren't Ontario employees.

The McDonald case inspired

the government to pass legislation making penalties for fleeing the police more severe.

And it spurred Chudleigh to ensure respect is shown for all officers who sacrifice their lives in the protection of public safety.

"I think it shows respect for the people who put their lives on the line," he said.

First reading of the bill went well, though it drew some heckling from NDP representatives, said Chudleigh.

"The NDP yelled at me. I think it was (NDP Corrections critic) Peter Kormos, but I was trying to ignore it," he said. "They talked about us privatizing the jail guards, which we're not doing in Milton. I was disappointed with their reaction."

Kormos attended a rally at Milton's Maplehurst Correctional Complex earlier this year to protest the privatization of Ontario jails.

The guards stated concerns that cost-saving measures in for-profit facilities could endanger the lives of jail guards.

Third reading of the proposed legislation isn't likely to take place before spring.

Halton police officer facing mischief charges

A Halton Regional Police officer is facing charges in connection with a hit-and-run property damage incident.

According to investigators, a police cruiser was involved in a collision in a Burlington plaza parking lot on Dec. 14th.

As a result, Const. Myles McLaughlan has been charged with public mischief, failing to remain at the scene of an accident and uttering a false document.

Constable McLaughlan, a first-year member of Halton Regional Police assigned to Burlington, has been suspended from duty with pay. He will appear in Burlington Court on Jan. 3rd.

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