

MILTON, Mavis

Hotel
Nov 4/89 Bel - Brigg - M

Belleville teacher heads group for provincial family studies

By LINDA O'CONNOR
Family Editor

Mavis Milton is going to be a pretty busy woman for the next year.

Milton was appointed president of the Ontario Family Studies Home Economics Educators Association during a conference last weekend.

Milton, a family studies teacher at Belleville Collegiate Institute, is quite ready for the challenge.

"I'm looking forward to seeing an expansion of family studies in schools," she says, "and hope to make people realize how important family studies is as a subject for students."

It will require a lot of evening and weekend work to fulfill her new position as she continues as a full-time teacher at BCI. Besides two major board meetings and four executive meetings each year, her job includes working with other professional groups and associations as well as other organizations which have similar interests.

The association, which has nearly 700 members, represents family studies teachers from across the province. With an ultimate goal of strengthening the family, Milton says the organization's ambition is to provide better family studies programs by facilitating professional development and personal growth of family studies educators.

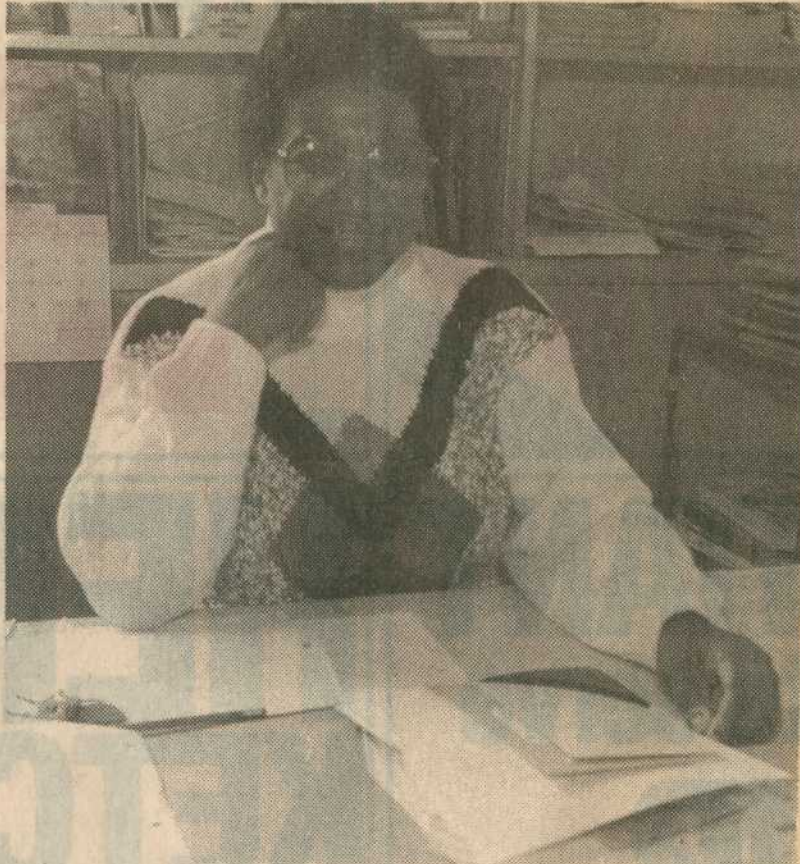
Milton brings with her to the new position a wealth of experience. Along with 15 years as family studies teacher at BCI, she also taught high school in Manitoba and at the University of Windsor for two years. She has her Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics, Bachelor of Education and Masters in Nutrition Education.

The direction of family studies has changed a great deal since she first came to Belleville, she explains. Far from the days of teaching young people about cooking and sewing, everything today relates to the family.

"All courses have a family focus today. We teach them thinking skills and help students to focus on developing their self-esteem."

When teaching high school students about food, for instance, it is no longer based just on how to prepare it. "We look at how the family goes about getting food, how families affect decisions about food and budgeting."

She says today's family studies



Relaxing for a few minutes before class, family studies teacher Mavis Milton talks about her new role as president of the Ontario Family Studies Home Ec-

nomics Educators Association. Professional development will be one of the focuses of her new position.

programs are not what people once thought of as "fringe" courses.

"It helps students to make better, more rational decisions, allowing them to respond better to relationships with family and peers."

Milton was the first family studies teacher in Hastings County to introduce a parenting course into her curriculum, done well before the new guidelines of 1987 stated that it must be included.

"It's a chance to develop awareness among students on what it means to be a parent, helping them to make rational decisions about becoming one."

Milton's recent appointment isn't her first involvement in the profession. She's the co-founder of the Quinte Home Economics Association; was on the board and is now a member of the Ontario

Home Economics Association, and was a representative and affiliate president of the Quinte chapter for the Canadian Home Economics Association.

One of the efforts of Milton in her new position is to reintroduce teacher focus in professional development to help them implement family studies guidelines.

"We'll be responding to educational issues as they come along and providing workshops to help teachers cope and provide better programs."

Milton sees as one of her most important duties to change the public's attitudes about family studies.

"I'd like to see people recognize the significance of the subject in the schools. We're asking parents to keep in touch with teachers and work with them."