Changes in family law discussed by lawyer

Upon marriage breakup, the wife (or husband) is entitled to half of the husband's (or wife's) possessions, even if legally in his (or her) name, if used jointly during the period of cohabitation. Equal sharing may be varied if it would be fair.

That is one of the most drastic changes in the new Family Law reform Act passed March 31, 1978, according to Georgetown lawyer Johan McMillan. She was speaking to a group of women at the Acton Y on Thursday. The seminar was sponsored by the Women for Women group.

Ms. McMillan explained that if a marriage breaks up, both parties are entitled to half of property acquired during the marriage. For example, if the family car was in the husband's name, but the wife used it, she has as much legal right to the vehicle as the husband. Ms. McMillan explained that in the old laws, the wife could not put her violent spouse out of house unless there was physical abuse. Even then, she had to lay criminal charges against him. Most of the time, the woman ended up leaving the house.

Now, Ms. McMillan said, if a wife can prove there is an emergency problem, a judge, within a few days, can probably order the abusive person out of the house. The same thing holds true if it is the wife causing the problem, she noted.

Another good thing which has come out of the act is the fact that the wife no longer has to go through all the horrible details leading to the marriage breakup.

A third good feature of the act, says the lawyer, is the judge's ability to attach a person's wages to provide support for the family. Ms. McMillan explained the husband (or wife) "always has a million excuses" why the support could not be paid. They could have faced a jail sentence, but this however, was an extreme. Judges felt he would not be able to earn the support money in jail.

Under the new laws, the husband's wages can be garnisheed. When pay day comes around, the employer pays part of the wages to his employee, but gives a predetermined amount of money to the courts. In some cases, Ms. McMillan said, the employer will fire the employee. When this happens, the employer may be subjected to contempt of court charges, as he is preventing the employee from paying the courts.

The law recognizes common-law relationships, Ms. McMillan stated, for purposes of support only and not property rights. If a relationship of more than five years breaks up, the women (or man) is entitled to support, but not matrimonial property rights. (Common-law is defined as two people living together.)

Ms. McMillan also cited a little known law regarding children over the age of 18. Children over this age must support their parents if they are unable to do so themselves.

Various other topics from child support to wills were discussed during the afternoon and a question and answer period followed.

About 30 people attended the special session. Baby sitting was provided.

GEORGETOWN LAWYER Johan McMillan spoke to about 30 women last Thursday on Women and the law. She discussed the new Family Law Reform Act passed in March.

Reading Service in Halton

Canada's first Radio Reading Service for the blind and print-handicapped is now on the air. Newspapers from Toronto, Hamilton and other communities are being broadcast daily along with magazines, best-selling books and information of use to those with a reading handicap.

Special radio receivers are necessary to receive the broadcasts and may be borrowed without charge. Those interested should write: Radio Reading Service, 1274 Rebecca St., Oakville, L6L 1Z2.

Bread festival

Eight hundred pounds of honey and 15,000 slices of specially baked bread will be given away at the Sixth Annual Bread & Honey Festival in Streetsville June 3, courtesy of Reid Milling and McCarthy Milling—oldest millers in Peel.

The Festival opens Friday evening June 2 with the Carleton Showband of "Pig and Whistle" fame in the Streetsville Arena.

Grandmothers' night for Dublin

Twenty-nine ladies, including one guest, journeyed to the home of Mrs. A. Murchison, Dublin Sideroad, Halton Hills, on Thursday evening to attend the regular monthly meeting of Dublin Women's Institute.

Mrs. M. Hunter, as president, presided for the opening numbers. Minutes of the annual meeting, as prepared by Mrs. David Hunter, were read by Mrs. K. Smith, the secretary-elect.

Roll Call was answered by "If I could, where would I live?". There was a variety of answers, and Vancouver, Florida and even New Zealand were mentioned. However, most thought the home district was the most acceptable, if one could journey south for a couple of months during the more severe weather in the winter.

Notice of the Halton Centennial Manor Lawn Party on June 17 at Milton was read; the Halton Musical Festival to be held in Acton on May 24; and the annual Pot Luck Supper on May 25, sponsored by the Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society, in Knox Church, Acton, at 6:15 p.m. Canvassers and anyone interested in the work of the organization are cordially invited to attend.

Reports from Standing committee conveners were given by Mrs. J. McLean on Agriculture and Canadian Industries; Mrs. A. Murchison on Safety; Mrs. A. Diamond as Card Convener; Mrs. C. McIntyre, of the Visiting-Committee; and Mrs. E. Wilson, of Catering Committee. She turned in a fine sum of money from three social events that had been catered to within the month.

Tentative plans for the booth at the Back-to-Acton celebration on the Dominion Day weekend were discussed.

Several ladies volunteered to act as hostess at the booth at the Hall at the Halton Regional Park on July 12, 19, August 10 and 11 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A progress report of the proposed annual bus trip of the Branch was given by Mrs. H. Besley, on behalf of herself, Mrs. W. Lasby and Mrs. A. Murchison, of the bus committee. It promises to be *a good one.*

It was an evening of reports, and Mrs. E. Norton reported on the successful Halton District Annual held on May 16 at Boston Presbyterian Church, Halton Hills. Ten members had attended from the Branch, and all enjoyed hearing the summary of the year's work in the District. In the competitions, Mrs. W. Frank won Third Prize for her lattice-covered cherry pie, and Mrs. H. Dodds and Mrs. J.C. Dennis won "Honorable mention" for their House Logs.

Officers' Conference held at Bingeman Park, Waterloo, on May 2-4 was attended by Mrs. K. Smith. There were a great many delegates at the Conference, and as outlined by Mrs. Smith, it had sessions full of interest and learning.

A committee of Mrs. J. McLean, Mrs. H. Blyth and Mrs. C. Armstrong volunteered to prepare and set up the articles for the Fall Fair Exhibits in the Fall at the neighbouring Fairs.

Shopping, consumer protection and how to be a good shopper were items outlined by Mrs. B. Alder, as Chairman of Family and Consumer Affiars. It was a timely subject as it affects all homemakers, and much help was gained by her talk.

It was Grandmothers' Night too, and each Grandmother was honored by being presented with a daffodil. Special prizes went to Mrs. J.A. VanFleet for having the youngest grandchild, and to Mrs. W.J. McIntyre for having the eldest grandchild. The committee in charge, Mrs. J. McLean and Mrs. C. Armstrong gave two readings—"Everyone should have a Grandmother" and "My Old Rocking Chair," respectively. Mrs. D. Hunter won the contest for the evening.

Sandwiches and relish plates, as served by the lunch committee of the month, Mrs. M. McCullough, Mrs. W. Lasby and Mrs. B. Rennick, assisted by the hostess, Mrs. Murchison, were enjoyed by everyone. A social chit-chat over the teacups brought the evening to a close. Mrs. C. McIntyre thanked the hostess, the social committee, and all who had taken part in the program to make it such an enjoyable meeting.

Credit Valley meeting

The seventh annual meeting of the Credit Valley Association for Handicapped Children is scheduled for this Thursday, May 25 at 8 p.m. at Mississauga Hospital auditorium.

The meeting is open to parents and general public and will include an up-date on the new Treatment Centre in Mississauga, scheduled for opening in September.

Staffing plans as well as plans for the Treatment Centre programs will also be discussed at the meeting.

The new centre will provide services for pre-school and school-age children in Halton and Peel regions. Physiotherapy, occupational and speech therapy, special education and treatment on an in-school basis and a day nusery program are among several programs to be offered.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
MAY 26 & 27
SPECIALS
9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

VACHON CAKES
Half Moons — Vanilla, Chocolate
Joe Lewis
Mini Flakey Squares
99¢ box

LAWN DARTS
Back Yard Family Fun
2 Rings & 4 Darts
Regular $4.99
$4.44

Big Big Buy
EXTERIOR PAINT
Non Tintable White
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FREE LAWN CHAIR VALUED AT $10.95 WITH EVERY PURCHASE
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Regular $13.97 $8.97
Boys' Sizes 3½-6
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