

Real Estate MARKETPLACE

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Halton CAS needs help

There are families and children in north Halton with special needs—needs which can best be met by new Children's Aid Society (CAS) volunteers.

The CAS is out to fill the gaps in services to families in Acton, Georgetown and Milton. Each community has particular needs according to Volunteer Coordinator Margaret Morrison.

Georgetown, for example, has a great need for big brothers: men who will act as models to be followed by children. A big brother teaches skills tailored to the child's needs; such day-to-day matters as how to use public transportation or making economical purchases.

The CAS in Georgetown has four referrals on its books. "We can't fill them and they're all important," Mrs. Morrison said. There are about eight big brothers in Halton CAS and 22 big sisters.

Big Brothers are also in demand at Milton, as are other volunteers—case aides—who deal with families. Case aides provide friendship, teach child management skills, assess families and other functions.

Milton, however, has a more urgent need: group leaders for mothers and for pre-school children. At least six leaders for pre-schoolers could have positions. Their functions, says co-ordinator Morrison, are to give children a good time at least once a week and also assess children so parents can be helped in designing activities which enhance children's development. Pre-schoolers, for instance, may be watched to see if they are speaking well enough for their age, to determine if fingers, hands and arms co-ordinate properly.

The mothers' group is part of a self-help pro-

gram. The CAS volunteer encourages the parent to say what her needs are with respect to family. The mother is then assisted in discovering methods of meeting those needs.

The greatest need for volunteers is in Acton. Big brothers, big sisters, case aides, tutors, drivers and others are urgently required, Mrs. Morrison said.

In Halton there are about 150 volunteers, most of them women.

"Our aim is to strengthen and improve family life so that children can grow up in their homes with their own parents. About half the families who require this help come to us on their own," states an Ontario CAS volunteers' handbook.

A volunteer helping an elementary school age child in north Halton is likely to meet the child on an average of once per week. Guidance comes from the CAS and Mrs. Morrison who discusses cases and their meanings with volunteers. Most of these discussions take place in a volunteer's home or in local offices such as Acton's Community Services Centre.

Once a month there is an education session for volunteers at Oakville and yearly volunteers set up their own education refresher program.

In Georgetown, Acton and Milton the CAS also has field workers nearby.

There are other roles CAS volunteers fill: supervising children while a parent is being interviewed; driving children or families on outings or to doctor appointments; interpreters; telephoning; and collecting toys and helping with children's Christmas projects.

Halton's CAS started with a meeting in Milton 65 years ago. Today's Halton society is right up to the minute with its campaign for volunteers.

To find out more about volunteering for Halton's CAS telephone Mrs. Morrison, volunteer co-ordinator, at 878-2375.

French get extension

A special case was made for extending the time limit on applications to the Halton Board's French Immersion course at Sunningdale School, Oakville.

Trustees agreed by a three vote margin to extend the time for applications one week, until Friday.



Margaret Morrison

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My hat's off to our farmers!

Even though we are into the last quarter of the twentieth century, with the tremendous technological advances that have been made, this can still be a mighty harsh land to live in.

At the time of writing, my heart aches for those poor devils in southern Manitoba, and in northern Ontario, who have been victims of floods. It must be devastating to see your fine farm covered with muddy water, your house or barn collapsing under the force of a vast, callous element over which you have no control.

We can blame ourselves for bad judgment, faulty management, or just plain laziness. But when Nature chooses, with her random, indifferent power, to throw a big one at us, whether it be fire, flood, drought, hail or grasshoppers, there is not much to do but weep, curse, or pray.

Modern man can walk on the moon, drift through the sky in luxury at 750 miles an hour, keep himself warm and clean by flicking switches and pressing buttons. He can communicate with his fellows over thousands of miles.

But when it comes to a tornado or an earthquake, there is little he can do but cower until it's over, and then try to pick up the pieces.

We are not much bothered in this country by those two "acts of God." But we have plenty of our own variety: blizzards, floods, forest fires, periods of either drought or rain that make the farmer despair.

Perhaps the greatest glory of man is that he refuses to succumb to the desolation that follows these curses of nature that remind him constantly that he is a petty creature, indeed, of little more importance in the scheme of things than an ant or a cockroach, and not nearly as capable of survival, over the long haul.

If I were a farmer in the Red River Valley today, I'd probably feel like going out behind what was left of my barn and quietly shooting myself.

by
Bill
Smiley



wiped out in a few hours, and be off to the bank to borrow for next year.

He may have modern, technical advice from government. He may be part of one of the great breadbaskets of the world, providing food for millions. But if it rains all summer, the bank still wants the interest on his loan, even though his crop is a disaster.

Sure, I grouse just like you, and you, when bread goes up a nickel a loaf, beef prices soar, milk costs more than beer, or nearly as much, and I can't afford a head of lettuce, without cutting down on cigarettes.

But when I think of the gamble a farmer takes, the amount of work he must do, and what he gets for his product at the rail-head, I can only shake my head and mutter, "Why do they do it? I wouldn't."

Well, my friend, it's going to get a lot worse. With the millions of acres of junk land in this country on which to build houses, our blinkered politicians continue to allow industry and developers to buy up rich farmland, and turn it into factories that pollute with essences, highways that pollute with gas fumes, and high-rises that pollute with people.

Take a trip abroad. Check the prices of farm products. Ours are still among the cheapest in the world.

When you have to pay \$5 for a pound of meat, 40 cents each for tomatoes, and \$2 for a loaf of bread, don't cry. Just remember that you read it here first.

The farmer in this country has been getting royally screwed for decades, and he knows it. Prime Minister Trudeau choose to call the farmers' anger "whining."

My hat is off to them. Pick up the pieces, boys, and rebuild. We need you. Very much.

But they won't do it, and that is why man will survive the worst things that Nature can do to him. He will pick up the pieces and rebuild, with a stubborn and dauntless spirit that makes him refuse to give in.

I've just finished *The Pioneer Years*, by Barry Broadfoot, about the settling of the West. A lot of people failed in their first confrontation with the eternal hardships of the prairies: the bitter cold, the vast emptiness, the terrible daily toil, the plagues of insects, hail, drought.

But even more of them fought back, with little but their human refusal to cave in under almost unbearable conditions. And their ancestors are still there. And they, too, will go on fighting the savagery of this country of ours, and triumph in the end.

Today's farmer in the West has equipment his ancestor could not even dream about. He can farm four sections in the time it took his grandfather to extract a meagre crop from a quarter-section, with horses, and brutal, dawn-to-dark human labor.

With the advent of the telephone and the automobile, the appalling loneliness of life on the prairies, of which Sinclair Ross writes so movingly, has disappeared. Today's farmer may even have a small aircraft to flip him into the larger town, or across the border to the fleshpots of the States.

But there still isn't a darn thing he can do about the weather. If there is drought, his crops burn and his cattle don't fatten. If there is hail, he can have a year's work