

Parent and Tot program a plus for area families

By MARK HOLMES

A unique new Acton YMCA program bringing both parents and children together is proving to be one of the best things that's happened to some area families in a long time.

Joyce Elson, who had been suffering from a bout with cancer and depression, thought she had nowhere to turn when she heard from an acquaintance about the Parent and Tot program.

Since she began attending, Joyce said she has gotten over her depression and her son Ryan, who was overactive and hard to manage, has benefitted from the service as well.

Trina Virgin was a long-time former resident of Acton. When she returned with her husband and family, she found she'd lost touch with most of the people she knew.

Parent and Tot got her reacquainted with people in the area, said Trina, and both she and Joyce have joined the mothers' committee which operates within the program.

Suzanne Ellis, another member of the committee, said there have been up to 100

mothers and their children involved in the program at any one time, with 30 to 40 participants at each meeting.

"We are not a babysitting service or a day care centre," explained Ellis. "We promote a healthy relationship between mothers and their children, socializing for the parents and interaction between the children."

The program is similar to the Children's Storefront program which Ellis attended three years ago in Toronto, but changes have been made to adapt the service for the area's needs.

In January, 1983, the program, sponsored by the YMCA, ran one day a week, but didn't meet the needs of the mothers who attended. Ellis and a handful of others got together and formed the mothers' committee.

Ellis, working with the committee, spearheaded a campaign to obtain funds from government agencies and after weeks of work, the Parent and Tot program received financial help from the Ministry of Social Services.

Since the money became available, the group meets three days a week, has pur-

chased toys and games for the children and has hired Marie Detlor and Dianne Gates.

Detlor is an experienced social worker who has spent considerable time working with the Children's Aid society and Gates is working on her Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education.

Parent and Tot runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and while the program is geared for mothers with children under five years of age everyone is welcome to drop in said Ellis.

So far the program hasn't drawn many fathers to the meetings because of the hours, explained Ellis, but a few have stopped by.

Ellis also noted that the Monday meetings are of a more casual nature, with crafts, games and counselling available. On Wednesdays, guest speakers are invited to talk on a wide range of topics.

Ellis pointed out that the service is free to anyone interested in coming out and, with plans for raising additional funds underway, the group hopes to be able to supply transportation for people who would otherwise be unable to attend.



Trina Virgin and Joyce Elson joined the Parent and Tot program at the Acton Y a year ago and say they haven't regretted a minute of it. In this photo, Trina and Joyce are sitting with their children Ryan Elson (far left), Natasha Elson (middle), and Jason and Matthew Virgin on the far right.

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THAT 'JUST CAN'T WAIT' TASTE



'Tis the strawberry shortcake season, and Mary Moore (left) and Tracey Bruce indulged in a little after-dinner merriment at Knox Presbyterian Church's strawberry "dessert" social last Wednesday at the church. Strawberry shortcake and coffee were served to those who believe in taking advantage of the time of year.

Town hall site deeded, renovations to resume

Renovation work on the old town hall should resume this week or next following receipt of a \$60,000 provincial grant.

Town council last week agreed to consider a bylaw conveying the hall's Willow St. site to Heritage Acton, as required by the Ontario Heritage Foundation. The move, finalized Friday by Heritage Acton chairman Ted Tyler, effectively rescues the project from a state of limbo.

Tyler said this week the first installment on the \$60,000 Bicentennial grant will enable

Heritage Acton to pay a few bills, start work on the steeple and continue painting, dry-walling and other refurbishing work.

He declined to predict a completion date for the renovations, but pointed out that the project may end up costing half as much as initially forecast by town consultants. While they predicted a cost of \$450,000 to \$500,000, he said, Heritage Acton and its preceding groups have thus far spent less than \$200,000.

Final approval for the site conveyance is expected this week. Council had already

agreed to the transfer, but was awaiting confirmation of a new grant as well as resolution of the problem of side yard access.

Under the new agreement, the Town retains ownership of the south driveway, providing permanent access to the adjacent firehall from the south and securing parking.

The Town reserves the option of reacquiring the site should Heritage Acton decide to dispose of the property at some future date.

First hat tossed in Liberal ring

Oriana Currie could be the first woman to represent Halton Liberals in a federal election.

The Campbellville businesswoman confirmed her intentions to seek the nomination, first announced in December, at a press conference Monday afternoon.

The announcement came shortly after Canadians were made aware of a federal election scheduled for Tues. Sept. 4.

At this point, Mrs. Currie is the only candidate for the nomination, a position she said does not bother her. Although she is not looking for opposition, the prospect of one or

more contestants does not concern the novice politician.

Halton Liberal riding association president Al Wilson, who introduced Mrs. Currie at Monday's meeting admitted there is "an advantage" to having a female candidate. Mrs. Currie only hinted that as a member of the female population, which represents 52 per cent of Canadians, she would have a jump on her prospective opponent Conservative MP Otto Jelinek.

"Women are being encouraged to enter politics. They're not being pushed," explained Mrs. Currie.

Encouraged is what she is following several meetings with party members in Halton who have been "firing questions" at the Liberal candidate hopeful. Those who share Mrs. Currie's wish to represent Liberals here at the polls will have several weeks to announce their intentions.

A riding association meeting held in Oakville Tuesday evening was expected to produce a date for the nomination meeting. That event will be held before the end of the month with July 20 the preferred date, according to Mr. Wilson's prediction Monday.

Mrs. Currie has never sought a seat in government at any level before but said she received a lesson in campaigning as a floor marshal and supporter of John Turner in the recent leadership race.

The nomination candidate has been involved in business since she graduated from Oakville Trafalgar High School. Since her husband Charles died in 1974, Mrs. Currie has operated the Campbellville-based amusements business.

Eleven charged

Nightsticks fly in street melee

Eleven area residents face various charges following a late-night confrontation between police and at least 30 young men and women at Acton's four corners last Wednesday night.

Sergeant Bill Gall of Halton regional police headquarters in Oakville told this newspaper that two of the accused and one police officer were injured during the altercation, in which some of the 14 officers summoned to the scene used their night sticks against citizens.

Desmond Noblett, owner of the Sit'n' Bull pub near the Mill and Main corner, confirmed Gall's report that the trouble started after a male patron of the pub became unruly and had to be forcibly ejected.

According to Gall, three undercover policemen on routine investigation at the pub helped pub staff eject the man after he started bothering other customers.

Once outside, one of the three officers was struck by a woman wielding a purse. A crowd of young people standing on the side-

walk outside the pub became agitated, police say.

After arresting two people, the officers called for reinforcement and waited for the crowd to quiet down, according to Gall.

When some people in the crowd began throwing bottles, one of which broke the \$700 plate glass window of a vacant store across the street, nine police officers from Milton, Georgetown, and Oakville joined the five already on the scene to try and cool the crowd down.

As well as six liquor-related charges, police arrested Jack Evans, 23, of RR3 Acton for breach of probation, obstructing police and being intoxicated in a public place. Wendy Titus, 22, of Victoria St. is charged with assaulting an officer, obstruction and escaping custody. John Evans, 20, also of RR3 Acton, is charged with obstruction, as are Robert Allonby, 22, of Mason Blvd. and Kenneth Anderson, 21 of Churchill Rd.

With the exception of Anderson, all of the accused appear in court August 13. Anderson appears July 23.

Clamp down on curfew

Citing an "alarming increase" in the incidence of vandalism and thefts from cars since the May 24 holiday weekend, Halton regional police will be strictly enforcing the 10 p.m. curfew established last fall for youngsters under 16 years of age.

Crime Prevention Officer Bob Ustrycki told this newspaper last week that the majority of cases of vandalism and thefts from vehicles are taking place after 10 p.m.

Anyone under 16 years old found on the streets after that time will be taken home by police and their parents will be notified, Ustrycki said. The first time a juvenile is

picked up, the parents will be warned that they face charges under the Child Welfare Act and a fine of up to \$1,000.

After the first time, the parents will be charged, Ustrycki said. They'll be required to appear in family court.

The 10 p.m. curfew for juveniles was instated last fall in response to a rise in youth-related crimes. Ustrycki explained that since the Victoria Day long weekend, most local cases of vandalism and thefts from autos seem to be the work of youngsters under 16 and usually take place after 10.



ELEVENTH HOUR REPRIEVE?

Remember when? In December, 1971, the first season Acton Sabres were one of the hottest tickets in town. Now their fate is up in the air. A meeting was set for last night (Thursday) to decide whether the team executive will stick by its recent decision to fold the Sabres for at least a season for lack of a sponsor or whether they'll make a go of it in 1984-85. See page A9 for details.

MP Jelinek predicts Tory majority Sept. 4

Scuffing at recent public opinion polls which showed the federal Liberal party leading the Progressive Conservatives, Halton Tory MP Otto Jelinek says he believes his party will form a majority government in the Sept. 4 election.

Jelinek, backed for a third try at the Halton seat during a local Tory rally last January, told this newspaper he's already been knocking on doors around the riding in past weeks. His campaign will now move into "high gear", he said, and double the size of its volunteer army, already estimated to number 500 campaign workers.

Almost a year ago, Jelinek named Dave Whyte of Oakville as his campaign manager. Whyte, Jelinek's canvass

chairman in the 1978 election campaign, will head staff working out of campaign offices in Acton, Milton, Campbellville and Oakville.

Jelinek said, he'll run "a simple, people-oriented campaign", personally approaching as many people as possible.

Praising Tory leader Brian Mulroney's "fresh approaches and fresh ideas", Jelinek called new Liberal leader John Turner's Cabinet "a continuation of the Liberal party of the past" and a reaffirmation of the Liberal's "socialist-type philosophy."

The MP criticized the Liberals for their "political opportunism" in asking the Queen to postpone her planned summer visit so the election could take place in September.