

Final report in a 5-week

Herald survey of opinions

DOUG COLLISON: HALTON RECREATION DIRECTOR: "We at the recreation department have

come to realize that our biggest mistake as professionals has been in organizing instead of trying to teach people how to organize their own time. Our young have been brought up on organization and are conditioned to having things done for them.

We have been marketing programs like Kellogg's Corn Flakes whether the people need it or not. We have conducted surveys to find out what our youth want but when we try to provide it no one shows up. We even ran a beer garden once in the summer for the older crowd, and only five came. When we questioned others why they stayed away the answer was "we heard nobody was coming."

We tried to keep our summer teen program as unstructured as possible, but as a government agency we cannot provide activities without supervision and rules and regulations. As a result we found that the supervisors outnumbered the participants.

If any group of Halton Hills residents wants to get together and show us that they are responsible and willing to put some effort into a chosen activity we will be happy to provide it as long as it is legal, safe and funds are available and they follow our rules.

Just as a matter of interest, there are over 1,000 kids registered in hockey programs in Georgetown. Ice time is booked solid to the point where a second facility is needed. The prime complaint of non-hockey enthusiasts is that hockey players get all the ice time, when, in actual fact, each hockey player enjoys about eight minutes of ice time per week.

ROY BOOTH, TOWN COUNCILLOR: "The first thing we have to learn is that recreation is not hockey and football. Recreation takes in every aspect of our daily living. I have been desperately trying

to upgrade the recreational facilities in Halton Hills through the council members. But these people are hard to convince. They are more interested in spending \$100,000 for a computer for the finance department than in going to do a blessed thing except put somebody out of a job.

On the other hand, I have no sympathy for people who hang around waiting for tailor-made entertainment. They are constantly looking for somebody to provide them with something to do and when we do they aren't satisfied. The sad part is none have told them that there's more to life than

just hanging around. Lots of dedicated youths are busy doing things for others like the Candystripers and the Boy Scouts and many other groups, but a lot of these kids are afraid to join in things because they think their friends are going to think it's dumb."

GEORGE STEIN, OPTIMIST CLUB: "I blame the town because this town has nothing to offer in the way of entertainment for the modern generation and everything that's suggested gets shot down by council. Sure they want a drive-in as long as they put it about eight miles down the road. Except that the fellow who wants to start the drive-in

doesn't own the property eight miles down the road. They squashed plans for a new pool hall and now they want to close the dragstrip where the teenagers were going two or three times a week.

The Optimists tried to start an Octagon Service Club but they couldn't get enough support. They worry about what their friends will say. Everybody's scared of being laughed at."

ROSAIRE ROUTHIER, GEORGETOWN POOL HALL PROPRIETOR: "I try to run a respectable place here. The kids know that they have to follow certain rules. There's no

communication between society and our long-haired youth. We have just lumped all teenagers into two categories, the good ones and troublemakers, and the latter are not worth bothering with. The town pours endless dollars into organized programs for the motivated, but shouts "why should we give them something for nothing?"

Don't they know that underneath all that hair there are real people with feelings and needs? Can't they see that their problem is everybody's problem? And maybe while they are hanging around Main Street, they are looking for something? They go from the pool hall to the restaurant, to the hotel, and down to Park's Variety where they can tell all their troubles to Mom Renahan, the bartender of the coca-cola set. These kids are looking for something. They are looking for motivation. They want someone to care. Motivation comes from caring. I know, because I've been there.

I am not a self-motivated person. I got where I am today because someone cared. And I'm a teenager. I'm a wife and mother, and I was home in my kitchen where I belong. But I had no interest, no sense of direction, no motivation. Then a special someone came along and took me by the hand

and led me. Marion DeLor, a social worker at the Mississauga Hospital made me see that I had talents above and beyond the demands of a housewife and mother. She spent hours and hours just getting to know me, finding out what I really wanted to be doing. She arranged psychology tests, aptitude tests, and personal interest tests. And when we discovered that writing is my thing, she didn't just say "okay go and write." She went through a pile of brochures with me to decide which night course would suit my needs. She wouldn't let me out of hospital until she was sure I had registered and then she gave me a kick in the pants and said "get going."

And because she cared I got going and kept going. The following year I attended part-time classes and then went on to a full time college course in journalism. She still receives a copy of everything I write. It all came about because of communication, motivation and caring. That's what these kids are looking for. Someone to take them by the hand and lead them. Isn't it really our problem? Whatever they do is affecting all of us. Each one is an individual and must be treated as such. They must be made to feel that they are contributing members of society. But how can this be done? Nobody has the time, nobody has the money and nobody wants to be bothered. The "Y" in Toronto has been running a very successful program involving street-workers. That is a person hired

Nothing to do in town! But who's to blame



Rosaire Routhier



Roy Booth



Doug Collison

to go and meet these kids in their own environment, get to know them and find out what it is they are seeking. It could be a home, a job, a specific recreation form, a career or just a friend. The system worked well and each year they find they have less need for such a program. We could run a program like that here. It might not work, but how will we know unless we try. The Children's Aid Society, who have passed up written requests to speak their piece, are looking for community involvement. It seems to me this kind of program would be to their advantage because the problems would be "nipped in the bud", so to speak. Our youth would become responsible citizens and there would be less

need for a children's rescue service in the future. The contact centre has dozens of volunteers working on four and eight-hour shifts, and apparently from what I have heard most of them are professionals. So why couldn't we try one or two "on the street." See if it works. I personally would love to take a gang of young people and organize an old-time dance. Get everyone of them planning, organizing and working. Show them how to really have a good time, like we used to. But I'm no different and no better than all the rest of the turkeys out there in "Apathy Land." I'm just content to sit here and wait for someone else to come along and say, "Okay, Saxon, let's do it."

and bowl on Sunday, it isn't any different and anybody could get on a hockey game or a bowling game. It's nuts. That arena they're building is already outdated before they start. It should have been a complex arena with two rinks and a roller rink that could be used for dancing and other things. In answer to an article in your paper, we charge 75 cents for 15 minutes. That's a per table not per person. So that if six people play for an hour, the cost of \$2.50 works out to 40 cents each. That's pretty cheap entertainment.

JO LISTER - Y EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: "The 'Y' is a

A few final words from someone who knows

By Cella Saxon Staff Reporter
Georgetown is a turkey town. There really is nothing to do. Nobody cares. No one's to blame and everybody's to blame.

After five weeks of research into the social problems of the youth in Georgetown that's the conclusion I've come to. Oh, yes, everyone's interested, everyone's concerned. Some

are even doing something about it in their own little way. But the general attitude throughout is "That's their problem." The key words are "communication" and "motivation." Lack of, that is.

"There's plenty to do if they want to get out and look for it," the experts tell me. "Why don't they get some motivation?" Motivation comes from communication. And there is no

communication between society and our long-haired youth. We have just lumped all teenagers into two categories, the good ones and troublemakers, and the latter are not worth bothering with. The town pours endless dollars into organized programs for the motivated, but shouts "why should we give them something for nothing?"

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Council doesn't go for busses

From bands to busses the Halton Hills town council has bounced. Having cleared the problem of grants to the bands in the former municipalities of Acton and Georgetown, town council Monday night drew battle lines over the question of whether or not to subsidize a free bus service for Christmas shoppers in Acton from Dec. 9 to 24.

The service previously set up and jointly paid for by the Acton Chamber of Commerce

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Continued on page 9.

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