



Beth Newell

Summer student conducts study of volunteers

One of the summer projects for the Halton Regional Social Planning Council will be a survey on volunteers and volunteering to be conducted in Georgetown, Acton and Milton.

York University student, Beth Newell, will conduct the Community Volunteer Survey and visit various local agencies to determine what jobs volunteers are doing for each agency at present and to learn what new jobs may be available for volunteers in the future. In August she will be in the malls and shopping areas of the three towns asking shoppers a couple of brief questions concerning volunteering.

"I'll be looking to find out the public's attitude to volunteering," she said. "I'll be asking questions like whether they have ever been a volunteer and if they benefitted from the experience."

BROCHURE LISTING

The culmination of the project will be a brochure listing the telephone numbers and contact person's name for each agency using volunteers. Miss Newell, originally from Carlisle, started her volunteering as part of the student

council in her high school. As she developed an interest in creative dancing she shared it with teenage girls and elderly residents of a nursing home.

She reminds students that working as a volunteer through the summer can be an excellent way to get actual experience in some field which can later be translated into work experience in applying for a job.

"The young person doesn't have to devote all his or her time to his volunteer work," she said. "It could be half a day, a whole day or just a few hours a week. During this time new skills can be learned, experience is gained and there is the possibility that it might lead to a paying job."

Being a volunteer is a way of getting to know others in the community and she heartily recommends it for young people who have just moved into a town. It is also a great way of getting to feel you're part of a community, she said. It can even be a way of discovering what particular field interests you and thus help you to choose a career.

"A youth volunteer has an experience as well as gaining it," she said.

Open meeting

Local police hear Acton complaints

By **MAGGIE HANNAH**
Herald staff writer

Communications was the name of the game Wednesday evening as Staff Sergeant John Barrett of Halton Regional Police sat down with a dozen Acton merchants and members of the Chamber of Commerce in the Acton library to discuss concerns over the town's policing.

A recent change requiring officers to report for duty at the District 1 headquarters in Georgetown rather than at the Acton office had merchants worried about the lack of visible police presence in the town as a whole and downtown in particular.

An improved anti-loitering bylaw was the most immediate solution Staff Sgt. Barrett was able to offer merchants angered by the number of young people hanging around

the downtown area.

In reply to questions by Henry Stachyra concerning the lack of police action to move teenagers loitering at the entrance to his Mill Street store Staff Sgt. Barrett, substituting for the vacationing acting chief James Harding, said his officers hadn't the authority to tell people to move along unless someone laid a complaint about them.

MORE TEETH

Acton does have a problem mainly around the corners of Mill and Main Streets, he admitted, but a bylaw with more teeth to it should effect the changes the merchants want. Milton's bylaw, for example, entitles the police to lay charges if a party has to be told twice to move along. Halton Hills council has set the clerk's department to work on the new bylaw after looking at the Milton one and others, and a new one should be ready soon, he said.

The officers refuted a suggestion by H.H. (Bert) Hinton that the police should just keep arresting loiterers over and over again until the justices of the peace got sick of having their courts tied up and begun fining the offenders. That sort of action would only result in officers being accused of harassment, he said.

Mr. Stachyra also commented on the length of time it sometimes takes to get a reply to a call to the department. Usually the officers are fairly prompt, he said, but cited one recent call which took 1 1/2 hours to get an officer on the scene and by that time the offenders had moved on.

Staff Sgt. Barrett reminded Mr. Stachyra that in a town with a population of more than 7,000 inevitably there will be times when the officers are tied up on other calls. Officers also have to take those arrested to cells in Georgetown. He pointed out that anyone arriving at the Acton office and

finding it locked may use the telephone on the wall by the door. This immediately connects the caller with the desk in the Georgetown office. Alternatively anyone calling from their own telephone should tell the switchboard operator they wish to make a complaint rather than asking for the Georgetown office. She will then connect them to the radio room where the information will be recorded and a message dispatched immediately to the nearest officer. If the caller asks for Georgetown the desk officer there has to take the information, relay it to the radio room and then have them dispatch the message to an officer. This of course, results in a delay.

EXTRA TAXES

He noted it would cost taxpayers \$150,000 to put one more man in Acton around the clock and questioned residents willingness to pay the extra taxes. He reminded those present that Acton wasn't losing the office in town. The men needed

a place to work out of and requiring them to parade at the Georgetown office at the beginning of each shift was a matter of economy as well as being good for morale, he said. As an Acton resident himself he was as concerned as any of them with the town's policing, he reminded them, and pointed out that in the circumstances he wouldn't be doing anything to upset the force's efficiency.

Don Jamieson said many citizens are nervous about identifying vandals and other people committing minor offenses because they don't want to go to court and risk being "found and got back at" later. "The general opinion seems to be that the law is pretty lenient now so people are afraid of the offender coming after them later," he said.

"If the law is lenient that's because we follow the wishes of society," Staff Sgt. Barrett said. "Society changes first and we change long afterwards. Intimidating witnesses in a court case is a serious

offense, however, and one a judge will be quick to lock up an offender for attempting."

MOST OFFICERS

To the comment no one knew most of the officers working in Acton Staff Sgt. Barrett said that although the officers had been rotated through various areas to acquaint them with the whole region the process is complete now. An attempt was always made to team an officer who knew the town fairly well with one who was a stranger to it.

He urged the merchants to take time to speak to the officers and get acquainted. His men would be reluctant to interrupt merchants at work but if the men were on foot patrol they wouldn't be in a big rush to go anywhere and would therefore have the time to be friendly.

"Half Acton's problem is that it's still fighting the inevitable," he said. "Let's accept it and make it (the Halton Regional Force) our force."



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