

NHAMR celebrates 25 years of assisting the retarded



Learning to pour himself a drink without spilling a drop can be a small triumph for a child at Tinkerbell Nursery, the nursery run by the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded. Motor skills are just one part of the program at the nursery, which went into operation in 1971. (Herald photo)

By LORI TAYLOR
Herald Staff Writer

The North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this Saturday night with a gala dinner at Milton's Bayrischer Hof.

The association has come a long way since it began in 1955 as the Milton and District Association for Retarded Children. The group's name changed in 1960 to the North Halton Association for Retarded Children, and in 1970, it changed again to the present name.

The first service offered by the organization involved the Sunshine School, opened in one room of the old town hall in Milton. The school later moved to Emmanuel Baptist Church, from there to a converted garage and then to its present quarters in Thornby. The board of education bought the school from the association in 1969 for \$1 and has taken over the expense of running it.

From 1969 on, the Sunshine School has expanded. The

younger children are attending school at Park Public School in Georgetown, where they are integrated with the rest of the community. The secondary school-aged students will be attending Milton's E.C. Drury Secondary School.

ADVOCATE'S ROLE

Mike Evans, president of the association told The Herald this week that the organization's role, now that the board of education has taken over programming for the school, has become one of an "advocate".

"We keep an eye on the programs to make sure the retarded children aren't lacking anything," he said.

The program for the children includes alphabet and speech skills, gym, music and art, "pretty much the normal curriculum, but geared to their level," Mr. Evans said.

The Tinkerbell Nursery, one of the more recent projects of the association, is for preschool children. The nursery, which was started in 1971 by

Acton's Jenny Kuiken, teaches speech and motor skills and provides playroom activities. The children also receive toilet training.

The program requires that the children have one-on-one attention, Mr. Evans said, and most of the counsellors are volunteers. Each child goes to an assessment centre and a full program is drawn up for the child, based on his particular needs. The volunteers work on an on-going basis with one child, so they are familiar with that child.

Mr. Evans said the community has been very helpful at Tinkerbell in helping out with outings where more adult supervisors are needed, such as swimming.

The business community has also helped out, Mr. Evans said. Bell Canada has donated a doll through which the counsellor can talk to the child, instead of trying to reach the child with direct communication.

"A lot of the program is to

help bring the child to his full potential," Mr. Evans said. "Tinkerbell has a home program where the counsellor visits the child's home once a week to help the parents reinforce what the child is learning at the nursery."

Children from Tinkerbell Nursery can go to three different places: regular classes, classes for the trainable mentally handicapped, and to the developmental centre for the severely retarded.

REACH POTENTIAL

The Halton Developmental Centre opened in 1976 at E.C. Drury School in Milton. There are about 21 people there, from Oakville and Burlington as well as north Halton. The developmental centre is for more severely retarded children who can't attend special classes.

"The main problem we have down there is getting volunteers," Mr. Evans said. "Often, we find getting volunteers for the nursery is a lot easier than for older children. I guess

people find it more difficult to relate to these people."

"Often, these children will be confined to wheelchairs, and severely handicapped. You need a lot of patience. I think the key to most of the volunteers at Tinkerbell and the developmental centre is patience, because the smallest improvement is really a triumph."

ADULT CENTRE

The association is now hoping to start an adult developmental centre, which it would fund until the program is organized and off the ground, Mr. Evans said. The association would then apply to the provincial ministry of community and social services to help fund the program on a continuing basis. Depending on the agreement with the ministry, the association might end up paying 40 per cent of the cost of running the centre.

The adult developmental

Continued on page 13

877-5213

FOBERT
H. Fobert Real Estate Ltd.
Realtor

EXCELLENCE AWARD
"IN CUSTOMER RELATIONS"

the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1980

The big paper with the big circulation covering Georgetown, Acton & Surrounding Communities

Seed House subdivision advised by consultants

By STEPHEN FROST
Herald Staff Writer

Dominion Seed House's vast nursery holdings along Guelph Street in Georgetown should be zoned for high-density residential use rather than parkland if any development is to take place there, according to a report on the Highway 7 corridor commissioned by town

council.

Released at last Tuesday's planning board meeting, the \$14,800 report by A.J. Diamond Ltd., prepared in collaboration with Barton-Aschman Ltd., examined the Seed House lands for future potential in the event that property tax revisions force the company's relocation.

Several major concerns emerged in the discussion between board members and consultants on the still-unreleased study.

The study was to be released to the public less than a month after being received by the planning board.

"Our heads aren't screwed on enough to deal with the study yet," board chairman Mike Armstrong commented. "Before we released it to the public, we should set aside a date for another meeting among ourselves."

Mayor Pete Pomeroy asked that the study be sent to the town staff for review. Clerk-administrator Ken Richardson suggested that six weeks would be adequate time.

Mayor Pomeroy told the board he is very satisfied with the study but questions the town's ability to implement its recommendations because of the cost involved.

"It will cost millions to implement this plan and I don't think it can be borne by the taxpayers that are here now," the mayor commented. "We've got to see how we're going to pay for it. Implementing this plan is going to entail making some powerful political decisions."

SOME FUNDING

Consultant Jack Diamond suggested that the capital maintenance budget could provide funds for some of the study's recommendations.

"If you accept the overall structure of the plan then you will have an overall principle

to follow," he said. "You won't be doing things piecemeal, as you are now."

"We realize that the Seed House properties are a sensitive issue in this town and the present owners are very content where they are. However, that may change if the properties are taxed at their real market value, rather than as agricultural land, as they are now. That may force them to move to another location."

"I don't think the Seed House properties can be taxed at real market value," Mayor Pomeroy told The Herald. "Market assessment is essentially used for residential and commercial land. The Seed House properties have always been zoned as agriculture and as long as they produce agricultural products, I can't see that changing."

Seed House general manager William Kay declined to comment on the study's recommendation, but termed the findings "presumptuous."

"I think the study is very good, but there is no way you'll see those properties used for anything else," Coun. Armstrong asserted.

Other problems dealt with in the study were the community's present lack of industrial land and the development of commercial areas along the highway.

LOOK SERIOUSLY

"You have to look seriously at the land zoned for industrial and make sure that you don't let commercial things creep in," Mr. Diamond said. "The town at the moment is some 180 acres short of industrial land."

Overall, Mr. Diamond said he felt that the highway at the present time tends to dominate the scene due a shortage of landscaping along its side and any future work done on the area surrounding it should be done with an eye towards beautifying it.

Of major concern to the consultants was a town plan to consolidate all its civic facilities in one area along the highway.

"You have to be careful if you do this because in reality you are signalling that this is the town's centre," consultant Marilyn McKelvey told the board. "You could very well signal the end to your downtown area and that would be very poor for the town as your downtown is unique."

While most councillors expressed satisfaction with the study, Roy Booth felt that much of what was recommended would be very costly.

Mr. Diamond suggested that much of the beautification could be done by business associations similar to that of the downtown merchants, who pay an extra levy on their taxes.

"The downtown merchants had to pay for their own study for beautification," Coun. Booth said. "I wonder how they're going to feel about other organizations having this \$14,800 study done for them at the taxpayer's expense."



NATIVE DANCERS HAVE CENTRE JUMPING

Weaving through a tunnel of raised arms, Mi-Zib-I-Zeens, better known as Richard Lyons, brought his Ojibway Indian dance troupe to the Cedarvale community centre Friday night for a stirring display of native songs and dances. Born in Fort Francis, Ontario, and a teacher at Thunder Bay's Lakehead University, Mr. Lyons and his family demonstrated the

significance of native ritual for a large and appreciative audience invited to the event by the Halton Hills Public Library Board. Mr. Lyons persuaded many audience members to join him for a dance routine that borrowed on his 34 years' experience with the traditional cultural art form.

(Herald photo by Paul Dorsey)

Whew! Halton Hills taxes increase least in region: 8%

By STEPHEN FROST
Herald Staff Writer

Compared to their Milton neighbors, who face tax increases of up to 30 per cent this year, Halton Hills taxpayers will have a relatively easy 1980.

Mill rate increases in Georgetown, Acton and Esquew will be 7.81 per cent, 7.5 per cent and 6.9 per cent, respectively.

These figures, released Monday by Mayor Pete Pomeroy and town treasurer Ray King,

take into account all municipal, regional and education taxes. The increases are not final, however, according to Mr. King.

"On Friday, we received a letter from the province saying there may be a change in format for assessing our regional levy," he explained. "They are currently looking at other equalization factors that would affect the final levy. They won't go up, but there is a chance the mill rate will go down slightly."

"It's all very well and fine to talk about percentages and the mill rate," Mayor Pomeroy said, "but what the average citizen wants to know is how much extra he is going to pay in dollars and cents."

A general breakdown for Georgetown is as follows, based on an average home assessment of \$5,638.

For general town purposes and urban area services, taxes will amount to \$222.08, an increase of 2 per cent over the \$209.05 paid in 1979.

The regional levy will rise this year by \$1.53 to \$69.35, for a rise of 2.2 per cent over 1979's \$67.82. However, this does not include a conservation levy for capital projects such as the paper mill dam sluice gates and dredging in the Credit River. That could add as much as \$4.90 to the average tax bill.

EDUCATION UP

Total education costs for the year will rise to \$347.69 from last year's \$320.46, a jump of

Continued on page 2

Our Spring collection

Hospital's First Born page 2
Acton's Arlie White page 3
Pay TV's On The Way page 10
Relatively Speaking page 20
Guys and Dolls page 24

The weather has been perfect these past few days for everyone to get outside and dust off the winter cobwebs. Paul Kelman and Carl Blight couldn't agree more, as they got in some work on skateboards. The next couple of days are expected to be just as nice. (Herald photo by Mark Clairmont)