

North Halton Hospice group comforts bereaved

Periodically we will be featuring an agency or group in North Halton that relies heavily on volunteer input.

North Halton Hospice is such a group, in existence for

approximately one year laying the groundwork for a very sensitive but needed service.

In every family, a person will die; no one is spared from grief and bereavement.

North Halton Hospice Inc. seeks to enhance the quality of life for those whose illness is in the terminal stages, their families and the community at large, through the provision of supportive care

services and education.

The goals of the group are to provide supportive and educational services to bereaved individuals and families in the area of death,

grief and hospice care, and finally to integrate hospice care principles into the existing health care.

Hospice volunteers may function in two vital areas:

direct support or administrative support. The whole idea behind hospice care, that of providing an optimum environment for the terminally ill and family can only be

achieved if there is time to listen, to understand and to provide care. This time is not readily available in normal health care facilities. As a hospice direct patient volunteer you would visit with the patient and family, both in the hospital and at home to assess individual and family needs, and then come up with suggestions that may not have been considered previously.

Many terminally ill patients prefer to die at home in familiar surroundings, but may not qualify for home care, at least initially. A hospice volunteer can provide support for both the patient and the family starting at a time when the patient is still ambulatory and alert. The volunteer can be present to help the patient-family overcome the first hurdle, that being the point in time when the patient has been told that his illness is terminal, and from there, begin preparations for the future.

A hospice volunteer may also have to help with the practical day to day problems as they arise. Those of insurance, equipment such as a hospital bed for the home, and observation for critical signs, are some of the problems for which a volunteer will be trained to help others cope.

In the time of crisis, when communication between family members is very important, tension and grief may cause a breakdown in communication. A trained,

skilled volunteer acting as confidant may be able to open up the channels of communication.

The most important role of the volunteer is that of an accepting supportive friend. The following is a list of some of the tasks a volunteer may perform: relief for primary care giver, transportation, meal preparation, writing letters, family shopping, dressing and feeding, observing and reporting, liaison between medical persons and patient-family and be-

reavement follow-up. The hospice group would not be able to function were it not for volunteers as support staff. These jobs may include community education, compiling and mailing a news letter, resource development and volunteer training.

For the continuance of this vital service, volunteers and funding are needed. To find out how you can become involved, call your volunteer centre at 877-3219, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 to 4:30.

HELP WANTED: All ages, all kinds

What is a Volunteer Centre?
The North Halton Volunteer Centre is a voluntary non-profit organization. Our purpose is to encourage and enable citizens of North Halton to serve the community through volunteer participation. We actively promote the concept and value of volunteerism to the community and to the individual.

The Volunteer Centre acts as a clearing house for the people who want the opportunity to get involved in their community. We will interview prospective volunteers and help them to choose the type of job that will be most rewarding for them. As a volunteer, you can work as little or as much as you like. The time you have free will determine the range of jobs available to you. The amount of training that you receive will also depend on the type of job that you choose. Many of our agencies offer intense training programs, in others you will be trained on the job.

After your visit to the Volunteer Centre, you will be referred to an agency or group that require your volunteer services. It is the responsibility of the agency to contact the volunteer and make them welcome. The agency will provide you with adequate training and a job description and will tell you to whom you are directly responsible.

As a volunteer you are responsible for being punctual and to carry out the agreed job to the best of your ability. In many jobs confidentiality is very important. Certainly this aspect will be discussed with you at the first meeting with your supervisor.

Some of the fields in which you may work are: RECREATION, as a coach, referee, instructor, hobbies. CULTURAL: in library or museum. EDUCATION: as a tutor, school volunteer, nursery school aid. SOCIAL SERVICES: as a case work aid, friendly visitor, distress line listener, interviewer. PUBLIC RELATIONS: to do

public speaking, press releases. CORRECTIONAL SERVICES: as probation aids. ADMINISTRATION: as a committee or board member, secretary, treasurer. There are many possibilities for your involvement.

If you have a particular skill that you would like to share with others the Volunteer Centre can help you find an outlet. There is always a need for handmen, bookkeepers, typists, photographers, musicians, hand craft teachers. Whatever your skill or area of expertise, there is someone with a need.

In future weeks you will be kept up to date as to what the needs of the community are. If you see something of interest and would like more information, call us. If you are aware of a need in the community and would like to know what services are available, we will do our best to provide you with information.

For information and involvement call your Volunteer Centre at 877-3219 Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 to 4:30.

Five teens open doors for younger counterparts

Helping youngsters take the first plunge

By ANI FEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer

Three young girls aiming to be swim instructors are spending their time as "counsellors in training" at the GDHS pool-side.

Kim Penna, 14, Melanie Jenkins, 15, and Joanna Delroy, 14, are volunteers with both Y and recreation department aquatics programs, giving up several hours a week to help swimming instructors.

Joanna, a Georgetown District High School (GDHS) Grade 9 student, began volunteering two winters ago for the recreation department, helping teach children to swim. Last summer she began helping out with the Y's aquatics programs as well.

Now on the high school swim team, Joanna said she loves to swim and used to be on the town's Blue Fins team. She began taking lessons when she was only five and remembers that she used to be afraid of the water herself.

"It's hard to be with someone you don't know and do something you think is scary," Joanna said. She tries to help the children in the classes by asking them questions about themselves so that they feel more comfortable by the pool-side.

"It's trying to make something that may seem hard for them seem fun," she said of her challenge to make them enjoy swimming as much as she does.



Keeping in the swim of things, (left to right) Joanna Delroy, Kim Penna and Melanie Jenkins were busy Sunday evening at the Georgetown District High School pool. The three are volunteers with the YMCA and the recreation department's aquatics programs, donating about three hours a week to helping swim students and instructors.

(Herald photo)

Looking forward to being a full-fledged swim instructor, Joanna has her bronze level in swimming and will be taking the leader level soon.

Kim and Melanie have both done the written exam for the bronze level and are waiting to have the swim test which will win them the award.

Kim, a GDHS student, likes working with the youngest children in the aquatics programs. Besides helping the swim instructor by getting out equipment like flutter boards, Kim gets to take two or three children aside to give them special attention.

"I'd rather work with one kid than with a group of kids," she said, relating how she convinced a three-year old

over two lessons to get into the water.

"We have floatable toys in a basket and I sat on the side and played with the toys with him until he got into the water to play with them," Kim said. "Once he got into the water, he loved it."

Melanie, a student at the Toronto French language school Etienne Brule, said she prefers working with older children, about eight years old.

"I help them improve their front and back crawl," she said. "I can tell what they're doing wrong from where I stand on the deck."

A student herself in the swim programs from the age of five, Melanie said she dropped out of swimming when she was 12 and going for her seniors badge because the other swimmers were a lot older.

Together with Kim this year,

Centennial students punch in their futures

Introducing computer age

There are some really smart kids at Centennial Public School, according to two Georgetown District High School students.

Grade 11 students Jeff Forsyth and Natalie Fisher are having to be quick to keep one step ahead of the Grades 7, 8 and 9 students they're introducing to computers.

The two high school students are volunteering an hour a week of their time to teach about 15 Centennial students how to use the PET computer in the Centennial library.

GDHS has about 20 models of the same computer and the two students completed an introductory course in computer science this winter.

"We usually teach only two or three people," Natalie said. "We come about 3:30 and stay 'til 4:30." She helps out Thursday afternoons and Jeff Wednesdays.

"A lot of them are grasping it really well and asking more questions when they don't understand," she said.

Jeff said the students are so quick at learning what they're being taught that sometimes they ask questions he doesn't know the answers to yet.

"There are some really smart ones. They really know what they're doing and they're making us almost look stupid," he smiled. "They're asking questions about things I don't know about so we just say 'til next week when we'll explain it."

He said that because it's an extracurricular activity for the students at Centennial, they don't approach it as work, but as fun and really enjoy it.

Natalie and Jeff both agreed that they're trying to set up the youngsters for high school computer science courses by explaining what the GDHS program is like and pointing out the advantages to the students of learning what they are now.

Students work out of a booklet at their own pace, with problems becoming more difficult as the pages change.

Jeff hopes to study computer programming at the University of Waterloo and wants to one day have a job programming large

computer systems.

Natalie said she'll be continuing her computer science studies at university and combining it with courses in psychology.

April 21 the Centennial computer club is visiting GDHS to see its computer facilities.

Through its services to patients, the Canadian Cancer Society helps to soften the impact of cancer for patients and their families. This work, encompassing a range of services from dressings to lodge facilities, relies on public support. Your generous donation to the Society at campaign time will assist these programs.



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