

# Newcomers, regulars make ActiVan job a pleasure

By CHRIS AAGAARD  
Herald Staff Writer

When you see the familiar ActiVan buzzing around town during the day, chances are Don Brown is behind the wheel—and enjoying every minute of it.

Mr. Brown lives with his wife, Helen, in a country home north of Ballinacree and has been driving the special bus for physically handicapped and otherwise housebound Halton Hills residents since last summer. ActiVan turns one year old tomorrow (Thursday), has passed its trial run with "flying colors" and is now a regular feature of the town's community services.

"I want to see it keep going, too," Mr. Brown told The Herald Sunday. "I like meeting a lot of different people and I've never met anyone I couldn't get along with. Our riders are very congenial, jovial people."

Employed with Tyler Transport Ltd. in Acton—the company which services and operates ActiVan—Mr. Brown welcomed the opportunity to switch from school bus driving to become ActiVan's principal chauffeur. Paul Goddard and Martin Cook are part-time drivers for the service.

A special ActiVan advisory committee manages the service, and is headed by town councillor Marilyn Serjeantson. In March, the ActiVan quarterly report said the service has about 120 regular subscribers who pay 50 cents per trip. But Mr. Brown thinks there are probably more riders now and new ones are calling all the time.

Some days are slower than others, he said, and the service has seasonal ups and downs. Mr. Brown's day usually begins at 7:45 a.m. with a trip to Hornby carrying a couple of passengers. As yet, the ActiVan service doesn't go beyond town limits, although the advisory committee is considering expanding service.

Except for one Tuesday a month when he drives an ActiVan-load of people to Halton Helping Hands meetings in the area, Mr. Brown's



ActiVan driver DON BROWN

day concludes around 5 p.m.

Most of the riders are senior citizens and not all of them are severely handicapped. Some, Mr. Brown said, have arthritis problems and some use the service "to get out more", having largely been shut-ins before ActiVan's advent. Riders range in age from a two and half year old Georgetown youth and a 12-year old public school student to a 99-year old Acton lady.

The service is never abused, Mr. Brown stressed, adding that those who need it use it. Wheelchair passengers board the bus using a hydraulic hoist, but beyond operating

the machine and driving ActiVan, Mr. Brown said his services are kindly waived aside by independent-minded travellers.

"My passengers don't want me to help them anymore than I have to," he said. "They want to do it themselves if possible, but I'm always close in case of any slips."

ActiVan is currently equipped to carry nine seated passengers and three people in wheelchairs, plus room for crutches, supports and canes. More room for wheelchair passengers can be made by removing one of the seats. When ActiVan is full, rides

become festive occasions, Mr. Brown said. For some of the riders, the trip to therapy or doctor's appointments is a time to exchange news, say hello and generally have a good time.

"While working with them," Mr. Brown explained, "I've found out they're a happy bunch. I don't hear many excuses or complaints even though some are having a really rough time."

"A lot of people are participating in the ActiVan service who were never getting out before; or, if they did, they had to hire taxis, which was hard on their finances."

Riders are so enthused by ActiVan, that some pay more than the regular fare—a special contribution to fund-raising efforts for the service.

"I don't know what else to say," Mr. Brown said. "I just really enjoy my work."

## Trophy honors Georgetownner

By BETTYANNE WELLS  
Fair board publicist

A new trophy honoring one of Halton Hills' best-known senior citizens will be introduced at this year's Georgetown fair.

The trophy honoring Emily Bessey will be given to the Best Lady Driver in the Light Horse division, a popular feature at the annual fair.

Mrs. Bessey, a resident of Kincourt in Georgetown, showed horses at Georgetown fair for many years. Last year, she was chosen to represent the senior citizens of Halton Hills at the 1981 fair, when she presided over the official opening of the 135th anniversary event.

The trophy is being donated by local businessman J.S. Jones of the McClure-Jones Funeral Home, where Mrs. Bessey was employed for a number of years.

Prizes in the Light Horse division of the fair will be increased in all categories, it was announced at a meeting of the Georgetown Agricultural Society held in Exhibition Hall at Fairgrounds Park. Director Delmar French recommended that prize money in all categories be increased in keeping

with those offered at other fairs and that one category be eliminated due to limited entries.

In order to make exhibiting at Georgetown fair more attractive, the fair board has been increasing cash prizes in all areas of competition, including livestock and domestic crafts, as it was felt that prior to 1981, the cash prizes offered were not in keeping with the costs involved to the fair's exhibitors.

This year the fair dates will be earlier than in recent years with an extended three-day fair planned for Sept. 10, 11 and 12. At the moment, the board is busy finalizing plans for the Saturday and Sunday program, which will feature greyhound races on the last day of the fair.

## SENIOR SCENES

By Morley and Laretta Mills  
877-3915

MY MOTHER

By Grace Noll Crowell

There was a wholesome beauty in her toil,  
I well recall the dear old home-sweet ways  
When she, an ardent lover of the soil,  
Moved in keen delight among the days.  
The sun was up no earlier than she.  
She loved white clouds, she loved each blowing tree,  
And all the little things that took her care;  
The small and helpless things; the fluffs of gold  
That peeped about her feet and begged for food;  
A sickly lamb, a small pig wet and cold,  
A turkey hen with its young drabbed brood,  
And all her household with its quick demands;  
Fruit to be gathered, cream to be skimmed and churned.

A thousand things awaiting her deft hands,  
And yet how swiftly, cheerily she turned  
These tasks off one by one, and found the hours  
For neighborliness and kindly sympathy;  
For books and pictures and her garden's flowers;  
For rest and gracious hospitality.  
I hope somewhere in heaven she has found  
A few familiar earthly friends like these: The wind and sun,  
A bit of fragrant ground,  
Things to be loved, and flowers, perhaps, and trees.

Congratulations to Harry and Peg Miller of 62 Park St. who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary April 24. Their many friends and relatives honored them on this memorable occasion.

George Haas, father of Alice Greenaway of Prince Charles Drive celebrated his 96th birthday recently. This was marked by a special dinner with friends and family.

Around 150 B.C., the Greek astronomer Hipparchus estimated the moon's distance and size very accurately, the National Geographic Society says. To do so, he measured the size of the Earth's shadow cast on the moon during a lunar eclipse.

The Seniors of the Durham Street apartments are having their Tea and Craft Sale at the apartment building May 8 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. There will also be a Bake Table and lucky draws.

Recently, several members of the "Beaus and Belles" Seniors' Club had an enjoyable bus trip to the Chatham area. Some returned displaying medals, proof of their prowess in bowling, shuffleboard and euchre.

I have four copies of "The Seniors' Directory for Halton Region", available for those 65 and over. It lists telephone numbers for advisory and counselling services, home support services, transportation, housing, health services and government information. Tel. 877-3915.

The years are beginning to add up when it takes longer to rest up than it took you to get tired.

By the time a man can read women like a book, he's usually wearing bifocals.

David O. Flynn.



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At the check-out counter Thursday morning was town councillor Marilyn Serjeantson accepting \$177 more on top of the \$432 employees at Georgetown's Miracle Foodmart have already given to ActiVan. Handing it over under the watchful eye of produce manager George Donnelly is cashier Marilyn Chant.

(Herald photo)  
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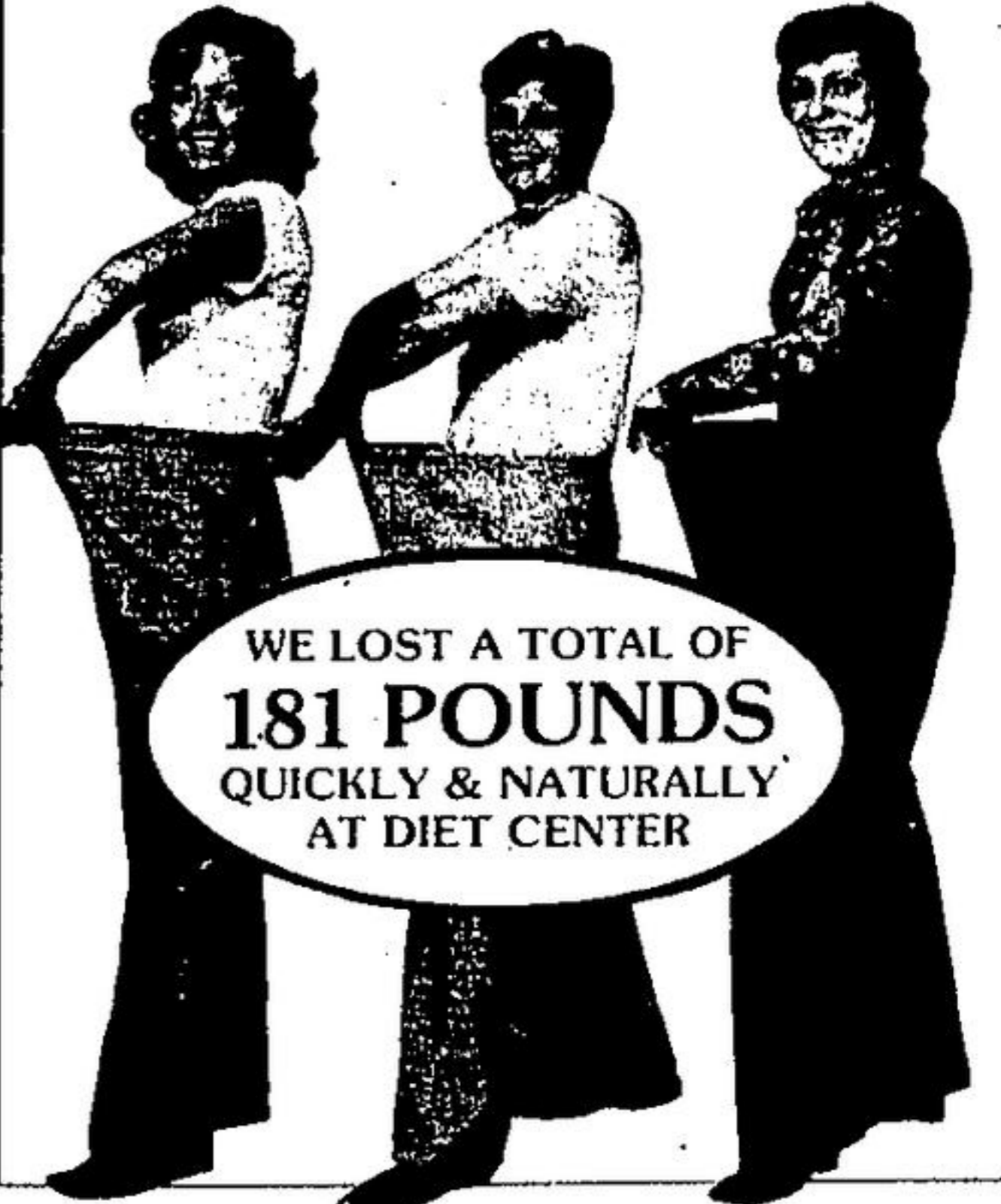


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