

# UWC pressure can turn tide - MPP

Pressure from groups such as the Georgetown University Women's Club (UWC) can encourage governments to act faster when dealing with social concerns affecting women, Hamilton-Centre MPP Sheila Copps said last week.

Ms. Copps was a member of an all-party committee reviewing the province's approach to family violence and wife battering. In two weeks, the committee is expected to present its findings to the provincial legislature.

Describing some of her experiences serving on the body, which grilled government ministers and heard testimony from victims and perpetrators of family violence, Ms. Copps told UWC members at Centennial School that the issue is a substantial concern to all of the province's political parties.

"We actually shared a unanimous point of view (on family violence)," she said. "It was the first time all parties felt strongly about the issue and rose above party politics."

At one point, Ms. Copps recalled, Conservative committee members grilled provincial attorney-general Roy McMurtry as intensely as their Liberal and NDP colleagues.

Among the committee recommendations is greater police involve-



Sheila Copps, Liberal MPP for Hamilton-Centre, was the special guest last week of the Georgetown University Women's Club. Ms. Copps discussed her debut at Queen's Park nearly two years ago and how she had to huck some sexist ribbing from fellow MPPs. She also talked about her work on a special legislature committee looking into family violence in the province and which is expected to submit a report to MPPs later this month.

(Herald photo)

ment in pressing charges against perpetrators of family violence and more community "transition" houses, like Halton's Women's Place in Milton, to which battered wives and their children can seek refuge when their home life collapses. The committee found

that police manual references about dealing with family violence are outdated, and go so far as to connect patterns of family violence with certain ethnic groups. According to Ms. Copps, constables instructing a woman who is ready to charge her husband with assault

should advise her that the husband won't be able to support the family if he is in jail -- a strong urge to drop charges.

But police in London, Ontario, have been working with community workers for the past ten years to curb the wife battering problem. Constables are

encouraged to press assault charges when faced with a wife beating case, although the woman herself may not want to take the case to court.

As police began to handle related assault charges, convictions in London

rose from three to 70 per cent.

"When society, in the form of police officers, says this is a crime," Ms. Copps said, "husbands are often shocked into a recognition of their behavior."

The committee found that most women are beaten by their husbands as many as 35 times before they call the police. Statistics indicate that one out of ten wives are beaten by their spouses.

## Rock-happy thieves hit markets shops

Four businesses in the Georgetown Market Place were hit by rock happy thieves overnight Saturday.

A Halton regional police officer on patrol discovered the glass doors and windows of Supreme Hairstyling broken by a rock at about 2:15 a.m.

Nothing was taken from the premises, and damage is estimated at \$150.

There was \$150 damage to the front door of Cadet Cleaners and missing were some articles of clothing and a small amount of cash from the till. Galyn Shoes had \$150

damage to its entrance as did Skipper Fish and Chips.



### New director

The board of directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Jo Davis as director of Halton Women's Place. Ms. Davis has been associated with the hostel as a volunteer, becoming a full-time staff member and was later asked to serve as stand-in director. This summer she took over as acting director when Adele Service left the position to become a full-time mother. Her main goals are to see an improvement in the present legal system's attitude toward the battered woman, and the education of young women to prevent them from becoming "victims".

### Woman MPP

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provocative but good-natured little note from the BBR, the "boys in the back row".

And at a wine and cheese reception, she received an envelope apparently from another member of the legislature. Inside was a picture from a Toronto newspaper, showing radio personality

Johnny Lombardi flanked by several bikini-clad women participating in CHIN radio's annual beauty contest.

The sender had circled one girl's chest and wrote "Sheila" nearby.

She never singled out the member who wrote the note.

### Travelcrafts

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how to crochet by following a pattern. Already crocheting toques, afglans and craft items, he needs someone who can translate the written instructions for him, Mrs. Albert said.

"We can serve more people if we have more volunteers," Mrs. Albert said. "I thought at first it might be depressing, but it hasn't been, because

the people get so much pleasure out of it, which is so nice to see."

There is only a registration cost of \$5 for Travelcrafts, and eight visits are made. The materials cost is up to those taking the course, although Mrs. Albert said she will help shop for them if it's not convenient for family members of the housebound.

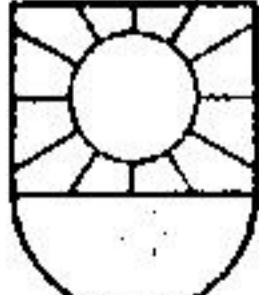
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