

'They're terrific!'

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer

Every week, 1,784 volunteers show up at Halton schools to assist elementary teachers and office staff. Another 913 are occasional volunteers, available when needed.

This army of unpaid workers is found in all Halton schools, enriching education for both elementary and secondary school students. Each year, more and more volunteers donate their time to share their skills and talents with young people.

The majority of the volunteers assisting in school libraries, resource rooms and classrooms are parents, concerned and interested in the education their children are receiving, and most of them are women.

SUPPORTIVE
"It's advantageous for both the school and the parents because the parents get to see the inside of a school and how it operates," Howard Wrigglesworth principal Tom Gibson said. "It makes them very supportive of the school."

All women, the 15 regular volunteers at Howard Wrigglesworth run off dittos, prepare charts and games and do math and reading exercises with children. They also work in the library, shelving, repairing and checking for overdue books.

"I think they're terrific," Mr. Gibson said enthusiastically. "They do a fantastic job for us." At Harrison Public School, 60 parent volunteers help in the same way. Some work one to four hours a week helping out a classroom teacher, while others may never be called in, but the school knows they're available should they be needed.

Volunteer power at the school runs an emergency telephone system which is infrequently used. If the school suddenly has to be closed, for weather or other reasons, parent-volunteers pick up their phones and start dialing a network of other parents to let them know to check their children at home.

HOTDOG
Volunteers run "hot dog days" at the school—monthly lunches of frankfurters which raise funds for school "extras"—and, each morning, it's three volunteers who field calls from parents letting the school know their children are going to be absent from class that day.

The calls let the school know who's away legitimately for when they do their daily check of absentee lists.

"From our standpoint, they're super," Harrison principal Ray Morrison said of the volunteers. He said the volunteer experience provides parents with better insight into what's going on in the school.

"It makes for a much closer relationship than there would be if they weren't out there helping us," Mr. Morrison said.

Most of the volunteers at Harrison are mothers, although there was one father helping out the kindergarten teacher over the winter when he was out of work, he said. Senior citizens also come out to help.

MOTOR SKILLS
For the first year, Harrison volunteers have instituted a program designed by the Halton board of education to help 12 pupils improve their hand-eye co-ordination and motor skills through exercises. Five parents work with the youngsters Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

According to a recent survey of elementary principals with the Halton board of education, there are 347 volunteers regularly assisting in kindergarten classes, 623 in primary, 266 in junior and 91 in intermediate.

Law looks after 'special' kids

Bill 22 has legislated that public schools in Ontario offer programs which will meet the needs of exceptional children by September, 1985. Gifted children are included in the term "exceptional" and defined by the Ministry of Education as those students having an unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated.

The ministry definition mentions "differentiated learning experiences". In gifted education, the emphasis is on process rather than content—how rather than what. Courses may be compacted in order to allow students to pursue in-depth studies of particular aspects of the course.

These in-depth studies in turn may be presented as enrichment to other students, thus broadening and expanding the learning experience for all students.

The teacher's role in the program is that of a facilitator: guiding, directing and evaluating

EDUCATION WEEK

projects and teaching the valuing the student's potential. Students will be

Work out with 'Coop'

Cooperative Education, often called "Coop", has been defined as the integration of classroom theory with practical work experience in which students spend specific periods of time attending school and specific periods at work.

At G.D.H.S. the cooperative education concept is a relatively new and very exciting program organized chiefly around career-oriented employment opportunities and it is fully integrated into the educational process.

A goal in developing the practical component of career education is to provide cooperative placements across the

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encouraged to use fluent, flexible, original and elaborate thinking and become producers rather than consumers.

A committee is presently at work in Georgetown District High School planning a program for implementation in September, 1985. The aim of this program is to produce students who will be autonomous-independent

learners. The program will be interdisciplinary rather than subject-based and will involve the high school staff and members of the community working as mentors with students. It will involve input from students as well as staff and should be an exciting educational experience.

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Time well spent

How much time do these volunteers give to Halton schools? Regular volunteers donate a total of 4,917 hours of assistance per week, which works out to an average of 2.7 hours a week per volunteer.

The survey showed the majority of volunteers, 998 of them, give two to three hours work a week to Halton's elementary schools; 269 volunteers work up to one hour a week; 225 volunteers work between one and two hours a week; and 114 volunteers up to five hours a week.

At a board meeting this month, trustees recognized the outstanding efforts of board volunteers and expressed thanks for their caring and contribution to education in the region.

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THE CRAFT CORNER

YOU CAN DECORATE A WEDDING CAKE LIKE A PRO

Imagination, patience and lots of time are more important than professional skill when it comes to decorating a wedding cake. Hands Magazine offers the following tips for making it even easier:

- *Almost all of the silver leaves sugar doves and roses plastic pillars and almond paste can be purchased from catering companies, department, party supply and cake decorating stores.
- *The size of the cake is determined by the size of the wedding. Count on about 12 pieces per pound.
- *Work out proportions before you start using a ruler to determine a proper triangular shape whether you're making two layers or three.
- *You can rent pans from decorating schools OR use any pans you have on hand measuring roughly 8 in., 5 1/2 in., and 4 in. - round or square. The depth of batter before baking should be about 4 in. deeper in the large pan than in the second and about 1/2 in. deeper in the second than in the smallest. Pans 2 in. deep can be expanded to 3 in. with heavy paper.
- *If possible bake the cake a few months before the wedding. It will stay fresh once sealed in almond paste. Don't use nuts however as they will go bad.
- *Allow at least three days for decorating — one to apply almond paste to each layer individually by rolling out and cutting to fit; one to make and apply Royal, Ornamental or Buttercream icing; and one to assemble and decorate layers.
- *To decorate with frosting use a good pastry bag with assorted tubes. Practice first on wax paper. Apply leaves, rose, etc. while icing is still soft.
- *Use wooden dowels, which fit through plastic pillars to support layers
- *Many bakers use styrofoam for at least the bottom layer keeping a separate slab for cutting ahead of time. Individual pieces should be about 1 1/2 by 2 by 1/2 in. and wrapped in plastic wrap and a fancy dolly.

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