

# Volunteering: It's a great way to grow!

## Helping others

To be a volunteer: the tasks aren't always easy and their work may sometimes be taken for granted, but where would we be without help from volunteers?

In a community like Halton Hills the town depends on many organizations who have people devoted to service because they thoroughly enjoy "helping others".

Volunteers are unique individuals. They're the type who honestly believe life has treated them well and in repayment for their good fortune, they're willing to sacrifice some of their free time.

The jobs volunteers take on provide the vital link for organizations so that they may run smoothly.

While on the subject of volunteer week, it's important to mention those who supervise the work of those who offer their time free of charge.

It's an art to be able to be a good manager, but superior skills are needed to work competently with volunteers: to motivate them and encourage them, to make them feel their work is appreciated; to praise even the most menial task, for each job is important to the efficient running of a volunteer organization.

The watchword of volunteerism is "do what you can".

Mother Teresa of Calcutta perhaps defined the best meaning of what volunteerism means to the world: "We feel ourselves that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not in the ocean, I think the oceans would be less because of that missing drop."

## 400 households benefit from Meals on Wheels

By ROBIN BAKEWELL  
Herald Staff

Area seniors, who may not be able to fully cope on their own, can at least depend on one hot meal a day.

Georgetown's Meals on Wheels program is a network of approximately 50 volunteers who provide over 400 home delivered meals monthly.

Co-ordinator Peggy Suttleworth explained that most of the recipients live alone. "Meals on Wheels not only provides hot meals, but also gives seniors contact with someone from outside their home," she said.

Applicants are first screened by a public health nurse, and if eligible, are referred to the program.

The whole process starts in Milton where a Georgetown volunteer picks up the meals from the Halton Centennial Manor. They are packed in various camping coolers which keep the meals warm and make for easy transportation.

Once the meals arrive in Georgetown they are divided into two routes from which point they are delivered. About 24 prepared meals are personally delivered in about an hour's time.

"On a cold day, by the time you get to the last ones, they may need to be popped in the oven," explained Mrs. Suttleworth. This proves to be no problem, as the packaging resembles that of

T.V. dinners. The meal usually consists of soup, meat and potatoes, and

The problem is getting enough volunteers to fill in, when there is a



Volunteer Pearl Guthrie flashes a quick smile as she prepares for deliveries with the Meals on Wheels program.

(Herald photo)

a portion of vegetables.

need for them.

One of the problems Mrs. Suttleworth faces is the shuffling about of the volunteer workers. Since the working schedule changes from day to day, some volunteers may forget when they are needed.

"Without volunteers it just wouldn't exist," Mrs. Suttleworth says. Meals on Wheels is financially supported by a grant from the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and donations from various churches and clubs.

## HOSPICE: Serving the needs of the terminally ill

By ROBIN BAKEWELL  
Herald Staff

After a public meeting, attended by anyone who cared for the terminally ill, it was resolved that various groups involved didn't have the time or money for proper palliative care.

It was through this meeting, three years ago, that the North Halton Hospice organization was formed.

Hospice is a community volunteer service dealing with the needs and emotions of termi-

nally ill people. A 25 member volunteer team and a nine member Board of Directors are the main factors which make the system work.

Board of Directors President, Karen Ferguson, feels Hospice is "able to bring to the patient, and family, some quality to the time they have left together."

"It is so satisfying to go into a situation that is in so much turmoil, and seeing them (the family) resolve a lot of

that turmoil," said Mrs. Ferguson.

Mrs. Ferguson, a registered nurse and former patient services co-ordinator with Hospice, sees the service as providing "a link with the community".

If a patient is in a local hospital, or at home, and is transferred to a hospital in a different locality, the Hospice volunteer involved is encouraged to visit that person and keep them informed on what's happening at home.

One of the major goals Mrs. Ferguson would like North Halton Hospice to achieve is incorporation into the hospital system. This would involve finding additional space, which the local hospitals may not have, and a certain amount of hospital responsibility for Hospice. Mrs. Ferguson cites funding as a major obstacle.

Hospice is currently funded by a \$2,000 regional grant, donations, in memoriams from families, and funds from the United Way.



Hospice volunteer Karen Ferguson feels the program brings some quality to the time a patient and family have together.

(Herald photo)



Thanks to the 67 volunteers at Maple Nursery School, the co-op program has been able to take on extra projects and allow the paid staff to do their jobs more effectively. It's a unique experience where mothers and fathers can observe their own child while working with other youngsters. Seen

here at the school are youngsters (left to right) Carl Newman, Danny Morris, Danny Hughson. Sitting (left to right) is Leona Howard the school's director and Penny Richardson. Standing in the back row is (left) Ruth Hunter and Maureen Bewley.

(Herald photo)

## Nursery school workers assist with kids' programs

By DAVE ROWNEY  
Herald Staff

An outsider might comment about how smoothly the programs at Maple Nursery School run, but only the insiders appreciate the behind-the-scenes planning.

The 'insiders' at the Cedarvale Hall-based school are for the most part volunteers.

The co-op nursery school began in 1967 for children 3-4 years. There are four paid staff members and as many as 67 parent volunteers who take turns supervising the children.

Says director Leona

Howard, "I wouldn't want to be without them (the volunteers)."

The parents are called 'participants' who come in once every two weeks for about three hours.

They assist the teachers in the everyday running of the school. If they have special talents, such as pottery, the children might be treated to a different type of activity.

A volunteer board of directors is selected to take care of administrative needs such as planning, finance, fund-raising and publicity.

Parents will volunteer

for special duties when the need arises, such as when handicapped children came to the school. Last year Ruth Hunter, Mary Carney, Cathy Edwards, Rita Davidson and Linda Leask all offered their time to work extra hours with the handicapped children.

Fathers are coming in to help out as well as mothers, says Leona Howard. Either they're house husbands or working on shifts which enables them to use their free time at the school.

"We get them to fix bikes and tackle carpenter

jobs while they're here, but they still have to scrub pots like the rest of us," grins Ms. Howard.

Extra work taken on by volunteers allows the children to go on trips to the firehall, cultural centre, Fong's restaurant, a farm, apple-picking and other excursions.

President of the board of directors is Maureen Bewley who now has her fourth child enrolled at the school.

She enjoys working with the children and fellow teachers as well as watching what her own child is doing.

## Auxiliary staff helps with variety of duties

By BRENDA BEAUMONT  
Herald Staff

Anyone who has entered the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, as a patient or visitor, is sure to have encountered one of the many volunteers there.

The teenagers, (previously called Candy Strippers) easily identified by their new red smocks, the ladies by their aqua smocks and men in white coats, all wearing the hospital auxiliary association crest.

The teenage volunteers work on the wards after school and weekends. Approximately 4-500 hours are given each year by these dedicated

teenagers. Adult volunteers (male and female, the association is no longer

Help is given on the wards every morning and evening, Monday to Friday, and every

Photos are taken of the new born babies, the hospital is decorated at Christmas time and recently a library service has commenced.

But there are many who are not so visible, yet giving time as volunteers. The ladies who make knitted garments for the gift shop; the Brownie pack who make delightful favours for patients on holidays and special occasions; the committee members, convenors, schedulers and others who help with fund raising events.

More volunteers will be needed when the hospital extension is in use.

To join or find out more about the Hospital Auxiliary Association contact the co-ordinator of volunteers, Brenda Beaumont, 877-8212.



V. HAINES

a women's auxiliary) open the gift shop for three shifts each day, and a gift cart is taken onto the wards every afternoon for those patients who cannot leave their rooms.



PAM FRAAS

morning transporting patients to physiotherapy.

Once a week a group of ladies do hairdressing, washing, setting and cutting hair of long term patients.

## Helping Hand Jane Adshead 'adopted'

By ROBIN BAKEWELL  
Herald Staff

While attending McGill University in Montreal Jane Adshead would visit a nearby nursing home where two thirds of the people had no living relatives.

"I enjoy the company of older people, they have a lot to share and I find it satisfying to be helping someone."

Jane Adshead is part of the Friendly Visiting Program which is run under the guidance of Halton Helping Hands.

Founded in 1972, Halton Helping Hands is a region-wide home support service for the frail, elderly and permanently disabled on restricted incomes. Funding is provided by the Province of Ontario, Region of Halton, local municipalities and the United Way.

The aim of the agency is to enable clients to live independently within the community for as long as possible.

ONGOING The Friendly Visiting Program sets up ongoing individual relationships between a client and a suitable volunteer.

"The person I visit doesn't treat me like I'm from Halton Helping Hands. I've been visiting there for one and a half years and we

treat each other as good friends, you sort of get adopted," Mrs. Adshead says.

Mrs. Adshead became involved with the Friendly Visiting Program after she took some time off work, as an occupational therapist, to raise her family. "I found I had some spare time on my hands and missed being around elderly people. After I saw an ad in the paper I called up and got involved."

The Friendly Visiting Program has 20 volunteers who spend about three hours a week with their clients. Once every few months meetings are set up to deal with any problems that occur in the program. "I haven't had any problems that I can think of," explained Mrs. Adshead.

LESS INHIBITED

One of the nicer things Mrs. Adshead enjoys about working with elderly people is the fact that they seem to be less inhibited. "I find them very honest and they say exactly what they think," Mrs. Adshead went on to explain that while younger people seem to take things for granted, even very little things done for the elderly are treated as though they were a big deal.



Jane Adshead has been visiting a friend through Halton Helping Hands for a year and a half now.

(Herald photo)

## WANTED: volunteers

- 1) Office work: phone, clerical, typing, for a volunteer organization.
- 2) Friendly visitors: to assist seniors with shopping.
- 3) Board members: for Block Parents.
- 4) Hospital Volunteers: Telephone, gift shop, drivers.
- 5) Big Brothers: friend to fatherless boys.
- 6) Board members for the bridge: people helping people to make an adjustment into the community.
- 7) Nursery school volunteers.
- 8) Volunteers for distress line.
- 9) Tutor: for basic reading.

For more information call the Volunteer Centre at 877-3219.

Betty Armstrong

## Red Cross volunteer for 14 years

By KAREN HEWER  
Herald Staff

As a Red Cross volunteer, the kind of leadership and dedication demonstrated by Betty Armstrong over the past 14 years is hard to find.

She first became involved with the Red Cross in 1970 after taking a home nursing course offered by the local branch. The course sparked her interest so much that Betty went on to assist instructor Dorothy Bergman in a subsequent course.

As her commitment to the Red Cross gained momentum over the years, Betty became district campaign co-ordinator in 1979, and continued with the role during the 1980 and 1981 campaigns.

"It's sort of like an addiction - once you start you can't stop," she quipped good naturedly, when asked why she decided to become a volunteer.

"Most people start because they want to do something constructive

with their spare time. I like working with people - I've been on sickroom supplies since 1973."

The sickroom loan equipment service is one of many areas in which the Red Cross goes unrecognized. As Betty explained, wheelchairs, commodes, crutches, canes, raised toilet seats and walkers can all be borrowed from the Red Cross Society free of charge for up to two months. Cancer patients are exempt from the two-month time limit as the equipment was initially donated by the Cancer Society.

Many terminal patients may need the "high-low" beds for up to a year. Patients may ask for extensions on the due date if necessary. Referrals to the Red Cross sickroom loan equipment service are made by hospitals, health units and doctors, said Mrs. Armstrong. "I think most people really appreciate the availability of sickroom equipment. Many

are surprised it's a free loan service (no deposit required)."

Mrs. Armstrong's volunteer contributions to the community do not stop here. For two years, from 1980-82, she



BETTY ARMSTRONG was the driving co-ordinator for Red Cross Corps, a division of the Red Cross which provided transportation to patients to and from appointments in various cities.

The fleet of unformed drivers offered a welcome service to the elderly, and many local convalescent patients

who depended on the Red Cross to get to their checkups. The service was phased out with the introduction of local ambulance service in 1982, but Georgetown volunteers still drive local people to out-of-town appointments upon request.

Betty is also great in an emergency. When a derailment spilled dangerous chemicals into parts of Mississauga several years ago, Betty was on the scene at the international centre in Milton, caring for evacuees. In an earlier Red Cross emergency response, Betty worked at the Port Credit oil refinery fire.

"It's rewarding - I think we all find it's rewarding," said Betty, adding, "the friendship with other volunteers is great."

But Betty's commitment to community service goes beyond day-to-day involvement. As a recent participant in a diet research project, her contribution may benefit others for

many years to come. After a referral from her doctor sent her to the Ludwig Institute for diet-related cancers at Princess Margaret Hospital, Betty agreed to take part in a study to determine the effects of low-fat diets on cancer of the breast, colon and bowel.

One of 220 women being studied, Betty was first asked to record a week's eating habits in a diary. Based on her eating pattern, dieticians at the institute developed a personal diet which would be easy for Betty to follow. Asked whether sticking to the diet was tough, Betty said no. "It's just great - it's the kind of diet that makes you feel well." She added that being a part of the research project has been a real incentive to stay with it.

In addition to her family and Red Cross commitments, Betty actually finds time to work in the giftshop as part of the hospital auxiliary.