

Child abuse statistics will help CAS: director

by DONNA RIDLEY
Herald Special

A study that claims a significant number of children are abused physically and sexually while in foster care offers "valuable information" said Margaret Morrison of the Halton Children's Aid Society.

The acting director along with public relations coordinator Karen Hewer spoke to The Herald about the report compiled from the data of 19 Children's Aid Societies in Ontario.

The agencies aren't listed by name to ensure an honest response in return for confidentiality, said the report's author Ross Dawson.

Mrs. Morrison said the report

contains no sample cases from Halton because during the three year period the report covered, the Halton CAS had no verified cases of the abuse of children while under foster care.

However, Mrs. Morrison emphasized that this is not to say the problem does not exist in Halton region — cases of abuse have occurred before and after the study period which ended in 1981.

According to Mrs. Morrison it seems the rates of abuse in Halton are comparatively low. This is an unconfirmed impression because at this point, no provincial averages have been compiled, she said. To alleviate the problem, the Dawson report has recommended the establishment of

base-line, across-the-province data on child abuse.

Mrs. Morrison and Mrs. Hewer said the report was valuable especially in recognizing the various situations where there is a higher risk for potential abuse, thus enabling the use of preventative measures.

Mrs. Hewer summarized high risk situations as the following: The first year of fostering is a risk year, as are the fifth and sixth years; sexual abuse rises when the child placed is a female and 12 years old or older — here the abuser is the foster father.

There is a higher risk of physical abuse when the child placed is a male, eight years old or younger — here the

abuser is the foster mother; the foster child is a higher risk if he or she is emotionally disturbed, displaying behavioural traits such as aggression or sexual provocation.

Higher risk is present if the foster parents are authoritarian in their childrearing techniques; and if the foster parents have erratic working hours, the potential for abuse increases.

There is a higher incidence of abuse if the child has a low level of contact with the foster father.

Another problem both Mrs. Morrison and Mrs. Hewer discussed was that some of the children placed in foster care actually belong in some

other form of institution such as a group home or a mental health treatment center.

However, this type of care costs much more than the foster care option. Because of a lack of funding, the problems are two-fold. On the one hand, the child does not receive the "help appropriate" to his or her needs and on the other hand, the demands made on the foster parents are overwhelming.

It is in terms of this last point that Mrs. Hewer is especially concerned. "While in no way do we want to minimize our concern about the findings of the report, none of this is meant to malign the foster parents," Mrs.

Hewer said that in most cases the foster parent is very dedicated. But Mrs. Hewer also added that the "morale of the foster parents is already at a low ebb, and now, we hit them with this as well."

As Mrs. Hewer explained, the morale problems stem from the fact that the foster parents are over-used and over-burdened in child-care demands.

Frequently this results in the "social isolation" of foster parents, or in other words, the "lack of relief afforded to foster parents in terms of entertainment time or simply time to relax."

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Guest speaker Norman Panzica

'Toll road' highlights drug awareness week

Drug awareness is coming back to Georgetown. With the help of a drug abuse committee consisting of local service club members, a week of activities is scheduled for February 23 to March 2.

Planned are displays, speakers, an adult forum presentations in the schools and a "volunteer toll road."

The volunteer toll will be set up Saturday February 23 from 9-4 p.m. Motorists will be encouraged to stop, pick up some literature on drug abuse and perhaps make a donation.

The next day the churches have been asked to set aside some time to talk about drug abuse and the problems it causes for families.

A special guest highlighting the week is Norm Panzica, an expert in the field of drugs and their harmful effects.

Mr. Panzica will be at the Georgetown District High School Wednesday Feb. 27 to talk to the students, at night he will talk to adults in a presentation at 8 p.m. at GDHS. Mr. Panzica will also be

talking to some elementary school students during his week-long visit, plus discussing drug issues with teachers.

This is the second year the community has been exposed to a program on drug awareness. The idea blossomed from the Optimist Club's involving "chicken club", which discourages

students from taking drugs.

Their drug awareness week last year was aided by the help of various other service clubs and a drug abuse committee was formed.

Last year a lively forum was held in which a guest panel discussed the problems of drug and alcohol abuse.

Mr. Panzica is the

author of the book "Your Teen and Drugs: a parent's handbook on drug abuse."

In 1984 he was granted an award of merit from the Ontario Secondary School Headmasters' Council for his invaluable contribution to the health and welfare of young people through his work in drug education.

He has led discussions

before an estimated 500,000 people in seven provinces, ranging from Grade 4 students to such professionals as police officers, social workers, probation officers and military personnel.

Heading up the publicity for the drug awareness week is Ed Prete. He can be reached for more information at 677-8891.

Sweetheart Carnival at Terra Cotta

You and your family won't want to miss this year's Terra Cotta Winter Sweetheart Carnival February 3, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Terra Cotta Conservation Area.

Members of the 1984 Toronto Argonauts are back to enjoy the many events with you and your family. Activities include broomball game, snowshoe races, tandem ski races, horse drawn sleigh rides, baseball on snowshoes, toboggan distance contest (bring your own toboggan), and the newly added cross-country ski race, and snow sculpturing contest.

Prizes will be awarded at the end of the day to the winners of each event. Another highlight of the Terra Cotta Sweetheart Carnival will be the crowning of the 1985 Sweetheart by Steve Ackroyd of the Argos.

This contest is open to any girl 12 years of age and under who participates in the days events.

Terra Cotta Conservation Area is located on Winston Churchill Boulevard, just 2 km. north of the Village of Terra Cotta. Entry fee is \$3.00 per vehicle.

El Salvador speaker

Get the "news behind the news" from El Salvador.

Rev. Marta Benavides will speak at a special "Ten Days for World Development" event, tomorrow Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. at Knox Presbyterian Church, sponsored by 9 local churches.

Also a 10 minute U.N. cartoon film on peace and development "What If?", Bridgehead. Products for sale, and refreshments. All welcome!

VON placements

The Victorian Order of Nurses, Halton Branch is playing host this month to two nursing students on field placement.

Jane Kennedy, a graduate nurse taking her Post Basic Nursing Degree from Ryerson, will be with the branch three days each week until April. Kennedy's specialty is patient educational programs. She will be making independent calls and is working with patients who require specific education in personal health care.

Quilting course

Thread your needles. There are going to be two quilting workshops at the Acton YMCA in February and March.

There'll be a log cabin quilting workshop February 12 and 19 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and a crazy quilting workshop February 26 and March 5 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Each two-day workshop costs \$8.00. There is babysitting available at \$2.00 a day per child.

To register, call 853-0170 Tuesdays or Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Euchre night Feb. 1

The Acton branch of the Canadian Red Cross is holding a euchre night Feb. 1 at 8 p.m.

Everybody's welcome to come and try their hand at the popular card game.

The action is at the Scout Hall on Acton's Lane. Refreshments will be served.

Provincial help down

Provincial funding has decreased by 15 per cent since 1979 for town, regional and educational purposes.

Back in the good old days of 1979, provincial funding was 45 per cent of the budget for tax supported services. Now, it's just 38 per cent.

The difference explains why your taxes have been going up. Through your increased property tax, you're offsetting the decrease in provincial funding.

Property taxes for Halton Hills residents have gone up from 47 per cent in 1979 to 51 per cent in 1984.

Motel room used for cheque forging

The Georgetown Motor Inn was under heavy police surveillance for two weeks in November, 1984 as the Ontario Provincial Police monitored a fraudulent cheque cashing scheme.

British Columbia resident Ranson Manners, 50, was sentenced to four years for his part in the forgeries, while Rodney Emery, 36 and Robert Mitchell, 24 each received three years in jail.

The three men were apprehended November 30 1984 after attempting to cash a fraudulent certified cheque for \$818.75 at a travel agency in Peel's Square One shopping mall.

At the time of their arrest the men had \$138,756 in forged cheques ready for cashing and if they had been successful would have netted \$162,825.

Ranson Manners appeared in Milton Provincial Court and pleaded guilty to charges of forgery, January 23. The other two men charged were handed down their sentences previous to Mr. Manner's trial.

The O.P.P. had all three of the men under audio and physical surveillance while the men were staying at a Georgetown Motor Inn hotel room.

Sgt. Williams testified that Ranson Manners played a "significant role" in the fraud scheme and seemed to be instructing and super-

vising the other men.

"From the information we obtained I do not think their operations could have been successful without Manners," he said.

The men set up various bank accounts under the assumed names of Jonathan Wright and Peter White in the Toronto and Brampton area, the court was told.

They then obtained the necessary items needed to forge certified cheques, such as a cheque writer, dye and rubber stamps.

Cheques used to obtain \$10,000 worth of gold and \$13,000 in travellers cheques were passed but because of tight police surveillance, the money was recovered.

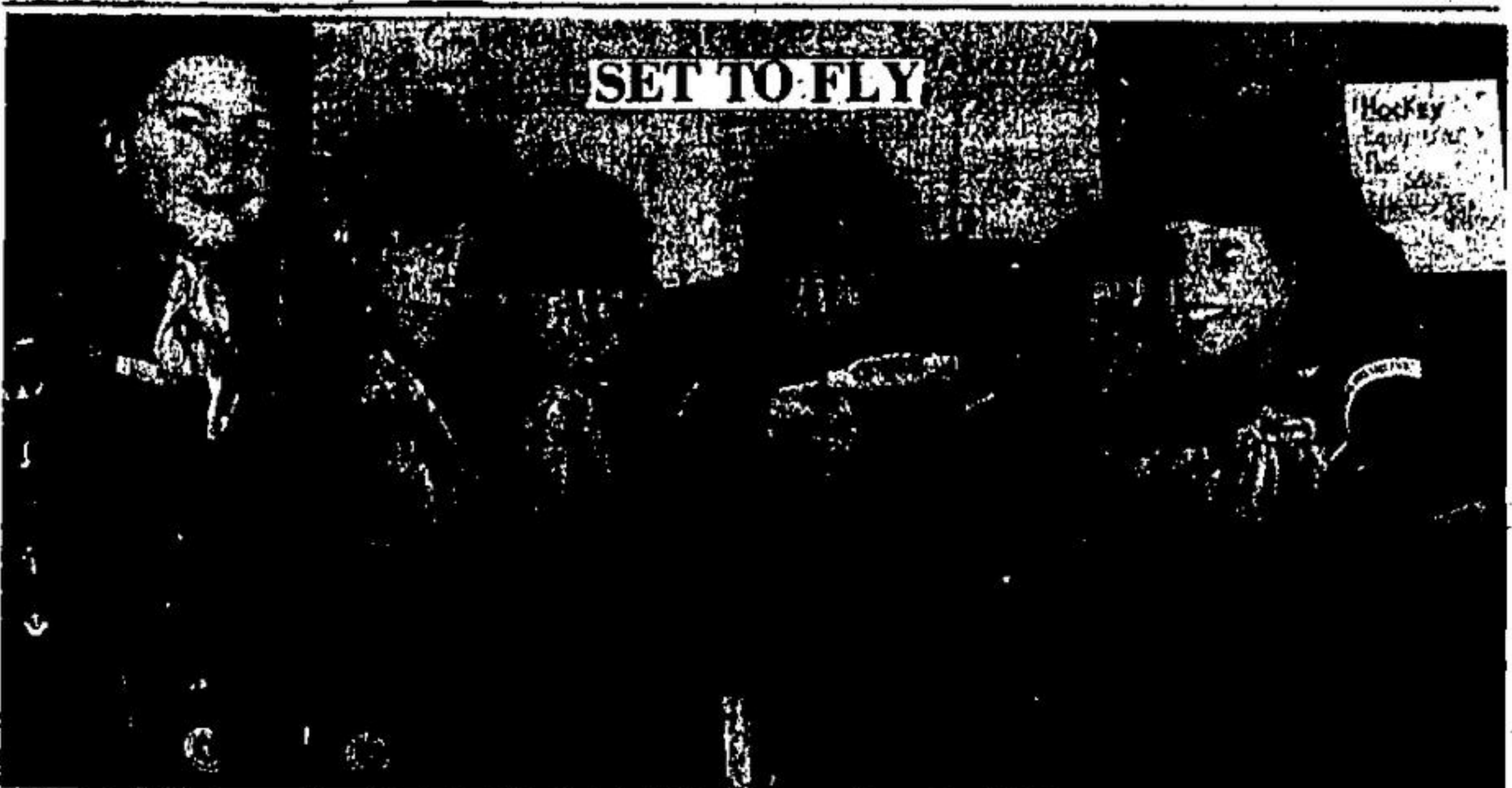
Mr. Manners was found in possession of the gold.

Crown Attorney James Treleven recommended a four year jail term for the accused.

Mr. Treleven said the accused had a 20 year where no criminal activities were reported. But said Manners had returned to the same type of crime he had been involved with 20 years ago.

Mr. Manners previous record included theft, robbery, extortion, possession of forged instruments and four counts of forgery.

In handing down the sentence, Judge "Douglas" Latimer said although the co-accused parties in the crime had more recent criminal records, they were more minor in nature.



It's not every day you get to fly-up to Guides, so naturally these six girls were excited last week. Enjoying a special ceremony in their honor were (left to right) Julie Robertson, Natalie Venditti, Amy Adams, Mandy Wenn, Elaine Baker and Dawn Newman.

Francophones celebrate Feb. 10 - 16

Want to celebrate French Canada's heritage? The time is coming when French activities and culture will be featured in Georgetown.

Feb. 10-16 is French Week. That means organizers have been working on a series of crowd-pleasing events for kids and adults.

Saturday Feb. 10 kicks off the week with a Cafe Cabaret at Sacre Coeur Hall from 8-10 p.m. There'll be wine and cheese and much more.

Sunday's events begin with a pancake supper at 12 noon after Mass. In the afternoon you can go for a sleigh-ride at Wildwood Manor ranch just outside of Georgetown.

Monday night a bingo and card party is scheduled at Sacre Coeur Separate School from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Then Tuesday your culinary delights will be spoiled after a down-home-cooked French-Canadian supper served from 5-8 p.m.

At Sacre Coeur Separate School Thursday there will be a winter carnival. Games are planned for the morning and a magician will be the highlight in the afternoon Saturday at the public library there will be films for the children and in the evening the adults can participate in a dance at the Sacre Coeur church hall.

A special treat for everyone is that a French bookstore from Mississauga will be coming Sunday Feb. 10 and Saturday Feb. 16 so don't leave home without your wallet!

Housing hopes bleak for needy families

By SUZANNE BROWN
Herald Special

Food, clothing, shelter — they're our most basic needs.

Yet, for people on low or fixed incomes, a lack of affordable housing in Halton and elsewhere, means they have very little left over for food or anything else.

Last year the federal and provincial governments spent over a billion dollars to promote affordable rental housing in Canada. However, in Halton Hills, there is very little in the way of affordable housing for lower income families.

The Halton Housing Authority which administers OHC subsidized rental units has only 18 family units in Acton (none in Georgetown) and Morley Mills in Georgetown, a non-profit housing co-operative, has only 46 units of which a minimum of 15 per cent are subsidized.

Both have waiting lists in a situation where turnover is very low. Given the present economic climate of high unemployment, it is not expected to improve.

Halton Housing has three buildings for seniors and disabled in Georgetown and two in Acton.

There is a waiting list for these buildings too, and according to last year's report by the National Council of Welfare, there will be an increasing demand for seniors housing as the rate of growth of Canada's elderly population continues to accelerate.

Ann Gabriel of the Halton Housing Authority says they do not anticipate any further OHC building. The initial capital expenditure and ongoing costs (in a time of government cutbacks) do not justify any further building, she says.

Social problems have made some communities resistant to the idea of more public housing projects, she says. A consensus among many is that it is better for subsidized tenants to be integrated into the community, rather than segregated in large scale public housing projects.

One such program is the subsidization of units in private developments. The housing authority pays the difference between what the tenant can afford to pay and the actual rent.

Subsidizing units in this manner does nothing to keep rents in an affordable range and since there are few vacancies in apartments with low rents, the program could well be filling vacancies in high rent buildings at a

high cost to the taxpayers.

Non-profit housing is another alternative. The federal government under the National Housing Act encourages non-profit housing by subsidizing mortgage rates for municipal, private or co-operative non-profit housing.

Peel has municipal non-profit housing which is 25 per cent subsidized and 75 per cent rent geared to the low end of the market and Peel-Halton has 18 co-operatives.

The latter have been very successful in Halton. Five co-ops are in Halton with two more being planned in the near future. In Peel, the Social Planning council released a report concluding that co-ops are the most effective form of affordable housing.

Here in Halton, the housing authority is pleased with the co-op program and says Anne Gabriel, they feel co-ops complement the housing authority.

These programs have the advantage of integrating low income households in the same building with households paying market rent, thereby eliminating many of the problems associated with the public housing program.

The government has also offered incentives to builders under programs such as the Ont. Rental Construction Loan Program and the Canada Rental Supply Plan to make a percentage of units available to the local housing authority.

Needy families would be placed in these units and the housing authority would pay the difference in rent between what the families could afford to pay and the builder's rent.

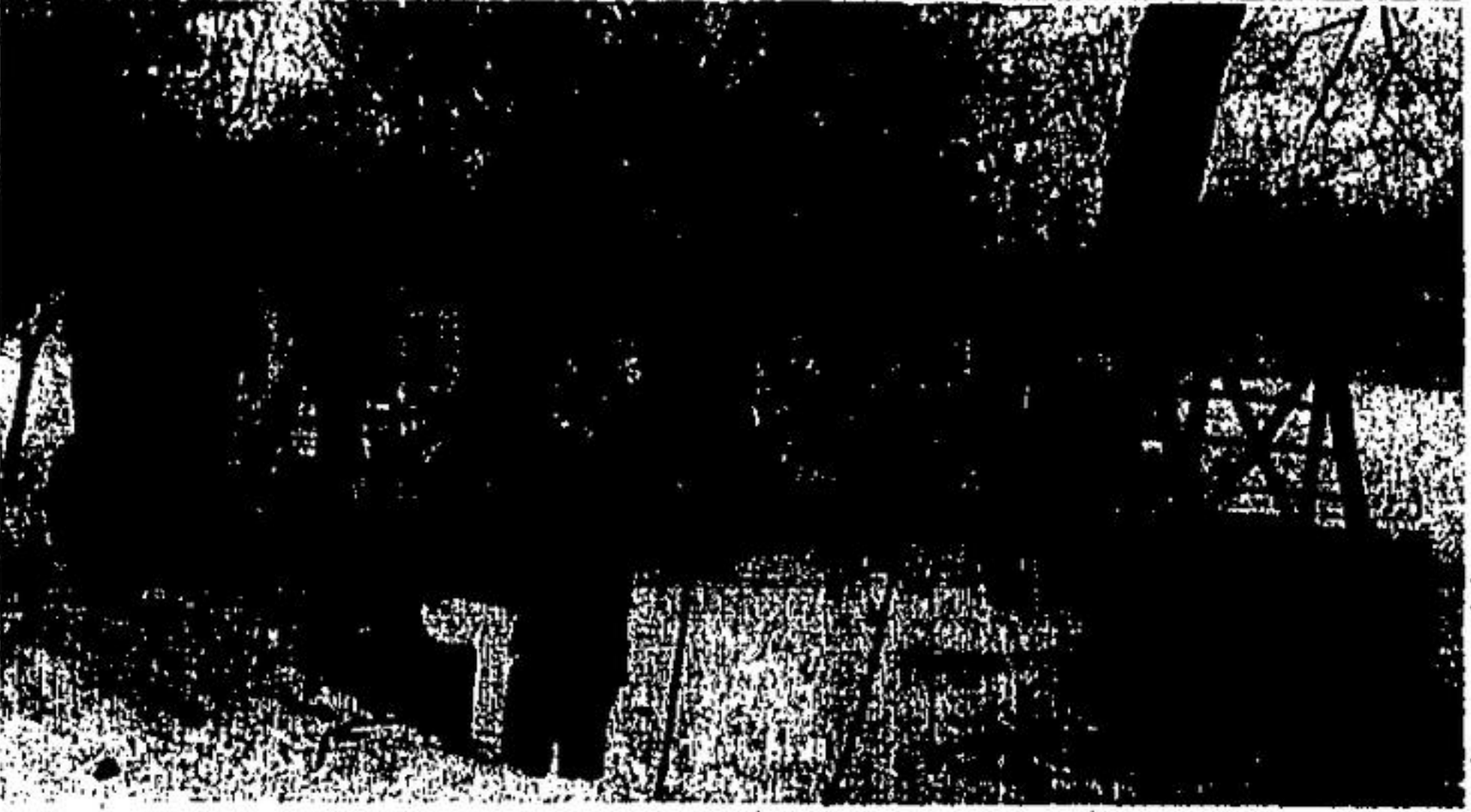
Few developers in Halton seem interested in the incentive and subsidized programs, says Gabriel.

However, while builders have taken advantage of these programs, some have failed to provide affordable rents for low and moderate income families.

Many of the buildings consisted of luxury apartments which have been beyond the financial resources of local housing authorities.

As well, they feared the public would react negatively to needy families being placed in luxury buildings. As a result, local housing authorities in Peel used only 33 per cent of the units offered to them.

Currently, the Canada Rental Supply Plan is suspended while "the new federal conservative government assesses its housing policies."



ABRIDGED

It was a bridge just far enough. Everything seemed to fit properly as crews from the town of Halton Hills worked last Wednesday at fitting a pre-fabricated steel bridge at Cedarvale Park. It's at the south end, allowing people using a new car parking section to cross onto the soccer fields over the creek. The bridge costs about \$10,500.

PSYCHIC RESPONSE

Carole Matthews

Dear Carole:

I have been reading your column for many months now and am now asking for advice. I plan to return to work - is this a good move after all these years? I am hesitant.

Thank you, Helena

Dear Helena:

It is never too late to return to a career. You have no need to worry, there is a job - part time thou. I feel will be very good for you.

I suggest you take this offer in March. You will be much more content than you have lately.

Take a chance.

Carole.