

## My Generation Clothing

# Woman taps the teenager market

By CHERYL MOODER  
Herald Staff

Teens take heart. After months of whirlwind buying and preparation Jan Withers has opened a clothing store for the younger generation.

Opening My Generation, located at 115 Main Street South March 22, was the realization of an idea Mrs. Withers had in her mind for years.

When she moved from Brampton to Georgetown four years ago, Mrs. Withers found there really was nowhere to shop for her two sons now 15 and 12. "I had to go out of town quite a bit," she said.

As well, running a retail store was something Mrs. Withers had been part of since her mother operated a store.

Although Mrs. Withers does not know if the time spent in her mother's store gave her any experience, she said, "It was just in my blood."

At the moment My Generation carries children's sizes eight to 16, 18 and 20 depending on the line.

These sizes would also fit a teenager. "I want to try and cater to the high school kids," she said.

Mrs. Withers, who loves kids and teenagers, wants to create an atmosphere where both boys and girls feel comfortable.

"I had a group of boys come in and they seemed to know just where to go," she said. The bunch headed for



Jan Withers opened a new store with the younger generation in mind recently on Main Street South in Georgetown. The idea for a store a cabinet in the corner to check out the shop owner's line of Ralph Laurens.

Mrs. Withers left them to their looking. "I really want the boys to know they can come in and shop," she said.

When Mrs. Withers heard space would be available in the old bank building at 115 Main Street South she got very serious about opening a store.

In September she and a girlfriend scoured Toronto looking at clothing

was started because there was a lack of selection for teenage clothing in town. (Herald photo)

lines. She made appointments at clothing showrooms to buy her spring lines.

She also went to Montreal in February to do her Ralph Laurens buying for the fall.

Her husband built the counter and shelves in her store and Mrs. Withers set her creativity in motion setting up displays.

She gleaned a few ideas from the showrooms she visited while on buying sprees.

Mrs. Withers plans to change her displays every 10 to 14 days just to keep things looking fresh and new.

In April she plans to take a course on display and promotion, which she anticipates will be useful.

Mrs. Withers' children were very supportive of her decision to open a clothing store.

"The youngest loves to come in here," she said. Her eldest son is doing the bookwork on computer.

Opening day champagne flowed, flowers bloomed and wrapping paper was torn from gifts. "It was exciting," Mrs. Withers said.

Grandmothers commented it was so nice to find something for the grandchildren in town, the store owner said.

Mrs. Withers will be continually getting new stock in and increasing her selection.

"I love it downtown," she said. The atmosphere is alive. The Georgetown resident would not want to be located in a mall.

And being in retail is exciting. "Every day something different happens to give you an indication where you are going," Mrs. Withers said.

She is open to constructive criticism, suggestions or ideas which her customers may have.

"I am new at this," she said, and would appreciate teens telling her what lines they would like to see the store carry.



One of the newest attractions at Work That Body is a life cycle which can simulate actual cycling conditions outdoors. Fitness is no longer a

fad and more people are exercising more regularly, says owner of the health club Laurie Burns. (Herald photo)

## A fitness lifestyle

By MIKE TURNER  
Herald Staff

Once was the time fitness was considered merely a passing fad.

But all that passed was time, and today, that "fad" is a very important part of most people's lives.

Work That Body is genuine proof of this, evolving from a series of fitness programs staged wherever they were in demand, to a thriving, up-to-date centre, which caters to the fitness-conscious masses.

Laurie Burns, owner of Work That Body, began as an instructor of fitness programs staged in conjunction with the recreation department in 1981.

Four years ago, Work That Body, the fitness centre situated near the junction of Mountainview and Guelph Street in Georgetown, opened its doors and today serves about 1,000 members.

Laurie is well aware of the emphasis placed on keeping fit, by society.

"Fitness was a fad for a while," she says. "But now it's a more important part of people's lives. We offer different types of memberships to suit different lifestyles, even as short as a month, so we can cater to more people."

WTB has a staff of nine instructors, including Laurie, as well as four part-time receptionists, a weight training instructor, and a full-time babysitter.

The centre remains open seven days a week during the colder months, and six days during the summer.

The air-conditioned facilities and services available include a gym, weight training room, sauna, women's locker room, hair dryers, sun tan bed, a babysitting service, fitness evaluations, and specialty programs.

One of the newest attractions at WTB is the life cycle, which is similar to regular indoor workout bicycles, but simulates actual cycling conditions, including the uphill stretches.

"It's computerized, and geared to time," Laurie says. "We set up specific programs with it, and it makes it more exciting. We're hoping to add another one by Christmas."

The greater part of the membership is comprised of women at WTB, but a men's weekday fitness program is operated during the lunch hour.

Another feature of WTB is their Fatburner Class, which is designed to use up large amounts of selective calories.

Fitness isn't necessarily confined to leisure hours, either.

WTB works closely with several local businesses to provide corporate fitness programs. In some cases, instructors will go to the workplace and conduct fitness classes on the premises during lunch breaks, with the employees.

The flexibility of their membership program, with monthly payment plans make Work That Body an inviting place to get in shape, and have a good time doing it.

### Frank Heller and Co.

## A success story for Acton firm

By DIAHANN NADEAU  
Herald Special

Frank Heller and Co. is a remarkable success story in Halton Hills. The firm has managed to grow

### Waste grant

The Regional Municipality of Halton will receive an additional grant of up to \$230,000 for its long-range waste management planning study, Environment Minister Jim Bradley announced recently.

This grant to Halton brings the total commitment to \$930,000 for work this fiscal year on its comprehensive Waste Management Master Plan, being done to meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act.

The grant comes under the ministry's Comprehensive Funding Program for waste management which was announced in June, 1987.

in a dying industry and has expanded its market, its product range, and its labor force.

Frank Heller was born in Czechoslovakia, where his family ran a tannery until they lost it during the war. Frank emigrated to Canada in 1949 and began working at the Canada Packers plant in Acton. In 1961 he started his own tannery in Acton. The company remained fairly small until Mr. Heller's death of a heart attack in 1969. Frank's son Ron and his son-in-law Fred Dawkins (now Vice-President of Marketing and co-owner) took over the business. The company presently operates two plants and employs 240 people.

The firm processes leather, especially split leathers, and sells to manufacturers of shoes, gloves, belts, handbags, billfolds, and attache cases. A key to their success is the ownership of the Canadian rights to a special leather coating process called Endura, which consists of a laminated, polyurethane film sur-

face on split cowhide leather, and results in a very tough surface with a flexible and comfortable reverse side. This product is extremely popular with shoe makers. An American plant also offers this coating, but they have not been as successful as Heller. The process originated in England.

The company sells 40 per cent of its goods to the United States. Mr. Dawkins is very positive about free trade; his company will gain by the elimination of tariffs on leathers. The company imports raw material from the Far East, South America, and the United States, making it a truly international affair.

The firm runs two plants: the largest is on McDonald Boulevard in Acton (110,000 square feet), and a second smaller one (20,000 square feet) is on Lamb Street in Georgetown. The company was originally located at the present Olde Hide House in Acton. Frank

Heller and Co. moved from the site in 1980. Don Dawkins, Fred's brother, now owns and operates the Hide House along with his son Stephen. No legal connection exist between Heller and Co. and the Olde Hide House, but the family tie is strong.

Fred Dawkins looks toward future expansion because of new product lines that are being planned. The firm is in continual need of labor. This is a high turnover industry, although some of the Heller employees have been there for 20 years. Mr. Dawkins is re-evaluating the present package offered to employees in hopes of attracting more labor. At this time 66 per cent of the staff is female. Because of the specialized nature of the work, the company has to train most of its employees. There are differing levels of skills which a worker can achieve and therefore there is room for advancement in the company. Frank Heller and Co. is a growing and progressive concern in Halton Hills, a company with a future.

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Curwood is a company that relies largely on the resources of the people who work there, to make it a success. From left, Dave Wolfenden, Gary Gabet, Doreen Merrill, Patty Heldeman, Dennis McClay, Tracey Charles, Brian Reed and Cary Darsan.

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