

USC is planting the seeds a better life in Third World

There is a wise saying that goes, "If you give a man a fish, you will feed him for today; if you teach a man to fish, you will feed him forever."

It may be putting it simply but this more than anything underlines the goal of the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, which is active through relief efforts in Third World countries.

Currently, USC is at work in various countries of Africa and Asia, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, Mali, Ethiopia, Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho.

USC was founded in 1945, according to Helmut Kuhn, Director of Canadian Operations, to provide relief for Europeans after the Second World War.

"They then began to move and divert Canadian resources to Third World countries, where the need was identified," says Mr. Kuhn, who visited the area last week as part of a "media blitz" and also to speak with service clubs and students at schools.

USC is in the process of getting their annual fall fundraising campaign under way, which was started many years ago by the organization's founding director Dr. Lotta Hirschmanova.

The campaign target for 1988-89 is \$4.7 million. Some funds for their work will come from the Canadian government, while the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba will also make contributions.

And the need to keep up relief efforts remains evident.

Mr. Kuhn says in Bangladesh work on development programs have been temporarily interrupted because of devastating floods. USC has therefore directed their attentions toward helping the people of Bangladesh set up water purification methods, while providing medicine and supervising clean-up operations.

John Martin, Chief Executive Officer for USC will leave this weekend for Bangladesh and will work with representatives to draw up plans on reconstruction projects.

Another important facet of USC's work is to provide women of Third World countries with direction. Mr. Kuhn says women are usually "on the tail end of the education priority," and are therefore very destitute.

USC wants to provide homes for these women and train them so their lives will be more productive.

Another major project undertaken by USC is their Seeds of Survival program in Ethiopia, which has



Helmut Kuhn (right) is director of Canadian Operations for USC, and was in the area recently to help launch USC's upcoming fundraising campaign, and also to outline the organization's current projects for

local groups. He is seen here with campaign organizer Sam Stubbs of Brampton, looking at a book on Dr. Lotta Hirschmanova, founding director. (Herald photo)

direct ties to the Canadian agricultural community.

Ethiopians have been farming for 10,000 years and have been developing varieties of food plants, such as wheat, barley, sorghum and millet which hold a major place in the modern world's diet.

The result is that every kind of crop grown in Ethiopia has thousands of varieties, and each variety has special genetic characteristics to survive local drought and disease conditions.

But these seeds are disappearing. New seed developed for modern agriculture is replacing the traditional varieties and because the new seed is genetically uniform to meet demands of industrial agriculture, it is less resistant to drought and disease.

The hardy seeds that have taken 10,000 years to genetically produce are quickly disappearing.

Seeds of Survival is a program that brings together scientists of the Plant Genetic Resources Centre of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian farmers with an innovative strategy for conserving the remaining diversity of Ethiopia's food plants.

Currently there are only 15 "gene bank" facilities of this kind in the world and Ethiopia has the only one in Africa. But it is the intention of USC to involve Africans from other countries in research as well.

"It's ground-breaking work, and reminds us of our interdependence," says Mr. Kuhn.

The USC fundraising campaign will continue through until Christmas and volunteers are needed to help with the effort.

Anyone who is interested can get in touch with the area campaign organizer Sam Stubbs in Brampton at 459-3563.

Open Door not your average hangout

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the first in a series of articles, which will run on alternate weeks in the Herald, highlighting activities at Open Door, as it heads into its fifth year of operation at St. George's Anglican Church on Guelph Street. By DAVID JAMES PRESSWOOD Herald Special

If you ever find yourself near the high school on a Thursday or a Friday, drop in to the Open Door. You'll find the youth drop-in center located in the basement of St. George's Anglican Church, beside Georgetown District High School.

Now this is not your average "youth hang-out". Open Door is like a second home to some, or at least that's how close the kids feel to it.



"Open Door is a place I can go, be myself, and not have any judgements thrown at my character," says one teenager.

There is a really warm atmosphere, friendly kids, and very understanding co-ordinators. Here, you can buy yourself a lunch, or maybe just a coffee, listen to music or just relax. I, myself, have been

coming to Open Door for four years now and I wouldn't give up the memories or friends I've made there for anything in the world. Nowhere else have I been able to find a place where there's such a mixture of teenagers; everyone is welcome, from punks to preps. The co-ordinators treat us like family, and we feel the same way. If we have a problem we don't hesitate to ask for advice, and they are just as quick to react to our needs.

Now that you've heard what I have to say, you're probably doubtful, so if you have any spare time stop in, ask some questions, and I guarantee it will live up to your expectations and more.

Program members plan fund raiser

The participants of the Open Door Young Parents Program have been busy organizing their first fundraiser in order to support the ongoing operation of this much-needed and successful local service.

Sunday, Oct. 16, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Cedarvale Community Center they will be holding a Giant Garage Sale.

Many items (toys, books, clothes, furniture and appliances) have already been donated to the sale. Anyone who would like to clean out their basements before winter and support this program is invited to call Open Door 873-2966 Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. or Fridays 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or 877-9173 evenings. Arrangements will be made to receive or pick up any dona-

tions. To make this a fun event for the entire family, children's entertainment and face painting have been arranged. A light lunch and baked goods will also be available.

All proceeds will go toward the Young Parents Program. Everyone is encouraged to come out and join in for a day of family fun!



Principal of Cooking

Park School principal Jack Peckitt was behind the barbecue, apron and all Thursday for the school's annual Parents Association barbecue. The parents group staged the event to help raise money for the various pro-

jects they co-ordinate with the school. Assisting Mr. Peckitt are Lynn Sargent (centre) and Donna Donaldson, co-chairpersons of the Parents Association. (Herald photo)

Parents keeping kids hopping

A group of Acton parents is working hard to entertain young teens.

Sandy McDonald is the president of a MacKenzie-Smith Middle School parents association. Five parents - Mrs. McDonald, Gayle Dale, Karen Lockwood, Jane Preston and Pat Trotter - got together last school year and arranged dances for Grades 6, 7 and 8 students. This year, plans are under way for a Halloween dance and a disco-jockeyed dance Oct. 21.

"We are trying to give the children a place to go on a Friday night," said Mrs. McDonald.

Last year the parental group held theme dances, including Hawaiian Night and Black and White Night, where children wore black and white clothing.

Mrs. McDonald said all young students (roughly 11 to 13 years old) are welcome to attend the dances. And this year could bring more than just dances to the Acton teens.

The parents' group could work in conjunction with the Halton Hills Parks and Recreation Department to come up with a movie night.

The dances are presently held at MacKenzie-Smith Middle School once or twice a month. The parents' group would like to provide more entertainment for children, and will discuss plans for the 1988-89 school year at an Oct. 12 meeting to be held at 7 p.m. in the teachers' lounge of MacKenzie-Smith school.

Funds raised by the parents are channeled back into the dances to provide a snack bar with soft drinks, potato chips and chocolate bars. There are draws, and generally a lot of fun at the dances, said Mrs. McDonald.

"It gives (the children) a chance to socialize with their friends on a casual basis," she said.

Sheridan hosts seminar

Sheridan College's Training and Development Centre, in cooperation with Revenue Canada, Customs and Excise, is presenting a seminar relating to the Federal Sales Tax Act on Tuesday, Oct. 18 at the Ramada Inn in Mississauga, Highway 401 and Dixie Road.

This seminar is specifically for persons who are responsible for the applications of the Federal Sales Tax in their organization. It will be of particular interest to manufacturers, wholesalers, jobbers, and importers.

Participants will have the opportunity to find out if their company is paying too much tax. Expert guidance will be given on current ap-

plications, interpretations and exemptions.

The \$160 per person fee for the full day seminar includes tuition, materials, coffee and luncheon.

For further information and to apply, please call Nancy Ferris or Renee St. Denis at the Brampton Campus at 457-7001

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