

Lifestyles



Mayor Russ Miller (second from right) and Regional Councillor Rick Bonnette (right) accepted 10 Junipers donated by Willowcreek Nurseries and Garden Centre in Acton Thursday afternoon. From the left Gerry and Tom Moroz of the centre installed the plants for the town in the front of the new civic centre grounds. (Herald photo)

North Halton Literacy Guild takes grassroots approach

"Tell me, I'll forget. Show me, I may remember. Involve me, and I'll understand."

The motto of the North Halton Literacy Guild is also a Chinese proverb, and is the grassroots approach the group takes to teaching adults how to read and write.

Letters lined the walls of the Georgetown Cultural Centre Wednesday night. People who had never before learned to read and write put pen to paper to say new doors were now opened for them.

The guild is located on Guelph Street in Georgetown but represents all of North Halton - Acton, Georgetown and Milton. There are 30 matched pairs of students and teachers, says project manager Maureen McCallum. And there are another six students waiting to be matched with tutors.

One student at the appreciation awards night Wednesday said he had "slipped" through the school system without learning to properly read and write. In his early thirties, the man gained a new appreciation of life.

The guild's objectives are to

teach adults to read and write "at a functional level of literacy."

They say one in five adults is not functionally literate.

Tutors come from "a variety of age groups and backgrounds. They need not have any teaching experience but (must have) an interest in people and a willingness to work with a student for a minimum of six months."

Lessons usually take place weekly in a library or local school. The content of the lesson is decided between the tutor and the student.

The North Halton guild runs on an operation grant from the Ministry of Skills and Development and receives donations from local clubs and industries.

Information about the guild and its services can be found by calling 873-2200.



Geraldine Barnes and Betsy Cornwell, both from Georgetown, received a North Halton Literacy Guild award from Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller last week. (Herald photo)

Our future is encouraging if children think for themselves

By JANET DU'VAL
Herald Special

Janet Duval is a member of HAND - Halton Hills Action for Nuclear Disarmament.

Has the New Age arrived? Could it be the triumph of human reason - or of simple economics? Or is it God, delivering us from evil? Whatever the cause, the world has changed dramatically in just a few months.

George Bush says the Cold War is over. Mr. Gorbachev is making huge reductions in his domestic and European forces, and NATO is scrambling to respond with peace initiatives of its own. Members of the Canadian peace movement were among those who watched in awe as the Soviets dismantled some of their nuclear weapons last year, and Soviets are witnessing the same process in midwestern U.S. towns. Peace seems to be at hand.

The sense of security we feel now, however, is not because of the weapons that "protect" us - they've been reduced by only about two per cent, after all. Only a few years ago, surrounded by those same weapons, many of us wondered if we would survive the '80s. The world is still capable of destroying itself many times over,

and will remain so for years. The difference now, I think, is in the leaders and the way they treat each other. Gone is the name-calling, the hostility and confrontation, and with them in assumption that each side was out to bury the other. It was probably economics as much as anything that inspired Mikhail Gorbachev's stunning peace proposals, while the west is beginning to realize that the communists can't and won't take over the world.

Where then is the real threat? Surely it remains in the weapons themselves, especially if they come into the hands of an irrational leader. Dare we imagine the consequences if Hitler had the atomic bomb in his final days?

As we watch the slow and intricate dance of disarmament begin, the question of "what then?" comes centre stage. How do we prevent nuclear conflict - forever? People with answers are

beginning to emerge from their quiet wait in the wings. Several universities have departments of peace and conflict studies. Non-provocative defence is becoming a byword, especially in Europe - a military ability to defend but not attack. Gandhi and Martin Luther King offered models of "gentle defiance" of unjust authority, now echoed in the protest of Chinese students, whose story has only begun. As governments close their military bases and cancel weapons contracts, including nuclear submarines, each of the foregoing alternatives deserve budget attention.

Perhaps the most encouraging sign for our future is in parents who teach their children to think for themselves, to appreciate other cultures, and to break up arguments with words, rather than fists. After all, our children have no other choices in the world that awaits them.

Doctor to speak on child abuse

Dr. Bob Bates, a leading medical expert on child abuse, will be guest speaker at a luncheon co-sponsored by Georgetown hospital and the Halton Children's Aid Society on June 15 at the Georgetown hospital.

Dr. Bates is Chief of Paediatrics at Credit Valley Hospital and Chairman of the Board of the Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse. He is widely recognized as an expert on child abuse, has many published articles on various aspects of this problem, and has presented related research papers at international conferences.

This presentation by Dr. Bates, intended for physicians and

medical staff, will cover the medical aspects of child abuse, including examination techniques and consideration of other health problems related to abuse. For further information, please contact Corrie Galloway at 844-8211.

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