

Seniors for the Future Information fresh

By LES MELLISH
Herald Special

The 'pumpkin' coloured brochure, which the Georgetown and District seniors issued over a year ago, is now out of date and we hope this column is replacing it.

Student residence centre started

A group of Markham students have been making it their business to help students outside of Metro find residence while attending universities and colleges downtown.

Barrington Luesang, of Markham, and several friends, received \$7,500 in provincial grants to start up a business, National Billeting Network, to bring students and homeowners together.

It took the group nearly a year to bring the project out of its planning stage. Although the network has only been in operation for a little more than two months, 80 homeowners have already contacted the group. Mr. Luesang, network co-ordinator, said 30 students have been put on the list to find residence while going to school.

The network is totally confidential, said Mr. Luesang, adding that all listed names are compiled in a data bank. The computer program sets up a compatible match between a homeowner and a student based on the area, options, expectations and rent offered, he said.

Once a match is made, the name and number of the student is given out to the homeowner who is then responsible for contacting the student.

Mr. Luesang maintains this referral method provides several advantages in that the student does not have to compete with the general public for the rental unit and the homeowner can earn extra rent without advertising publicly.

The network works with nine zones, each area having a college or university in its district. The network is planning to expand into Montreal where there is also a high demand for housing, said Mr. Luesang.

A finder's fee for homeowners consists of \$30 for six months and \$50 for a full year. There is a six-month \$20 finder's fee for students and a year-long fee of \$30. Students who have shown good standing on accommodations will be re-listed in the network databanks free of charge, said Mr. Luesang.

The network has no authority to screen its clients because it cannot accept that type of liability, said Mr. Luesang.

The network is now working out of an office at 1020 Dension St., Suite 112, Markham, L3R 2Z6 and can be reached at 754-5377. Mr. Luesang suggests any student interested in becoming listed with the Billeting Network join quickly as rental units will soon be high in demand.

The information published here is at least up to date and more complete. It is fresh every week. We are hearing favourable reports of this column and this tells us it is useful and being read. We expect to keep it this way because we are counting on it to get our message through to all readers, not just to seniors.

Our message is that we are working with the town to build a seniors' centre in Georgetown, and we will need the support of everyone in Georgetown, not just seniors.

This centre is going to add to the cultural life of Georgetown and everyone is going to benefit. Our main thrust is to get it established as soon as possible, while some of those who are working on it are still around to enjoy it to some extent at least.

It is not going to be easy. We, in Halton Hills, have a particular circumstance to contend with. Seniors in both Acton and Georgetown are in need of seniors' centres and the communities are too far apart for one building to service both areas so two centres are needed.

We cannot let this slow the project down, however. The extra cost of working around this difficult circumstance is part of the price to be paid for the ongoing financial advantage of running the two communities from one location. When the cost advantage of this single administrative structure was worked out, the fact that some social services would have to be duplicated would have been an accepted expense.

So the Association does not put too much weight on this situation. Acton seniors have their needs just as we do, and we are happy to hear that they have a possible solution in sight.

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Note: All of the above are retired.

Any senior wishing to add support may write to Toronto Symphony Orchestra, co Carol Howitt, Scotsdale Symphony Summer Home Committee, No. 10 Sideroad, RR5, Milton, L9T 2 X9.

756 Air Cadet Squadron gets wings clipped by Council

Although sympathetic to financial constraints of the Georgetown 756 Air Cadet Squadron, Halton Hills Council decided Monday not to reduce the user-fees the town charges the squadron to use such town facilities as Cedarvale Park, the schools and arenas.

"Council is sympathetic to their problems, but the town can't afford to reduce the rates," said Acton Councillor Norm Elliott during a debate on the issue.

Coun. Elliott and the rest of council directed the town's Director of Recreation and Parks, Tom Shepard to write the squadron stressing the town is also facing financially tough times. "I don't want them to think we (the council) are indifferent to groups," said Coun. Elliott.

The commanding officer of the Air Cadet Squadron, John Maclean, wrote in a letter that went before council Monday.

"In the past year, increased costs of renting facilities such as Cedarvale, a local school gym-

nasium and (Memorial) arena for our training and sports programs almost depleted our funds. This forced us to significantly reduce the extra-curricular activities for our young people. It would appear that the user-fee policy is creating a situation that is hurting the young people of Halton Hills rather than helping them."

But Mayor Russ Miller said the user-fee rates haven't gone up as much as the squadron is claiming. The rates appeared to be significantly higher compared to last year, he explained, because the group was charged a reduced rate at that time.

Mr. Shepard felt the letter wasn't prompted so much by the high user-fees but rather that the group had to pay a "hefty" amount for use of the park once time this year even though the group didn't use it.

The squadron booked the park but there was some miscommunication amongst the squadron leaders and no one showed up to use the park, Mr. Shepard told

council. The group was obligated to pay the user-fee because it booked the park, he explained.

Mr. Maclean said one reason for the squadron's financial constraints is because the group's funds only come from the yearly Air Cadet League ticket sales and public donations. "Contrary to popular belief, we are not funded by the Department of National Defence," he stated.

The group is sponsored by the Royal Canadian Legion in Georgetown. The legion raises money for the group through the Air Cadet League ticket sales, said Mr. Maclean.

But Mayor Miller told council the legion funds the group through special events and out of the legion's general funds. And that's "a good amount," he added.

Acton Coun. Gerald Rennie argued the town shouldn't provide the group with financial support because it would be unfair to similar groups such as the boy scouts.

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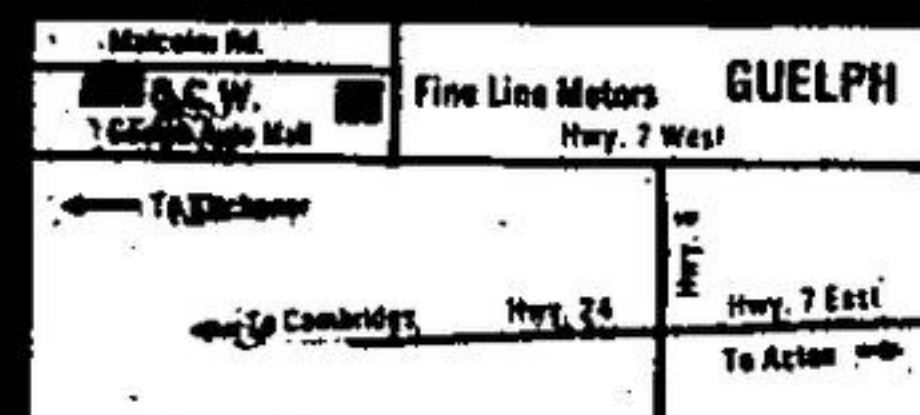
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