

# Community

## Self defense course introduced at high school



Tanya Dale was just one of the many Georgetown District High School girls who took part in a self-defence course for females last week. Pictured above, instructor, Robert Pelletier, shows the student how to defend herself against an attacker who strikes from behind. (Herald photo)

By LIZ GALVIN  
the Herald

At least 20 girls in the Halton school system have the right attitude about sexual assault. And if they had their way, all of their peers would as well.

The Georgetown District High School students are presently involved in a four-hour course entitled Simply Defense and they are gaining the confidence and skills to defend themselves in case they are violently attacked.

The term "right attitude", explains instructor Robert Pelletier, a former boxer, "is about fighting back" and "overcoming psychological barriers". The kind of barriers that make women perceive themselves as helpless victims.

He has also noticed what he describes as "a progression" in women where teenage girls don't notice violence being pushed upon them until they leave high school and go off to college or university.

Keeping this in mind, Mr. Pelletier touches on subjects such as date rape in his high school program, in addition to teaching the physical manoeuvres necessary to thwart an attacker.

Many aspects of his classes don't change, however, like the concern of women about the growing incidence of violence in society and the fact that many women don't feel as though they are strong enough to fight back against an attacker.

And the fact that more and more women are interested in taking the course.

Lisa, a Grade 12 student at G.D.H.S., is glad she signed up, citing "scary statistics" as the reason. "There's a general fear that we don't know what's out

there," she said.

After the second session, however, she realized, "I do have some strength" and that in case of an attack, she wouldn't "just sit there thinking 'okay, I'm a victim'."

"I don't think it's a bad idea for anyone anywhere to take the course," she said, adding she thought Georgetown was "safe, a smalltown where everyone knows everyone."

Her friend Jenny also enrolled in the four-hour course on her mother's suggestion. "I guess because the world is getting a lot more violent," she said.

Jenny says she also wanted to improve the techniques she had learned in her athletic endeavors. As a lifeguard, she has learned many defence and release moves and admitted, "I was never too worried," about an attack she couldn't handle. "I just wanted to perfect things," she explained.

Jenny, like her friend Lisa, would recommend the course to "anybody, anybody," she said and blamed the somewhat small turnout on the fact it was not publicized very well. She would use big, bright signs all over the school to advertise it next time, she said, and she is fairly sure that more girls would sign up for the course.

Maybe Rob Pelletier will take Jenny's suggestion into consideration and present it to Sue Amos, the co-ordinator of physical education and health for the Halton Board of Education, when he meets with her to discuss implementing Simply Defense board-wide.

The instructor points out the course is offered at many Ontario colleges and universities and that

the demand is high because all kinds of violent attacks are on the increase.

The situation becomes clear, he said, when you consider that rape crisis centres and distress centres are expressing a need for more funding just to operate.

He is expecting the turnout for the next session, to be held in January, 1991, by the Parks and Recreation Department of Halton Hills, to be good. Local resident, Nancy, who has also taken the Simply Defense course, would recommend the course to anyone as well.

She took part in Simply Defense in the fall of this year and found that, "it really opens your eyes, really informs you of how you leave yourself wide open" to attack.

An assault was something the Georgetown woman never thought would happen to her because, like Lisa, she views Georgetown as a very safe place to live, she said. But after living here all her life, she reports, "it's changed."

"After all these stories I hear now," she admitted, "I think, 'Gee, this could happen to anybody, no matter (where) you are'."

About learning the "right attitude" Mr. Pelletier is so adamant about, she says, "He's absolutely right". Students in the class learn how to handle themselves, and more important, how to control themselves instead of panicking in the case of an attack.

"I hope I have the presence of mind to use (my newfound skills) if something ever happened, she said, admitting "I would have a chance if something did happen."

## S.A.L.E.P. a worthwhile program

Halton School Board trustees learned that the Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils (S.A.L.E.P.) continues to be a worthwhile program for many Halton students.

In the 1990-91 school year, 69 students enrolled in the program. That figure is fairly consistent with figures from the last five years, according to a school

board committee report.

S.A.L.E.P. offers 14 and 15-year-olds "an opportunity to pursue learning in an alternative educational programming and/or employment," said the report.

The program may include full or part-time employment at an approved work station, enrolment in a life skills course, or

continuing studies or other activities directed towards the pupils needs and interests as may be acceptable to the committee," said the report.

It was also reported that the Secretary of the S.A.L.E.P. program "remains an essential link between the student, the family, the educational system and the community."



## Glen kids care for Terry

The children at Glen Williams Public School raised \$2,026 in the Terry Fox Run on September 21. Shown here accepting the cheque is the organizer and teacher at the school, Dave Toderick (left). Kindergarten teacher Eleanor Scarth and Principal

Doug Magwood were also on hand at the assembly where the students were informed of the final total of their efforts. All money went to the Canadian Cancer Society. (Herald photo)

## Town Gardener

### Indoor bulb takes the cake

By Tom Cavan

The word Hippeastrum Sp. is the genus of what we call Amaryllis. The true Amaryllis is never forced in Ontario homes. In fact, it grows in Africa and the bloom looks more like that of a Daylily. A different family, a different continent, and its common name is Belladonna.

Of all the indoor forcing bulbs, this one takes the cake! Its popularity is wide-spread. Its bloom rides high above the leaves and I repeatedly hear of a second flowering from older bulbs. The trumpet shape blooms are in clusters of two to six. Less number of blooms in a cluster renders larger blooms and smaller trumpets when four to six blooms come on one flower stalk. The Amaryllis bloom is so large it casts a shadow the size of a football.

Sound good? Are you inspired yet? Well if you are, here's how you start. When selecting bulbs, choose clean bulbs with four inch or better fleshy roots. The bulb should feel heavy for its size. When choosing any bulb, firmness and weight is more favorable than large and lighter bulbs. Now, if you do find a humungous, heavy, clean bulb you have found a gem.

When choosing a container, I recommend six to eight inch clay not for sustaining success. Depending on bulb size, be sure to have a one inch minimum between bulb and pot so you can finger and firm those roots in potting soil. Use a potting soil which contains more than 10 per cent actual organic soil. Do not use soilless mixes or plastic pots because when this plant blooms it's too heavy and needs the proper foundation to stand tall between waterings.

Be sure the roots are directed downwards and the soil is firm to the roots to avoid air pockets. The

bulb should only be submerged 50 per cent into the soil. Be sure the potting soil is evenly moist and evenly watered but do not let the plant stand in a tray of water.

Place the plant in a dark location until it roots. Okay, the roots are hiding, a minimum of two weeks but if kept cool, you can hold out for six weeks. The Amaryllis will tell you when you check in once a week and see this blanched spear seeking sun.

Now is the time to place your plant in a sunny window and water as it requires watering. As it blooms, avoid hot spots. A drastic rise in temperature will dry the bloom and you'll nickname your Amaryllis the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

After blooming is complete and finished, remove the flower stalk and continue to grow in full sun and feed with every fourth watering. In summer months you can keep in a sunny window or sink the bulb into the garden for a holiday.

Reduce temperatures and allow the bulb to go dormant in your basement or garage. Do not allow the bulb to freeze in the garage for those who experience September frosts.

Now you have come full circle with maintaining Amaryllis. If you ever see offsets where the roots come out, these are babies that can be plucked from the nest. Grow these in the same soil mix but don't expect flowering until next year.

There are many types of Amaryllis but the Dutch (Leopoldii) hybrids are by far the most spectacular and widely propagated. When you go to start a bulb held over for a second grand performance, use fresh soil and discard the old soil.

If you have any questions, call the Gardening Grapevine Hot Line at (519) 833-2117.