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Halton police service for victims of crime expands

By KAREN SMITH

A Halton Regional Police organization, which comes to the aid of crime victims, plans to open an office in Milton within the next few months.

An increased demand for services provided by the Victims Services Unit has prompted the organization to expand to Milton.

Milton victims are currently

assisted through the Acton office, but soon help will be even more close by.

Designed to help people deal with crimes committed against them, the unit works with a range of victims - from those subject to bicycle theft to people coping with the death of a loved one.

Victims receive the immediate assistance and the long-term support they require to adequately deal with their trauma.

"We look after the victims of crime from the smallest victim to the largest victim," says Linda Ellison, co-ordinator of the service. "Most often they just need someone to talk to."

Ellison, one of two staff members with the unit, works with a team of 40 volunteers at Burlington, Oakville and Acton police stations.

About 10 more volunteers, interested in providing assistance and support to victims of crime, are being sought to work out of the Milton unit. You must be at least 21 years of age.

Volunteers accepted will be fully trained by the police and will be expected to work about three hours per week in the evenings, according to Ellison.

The Victims Services Unit offers help in a number of ways including emotional support as well as information regarding the criminal justice system, police procedure, court proceedings and

compensation for victims of violent crimes.

Representatives of the organization also work closely with related community agencies in order to provide referrals when needed.

Ellison, a founding member of the seven-year-old unit, has accompanied many a victim to court.

This year the unit will help more than 7,000 women, men and children of all ages. The bulk of the service will go to victims of domestic violence, says Ellison.

A police officer may call on the unit to ensure a victim receives immediate assistance or the officer may advise a person to contact the service at a later date.

In addition, police reports are continually reviewed by program staff and victims are contacted and offered assistance. Helping people provides the reward in the work, adds Ellison, but the job isn't fit for everyone.

"Only a certain kind of person can do this job," she explains. "It's very emotionally draining."

Ellison says she hopes to stay on the job until Halton Regional Police retire her.

If your rights have been violated by a criminal, aggressive or violent act, you are a victim.

For assistance or to volunteer, call the Victims Services Unit at 878-5511, ext. 321.

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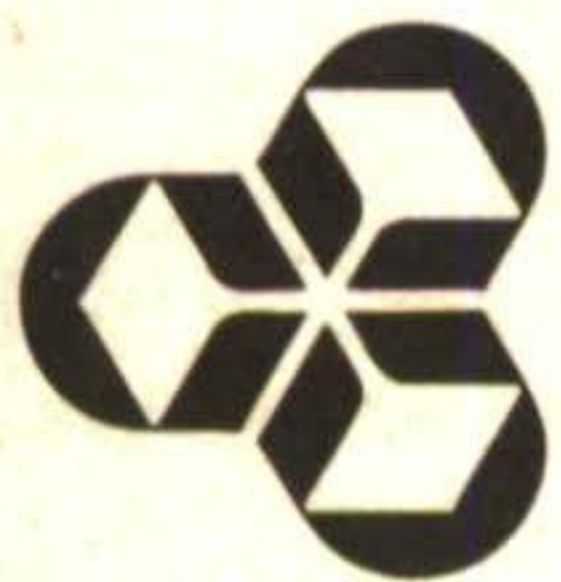


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RECREATION REPORT

PUPPETS! PUPPETS! PUPPETS!

A half day workshop, sponsored by the Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department, for anyone who enjoys being or working with children. This program gives you the opportunity to design your own creations to give or share with kids. A step by step hands-on puppetry workshop where you can choose from finger puppets, glove puppets or pop up puppets. Instruction will include demonstrations on how to use puppets to teach, tell stories, sing songs or just to have fun. (Registration started March 6, 1991).

SPRING PROGRAMS

The Recreation and Parks Department is now taking registration for our spring programs. For youth, choose from programs such as: Saturday Morning Peanut Club, Kids in the Kitchen, Youth Activity Night, Up, Up and Away (kite making), Chocolate Making, Tennis and Golf Lessons. For adults, select from: Ballroom Dancing, Fitness, Sewing with Silk, Heirloom Band Box, Tennis or Golf lessons, and much, much more!

For more information check your new Spring and Summer

1991 Brochure or call 873-2600, ext. 268.

EASTER POOL CLOSURES

Both the Acton and Georgetown indoor pools will be closed Good Friday, March 29 and Easter Sunday, March 31, 1991.

LIFESTYLES OF HALTON HILLS

It only happens every two years and it is all over in one day - but while it lasts, it is the most concentrated "trade show" for community groups, organizations and agencies in North Halton.

It takes place Saturday, April 6 at the Georgetown District High School and is the single best occasion for individuals interested in a range of local activities to make contact with the groups providing the leisure or service opportunity.

If your organization has not yet reserved a booth, the "Lifestyles" committee urges you to do so now!

For registration and information, call Linda or Joy at the Recreation and Parks Department 873-2600.

SPRING AQUATIC REGISTRATION

Spring Aquatic Registration will start Saturday, March 23 at Acton and Georgetown indoor pools, 9 a.m. - noon.

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Johnson & Johnson is looking for twelve babies

Some cute little tyke in this area may be the winner of the 1991 Johnson & Johnson "Adorable Babies Photo Contest." The company is conducting a search for Canada's 12 most adorable babies.

One grand prize of \$25,000 in post secondary scholarship funds and 11 secondary prizes of \$10,000 each in scholarship funds can be won.

Proud parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, amateur photographers and friends of the little tots can enter the contest by submitting

photos of their babies — born after May 31, 1988 — along with a clever, decriptive caption for each photo. Entries will be judged on the "adorableness of the photo, the charm and originality of the caption, not on the professionalism of the photography.

Help with a child's education may be a "snap" away be entering the fifth annual Johnson & Johnson "Adorables Babies Photo Contest"

For a contest entry form, call 1-800-265-8383 and enter before June 30, 1991.