

ASSIC helping local families

Christmas is coming - a time of joy, a time to celebrate. Some families and individuals are not so fortunate. Instead, they live day-by-day and Christmas is a luxury that they can not afford.

Each year Acton Social Services and Information Centre (ASSIC) makes every endeavor to assist low-income families in Acton. Its goal is to give children (under the age of 15) a Christmas.

This would be impossible if not for the wonderful donations ASSIC receives from local community members. Each year Acton residents donate new toys, clothing, blankets and food. Several seniors also assist in knitting warm hats,

mitts, and scarfs which are well received by the parents and children. This year ASSIC expects a greater need for knitted baby items including blankets, warm hats, mitts and baby sweaters.

Others enjoy treating a family to Christmas dinner. This is nice for financially limited people who do not have family locally to be with for the Christmas holidays.

All monetary donations to the program go towards the purchasing of clothing items such as track suits, pyjamas or warm blankets for the children.

Last year ASSIC assisted 82 children from 43 families in Acton. This year, with the increase in unemploy-

ment, ASSIC foresees helping at least 50 families and perhaps 90 children in Acton.

ASSIC thanks all those who assist its program each year and particularly wishes to recognize their avid knitters and the Christian Reform Church for the wonderful support and care they devote to the Christmas Needs Coordination Program each year. They usually take on several Acton families and supply them with a Christmas package complete with all the trimmings.

Interested in helping out? Call Lin at ASSIC (853-3310) and enquire about how you can make a difference!

Help as close as your Kitchen Table

Rural Ontario is undergoing great structural changes. Farms, homes, and businesses are being lost to bankruptcy.

The real victims are families who suffer through the stress and dislocation, often alone, isolated and in silence.

There is hope! It's based on the principle that we can't look to others to solve our problems - we must do it for ourselves, together, as a community. Help is as close as your Kitchen Table.

The Kitchen Table Alliance is a direct community-based response to the urgent need to lend a hand to families and help them regain their strength and productivity. Prevention by seeking help early is the Alliance's priority.

The Kitchen Table Alliance is sponsored by EWAG (East Wellington Advisory Group), and takes advice from a community advisory committee which is being formed now.

Here's how it works: community volunteers, called Kitchen Table Advisors (KTA's), take a free indepth training course.

In response to a call on our crisis line, a team of two experienced KTA's (sworn to confidentiality) will visit the family, assess the situation, and make customized referrals to needed services. KTA's can connect families with professionals (lawyers, accountants, advocates)

who volunteer to help out on a case-by-case basis.

Emergency financial assistance for family needs or family counselling is available through KTA's.

A unique feature of the Alliance is the KTA's stay in contact with the family for several months to make sure things are improving.

The KTA's take a powerful message to a family in crisis - that someone cares and is ready to lend a hand.

Some of you reading this have helped neighbors through difficult times, or received help yourselves.

Can you help? Please call EWAG at 833-9696.

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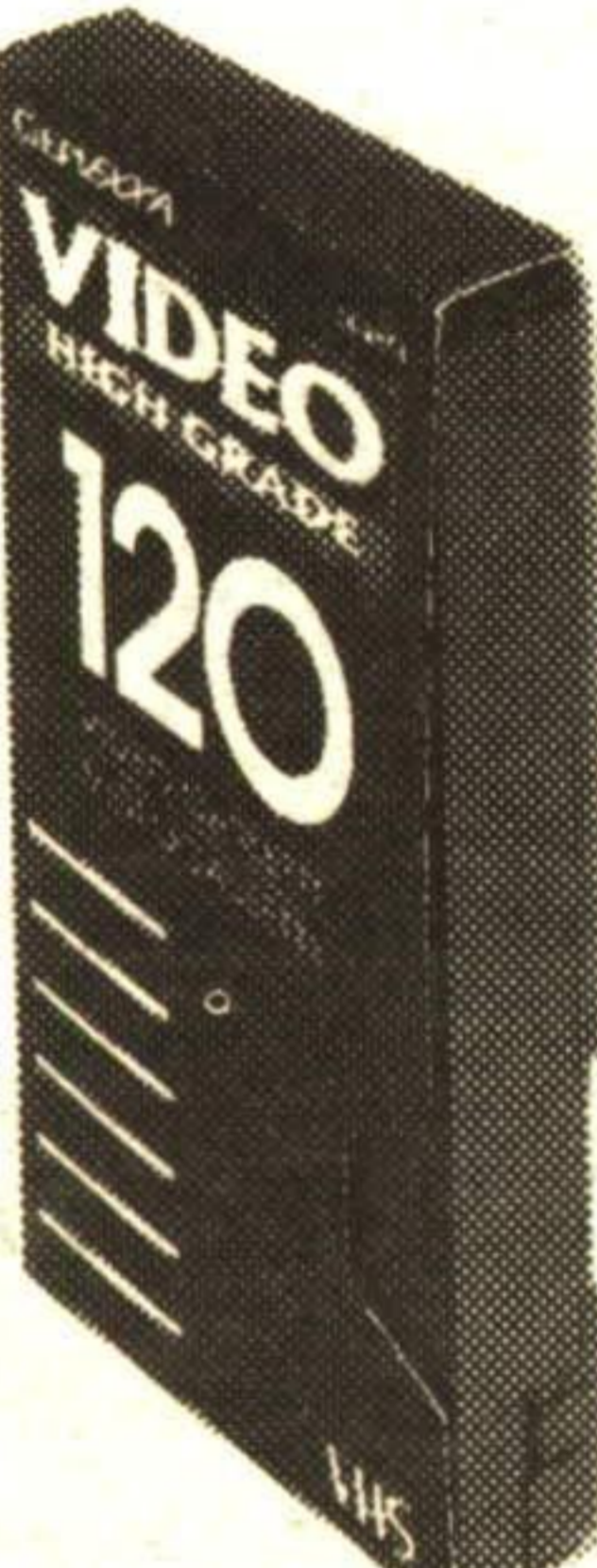
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Acton/Georgetown - Sunday, December 19, 1993 Page 15

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