

EDITORIAL

Seniors deserve to have a centre

Seniors in Georgetown have been quietly fighting a battle for the last four years to get a recreation facility up and running.

Georgetown is the only community in Halton Region that still does not have a facility for its growing over-65 population.

A 1991 report to Halton Region showed that there are 3,221 persons over the age of 65 residing in Halton Hills and that number is growing.

Approximately 800 of the local seniors belong to the Georgetown and District Seniors Association which has kept this quiet lobbying active over the last four years.

A 1988 study of Georgetown seniors showed that if such a facility was constructed 94 per cent approved the development of a centre and 84 per cent would utilize the centre.

But "constructed" is the wrong word to use to describe the development of a seniors centre -- a place to meet and socialize.

Let's face it, as attractive as it is, the Food Court at the mall is just not the right kind of facility for seniors.

For the most part Halton Hills -- its people and its council -- care about its seniors, but not having a facility -- even a temporary facility -- sends a message that contradicts that caring.

As proved by the Milton model, a seniors centre does not have to be costly.

Using an existing facility the Milton centre costs the town about \$37,500 annually -- in a community's budget terms a drop in the bucket.

While we applaud Georgetown seniors for the approach they have taken to getting a facility -- low-key and persuasive rather than confrontational -- it is time that something is done to provide these people with a much needed service.

The seniors have recognized that they will not be getting a brand new building in the near future but as Les Mellish has said, local seniors would be perfectly happy with a makeshift location in the interim.

As Mellish said: "We've got to do something in the meantime."

Any sort of proposal that will give this group of people -- most of them still active in the community and long-time residents -- a place to call their own should be given serious consideration.

We find it astonishing that the man who should be supporting and fighting for the seniors -- Director of Recreation and Parks Tom Shepard -- appears to be unwilling to talk even about a temporary facility.

He also commented that Georgetown seniors "are not prepared to take anything less than what's the best for their use" and that is a main factor delaying the centre.

We find that attitude offensive and believe our seniors should not have to settle for anything less than the best.

It is time the town gets a facility of some sort for the seniors -- we are all going to be able to use it sometime in the future.

Letters Welcomed

Halton Hills This Week welcomes your letters. Letters must be signed and include your full name and address. Names will be withheld on request.

Halton Hills This Week reserves the right to edit, revise, or reject any letters on the basis of factual

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Send your letter to:

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232 Guelph St., Unit 9
Georgetown, ON
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Halton Hills THIS WEEK

Halton Hills This Week is published every Wednesday at 232 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 4B1, and is printed in Oakville by Q.E. Web Printing.

In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time.

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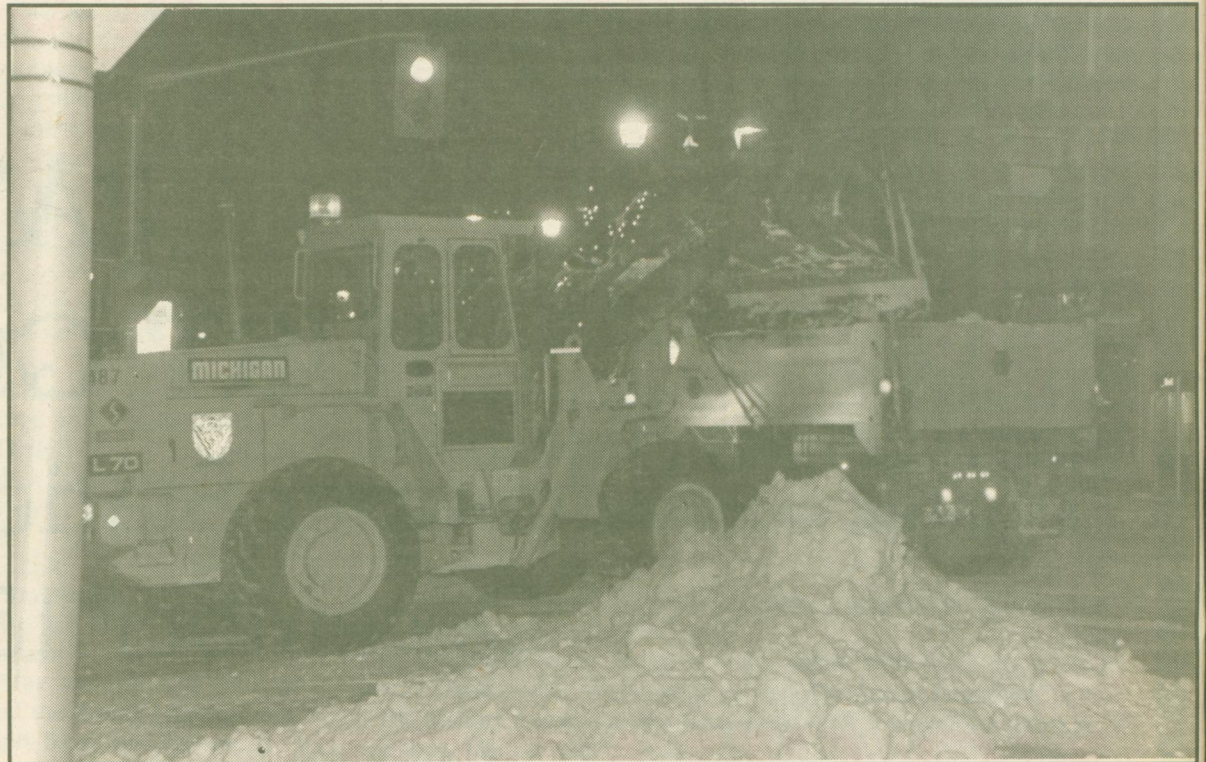
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Kathleen Topolsek

HALTON HILLS THIS WEEK IS INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED.

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Snow removal machine



Halton Hills Public Works crews toiled through the night Friday to remove some of the near-record snowfall from Georgetown's downtown core Friday. While most were pleased to see the crews working some people found the all-night noise a little disturbing. Photo by Scott Augustus

Family Violence

Support services

By Jacie B. Palmer

A few weeks ago I wrote an article on the grieving process. While it dealt with the sense of loss we feel because of death, there are circumstances which come into our lives that affect us in much the same way as a death does.

Every time a relationship ends, whether it be with a spouse or child or friend, we grieve for that end, the sense of loss and the changes to our lives. We need time to grieve, to be comforted and to recover. We need someone to love us through that period.

A woman who loses her husband through a heart attack, stroke or cancer is likely to have loads of friends to comfort and nurture her through her loss.

But what about the woman who decides to leave her husband? Do her friends rally round her? Do her kids support her? Does her family provide her with the love she needs? In many cases, those things just don't happen.

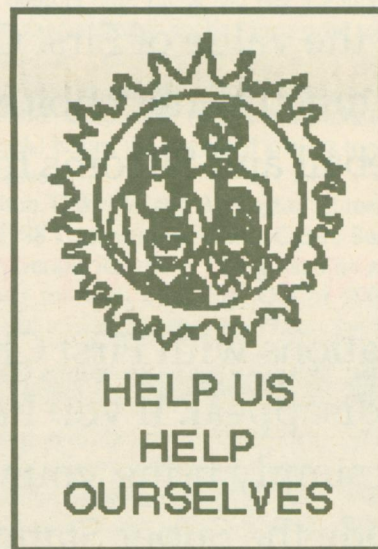
When I separated from my husband, he moved in with my mother. She didn't speak to me for several weeks and when she did decide to see me, one of her first statements was: "Well, what about the kids?"

I looked her straight in the eye and asked: "Well, what about me?" She'd never considered that I might have been miserable and suffering in silence for a long time.

I could see the shock in her eyes. She'd just assumed I was happy and content. It's a sad mistake we all make -- assuming qualities, beliefs and feelings about other people.

Most of us dream of growing to love someone, living with that person and growing old together. Too often that dream is shattered because we've chosen unwisely.

Those who are fortunate to be with someone who cares for them should thank their lucky stars every day for the lives they have. The rest



of us can only hope to choose better next time round.

Sometimes a divorce can break the family totally apart. Some women who leave an abusive relationship and can't take their children with them must learn to live alone and often without the support of their children.

It's a fact that children will go where the money is and that often means with an abusive parent. When the victim takes action to end the relationship she receives the blame for all the changes the family must face and must confront the resulting animosity of her kids.

Nothing hurts a mother more than not having an open, loving and caring relationship with her children. Talk about being torn apart inside!

Yet, for her own survival a victim must stick to her plan to change her life. There is nothing like having a child call you when he/she want something.

I remember telling my kids that all I'm interested in is loving them and if they want more from me, I do not wish to give it. I never wanted a web of money and gifts to foul up our relationship.

But it's hard to have priorities straight.

All kids want treats but no mother should have to buy her family. Yet that is often what it comes down to when divorce sets in.

Competition between the former partners is often fierce. I wish we could all be secure in our relationship with our children and have the patience to recognize that time really does heal the hurt and pain.

A wise, participatory parent has built in a lot of consistent love, nurturing and time with the children and they will remember that over the long term.

Women who choose to leave an abusive relationship to give themselves the opportunity to have a new and better life are bombarded with not just their own pain, but the pain and anger of their children, spouse and family.

At a time when they need the love and support of others, often they don't find it. When friends should be asking them over for dinner or tea they find themselves alone. The phone doesn't ring as it once did.

Being alone is not easy if you are used to kids and a hubby around. Quiet feels good for a while but interruptions become more and more welcome.

We all need the companionship of others to help us through the rough times.

Support networks! We all need them. If you have a friend who is alone by choice, try not to judge her or hurt her. Instead, try to be her friend and supporter.

Feel free to contact Jacie in confidence by directing letters to her attention at Halton Hills This Week. All correspondence will remain confidential. Jacie can be reached in person through the Distress Centre at 877-1211. Leave a message and Jacie will get back to you. If you are in crisis, call the Distress Centre or 911.