

Seniors association remains active

By Les Mellish

The Georgetown and District Seniors Association enjoyed a well-attended Annual General Meeting on May 19, with Councillors Chatten, Cook and Heaton and Recreation and Parks Director Shepard attending.

The Board of Directors is now operating with a "full deck". Not much information is available at present on a temporary location for a senior's centre, but let me assure you we are constantly working on it and in spite of difficulties, we feel optimistic of a solution before very long.

In the meantime, as some of you know, we have a Senior's Advisory Committee here in Halton Hills. This is a committee appointed by the Mayor and chaired by Councillor Gerald Rennie. Representation on the committee is from all organizations of seniors in Halton Hills. I represent the Georgetown and District Seniors' Association and also represent the Senior's Advisory Committee on the Elderly Services Advisory Committee (E.S.A.C.). The latter is a Regional Committee and is in an advisory capacity to the Regional Council.

These two committees (the Regional and the Halton Hills committees) are worthwhile opportunities for seniors to express their opinions and make the wishes and needs of seniors known to council, both municipal and regional.

Of immediate interest to Halton seniors is the E.S.A.C. sponsored Seniors Safety Fair being held on June 12 at Halton Regional Centre, Bronte Road (Hwy. 25) from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Look out for posters, they are being distributed around town, to seniors and wherever seniors might be.

This Fair will feature safety issues of all kinds, particularly as they apply to seniors. There will be Indoor and Outdoor exhibits, Seminars, Videos and clinics. It is a family affair with family entertainment and refreshments available - bringing the whole family!

Free buses are available from both Acton and Georgetown. Call ASSIC 519-853-3310 or in Georgetown call Fern Boisvenue at 877-9714. Use a bus if you can or carpool if possible as parking is not unlimited, but please come, rain or shine, it will be an interesting and enjoyable day with door prizes and an antique car show.

This fair is one event that the Elderly Services Advisory Committee and Good Neighbors Council is sponsoring. Other activities are of a more serious nature. The committee has influence on legislation at provincial and regional levels by participating in and initiating studies around proposed legislation or changes to existing legislation affecting seniors particularly. Examples of this are the Long Term Care legislation that is just beginning to emerge from Queen's Park. The opportunity was there for seniors to have a say in this legislation and through E.S.A.C. we were able to make difference.

This kind of thing is going on all the time. At regional level, E.S.A.C. is currently monitoring implementation of the "Strategic Plan for Health and Social Services for Seniors in Halton Region (1990)". This was prepared at the instigation of the Elderly Services Advisory Committee and the Halton District Health Council and is in the third year of a 10 year implementation period. Some of the themes contained in it are Transportation, Housing, Elder Abuse, Lifestyle/Recreation, Loneliness and Companionship,

Seniors Association

and Safety. These themes are continually being addressed and progress is being made to correct problems and improve the quality of life for seniors.

One theme close to our hearts here in Halton Hills is lifestyle/recreation and this report recommends that "The Town of Halton Hills establish seniors' centres in Acton and Georgetown". Seniors are working with the town to comply with this recommendation and I report to E.S.A.C. each month on the status of our project. The committee is deeply interested in our progress and Halton Hills is invited to a Network meeting of senior's centres planned for July

13. I believe seniors must have an input on issues that affect them and also that they must take responsibility for participating to ensure that money being spent on their health and social well-being is spent wisely. Much of it is our own money.

Today, more and more of seniors' money is being taken in taxes of various kinds. We should share in the decisions on how it is spent. We do have more time at our disposal than the average citizen. I hope to comment more frequently on the activities of the Senior's Advisory Committee and the Elderly Services Advisory Committee in the future.

See you at the Safety Fair.

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