

Graduated licensing just around the bend

By Cathy Vint
Special to HHTW

Time is running out for want-to-be drivers hoping to bypass the provincial government's graduated licensing program.

Although the NDP government hasn't released the actual date when the program takes effect, Anne McLaughlin, with the Ministry of Transportation, says the program will be in full operation in the spring of 1994.

New drivers who get their license before the program starts won't be subjected to the restrictions under graduated licensing.

However, a clerk at an area driver's examination centre says that the next available date to book a road test is the first week of December.

"We do realize that some people are more interested in getting their license prior to the program coming into effect," admits McLaughlin, adding that when the program starts it could take a new driver up to two years

before they have a full license.

The program consists of two levels for all new drivers, which gradually increases driving privileges during the driver's first two years on the road.

"The ministry is looking for ways to improve safety. New drivers need more time to sharpen their skills in the more demanding situations," explains McLaughlin.

Ministry of Transportation statistics show that although drivers under the age of 25 make up about one-sixth of all licensed drivers in Ontario, they represent almost one-quarter of all drivers killed in collisions. And, it is estimated that Ontario residents spend about \$4 billion annually on health care, property damage, insurance claims and lost wages resulting from collisions.

Under the graduated licensing program, new drivers have a number of restrictions in level one, such as driving at night, driving alone, driving after drinking any alcohol, driving with too

many passengers and driving on high-speed highways.

Level one will last 12 months, unless the new driver completes an approved driver education course, which could reduce the period to eight months at their request.

At the end of level one, drivers are required to pass a road test before being eligible to proceed to level two.

The following level will

last a minimum of 12 months, and allows for more driving privileges. The only restrictions are that the driver must maintain a zero blood alcohol level while driving and limit the number of passengers to the number of seatbelts in the vehicle.

After completing level two, drivers must take a test on advanced driving skills in order to qualify for full license privileges.



Leah Smeaton and Tom Podaras were united in marriage at Union Presbyterian Church, Glen Williams, June 5, 1993.

Leah is the daughter of Marion and the late Bill Smeaton of Georgetown. Tom is the son of Haido and the late Nicholas Podaras of Toronto.

Blood donor clinic a success

Red Cross officials reported 354 donors attended the Blood Clinic last Monday and donated 238 units of blood. This clinic was supported by Halton Hills This Week and Arthur F. Johnson & Associates Ltd. Realtor. Their help in printing and distribution of posters, setting up the clinic, loading equipment and general assistance at the clinic was appreciated.

Thanks to Dr. A. Ashenurst, who was on call, volunteers, staff, nursery help and drivers, the clergy, Halton Cable Systems, Halton Hills Hydro for banner displays. The clinic went very well.

Thanks were also given to the sponsors who donated food and drink during the clinic.

Dairy Queen provided juice and paper products. Loblaw's provided donuts, Lynn Ferguson of Mac's Milk provided pop, Miracle Mart, coffee, and Pizza Hut provided tea and serviettes. As in the past 25 years, the kitchen staff was overseen by the C.W.L. and Mr. C. Domingos of Holy Cross Church.

Special thanks is extended to Maruk Bupooji and her telephone committee, Shirley Chaplain for publicity and promotion and Janet Dean and June Russell, the conveners of the clinic.

Awards were given to the following donors:

John Dawson, 100th donor; Norman Firth, 50th donor;

Wallace Fenskie, 50th donor; Geoffrey Newman, 35th donor; Don McLean, 35th donor; Reg Digby, 35th donor; Sharon Anderson, 35th donor; John MacDonald, 35th donor; Roger Brown, 35th donor; Charles Hayward, 20th donor and Catherine Giverson, 20th donor.

The next regular Clinic is to be held Nov. 8, 1993. A special clinic is to be held Aug. 27 in the Georgetown Marketplace Mall.

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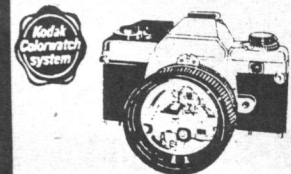
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