

Making the sun shine even when it rains

Given the weather we've been subjected to this year, making the sun shine a bit more would be doubly acceptable to most of us. Last Wednesday at ASSIC's annual general meeting we learned exactly how the trick is done.

Mr. Mel Shipman spoke about Intergenerational Programs and he highlighted the joy which often results when you bring together the young and the old.

Youngsters benefit from the attention they get when matched with seniors; seniors are enthused by the natural exuberance of the young.

Seniors can act as surrogates when parents are not available and, by sharing and caring with a special youngster, strong bonds are created. Seniors share wisdom and experience in living and they have that most precious of all gifts — time — to give freely and without judgment to one special child.

Children respond predictably, with love and real joy. When you make the most out of the situation you can end up with a partnership made, well, almost in heaven.

Take a look at the work which goes on at ASSIC and you'll see that this multi-service agency, together with its many volunteers, has added significantly to our own local sunshine. Between April '91 and March '92, volunteers logged an amazing 7,714 hours providing a wide variety of assistance in 40 different programs ranging from Meals-On-Wheels (1,053 hours) through providing transportation (1,152 hours) and more, much more. Divide 7,714 by 1,750 (that's a year's work at 35 hours per week for 50 weeks) and you'll note that volunteers between them provided the equivalent of well over four years of full-time assistance to the citizens of Acton and vicinity.

So where do you find the heart and soul of a community?

Easy — in the passion for service which was demonstrated 7,714 times last year right here in our neighbourhood.

Volunteers truly are the people who make the sun shine even when it's raining. Blessings on them — one and all.

— Eric Balkind



Acton Social Services hosts successful AGM

BY ERIC BALKIND

Last Wednesday evening, Acton's Social Services and Information Centre held its annual general meeting in the St. Alban's Anglican Church hall. About 60 citizens turned out and, despite heat and mosquitoes, they enjoyed the opportunity to hear about good things happening here in town.

President Lorne Doberthien handled the initial formalities and Acton councillors Rick Bonnette and Norm Elliott brought greetings from the Mayor's Office and the Town.

A number of citizens received recognition for their ongoing efforts as volunteers over a five-year period: Doug Anderson, Janet Butler, Allan and Barbara Crawford, Lily Dee, Jean Jackson, Lydia Kerr, Edna and Mansel Nellis, Betty Oakes, Norman and Jessie Price, Peter Papillon and George Williams were each honoured with a scroll and a service pin.

A particular highlight was the recognition, by president Doberthien and executive director Peggie Balkind, of a special group who have each given some 15 years of volunteer service to the citizens of our community. In this regard, Rena Arbic, Lorna Clarke, Helen Dubeau, Dot Redekop and the Members of the Rotary Club of Acton surely qualify as "Citizens First Class." Their names are now inscribed on a plaque which graces the centre's wall.

A major part of the evening focused on what are known as "Intergenerational Programs" and keynote speaker Mel Shipman saw a part of his thunder stolen, since he was preceded by heartwarming reports on a number of these initiatives which are already underway in our community.

Willy Argudin, a teacher at M.Z. Bennett, introduced senior Margie Patterson, who volunteers her time at the school. Margie was clearly delighted to tell how she had been able to reach out to a small boy who, as the result of her efforts, is now making much better progress. In fact, he went home after just about a half hour's work with Margie and proudly told his parents that "Some lady taught me to read."

Guide Michelle Smith was introduced by Helen Dubeau; Michelle gave a quietly moving report about the great pleasure which she and her mates get from helping with Meals on Wheels deliveries. On special occasions throughout the year seniors also receive, as a "bonus" with their meals, small samples of the Girl Guides' craft work. Little gestures such as these often make the day for their recipients.

Three "Grandmas" (May Kennedy, Alma Zacharis and Elizabeth Anderson) were introduced by staffer Donna Kirton; in fact they were too shy to say much but you could tell how much love

they gave and received as the result of their work with the infants in the Teen-Aged Mothers (TEAM) program.

"JOY" was speaker Mel Shipman's theme — Joining Old and Young in and with intergenerational programs. He spoke briefly but from the heart on the enormous value of bringing together the generations and closed by drawing attention to a remarkable film aptly entitled "Between Generations."

At the end of more than two hours the people were still there, proof enough that Acton cares about the good things which are happening, courtesy of ASSIC staff and their incredible team of volunteers. ■

Assic Alert

Phone ASSIC before throwing it out

If you have household items you are planning to throw out, please call ASSIC first. These may be of use to someone else.

The Acton Social Services and Information Centre wants to encourage people to be "Good Neighbours," and think of those less fortunate, passing on to others what you are not using. ASSIC will pick up items and ensure they are given to those in need. This recycling also helps our environment by generating less garbage.

Social Services has an urgent need for the following: coffee and end tables, various size refrigerators, washing machines and dressers. ■



FIVE "CITIZENS FIRST CLASS": Left to right: Rotary Club of Acton (Bruce Prendergast accepting), Lorna Clarke, Dot Redekop, Helen Dubeau and Rena Arbic with the wall plaque honouring their services over 15 years.

THE ACTON Tanner

Editor & Publisher
Paul Nolan

Associate Publisher
Dianne Preston

News Editor
Frances Niblock

Business Editor
Michael Coté

Staff Reporter
Leanne Okum

Design & Production
Anne Klassen

Distribution
Sandy Williams

Regular Contributors
Eric Balkind
Esther Taylor

THE ACTON TANNER is published weekly on Tuesdays by Wicklow Hills Publishing Co. Inc. at 7 Mill Street, East Acton, Ontario. L7J 1G8. Mailing address: P.O. Box 150, Acton, Ont., L7J 2M3. Telephone: 519-853-5100. Facsimile: 519-853-5040. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Ideas expressed herein are those of the author only.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND CHANGES OF ADDRESS: Subscription rates are: \$26.40 for one year (52 issues for the price of 44) and \$2.40 for one month (four issues). First Class Mail subscription rate: \$78.40 in Canada.

ADVERTISING SALES: Ratecard available on request. Publisher responsible for errors in ads to extent of cost of that portion of the space occupied by erroneous item.

Phone: 519-853-5100
Fax: 519-853-5040