# Helping people to cope

During the best of times, community support worker Lin's job is a challenge; during today's times it is closer to being a vocation. She is an integral part of the team at Acton Social Services and Information Centre (ASSIC) and, together with her co-workers, she has seen a major increase in her workload. People out there are hurting and Lin's job is to help them cope by pointing them towards help; "In a way," she says, "we fill in when clients don't have a support system. Who else could they turn to?"

Last month, Lin worked with upwards of 70 individuals and families and, as the holiday season draws ever closer, she expects the numbers to grow. "This time last year we were involved with 43 families but this time round we expect to assist at least 50 families with Christmas needs," she reports. "We generally have lots of toys available but we always need good bedding and clothing; as well, we share out any financial donations."

An aspect of Lin's job is needscoordination—the apparently simple job of bringing together those in need with what they need. "Furniture, clothing, or a baby crib, there's always something that someone needs," says Lin.

A typical case facing Lin and her ASSIC comrades might read as follows: Mr. X lost his job in March and had to file for UIC. Mrs. X has not worked since May 91 due to recurring illnesses; recently she underwent surgery and is still unable to return to the work force; currently, she does receive welfare.

The family has two youngsters — aged six and eight and they are both good kids and steady students.

Altogether, Family X has trouble making ends meet because although their combined income is roughly \$1,200 they must pay over \$700 for rent plus some \$200 for utilities. In order to stretch their few dollars, the family generally uses the food bank at least twice monthly.

Through the transportation program Mrs. X has been able to travel to out-of-town medical appointments; Mr. X received a small amount of cash to allow him to

AUTO

SERVICE

CENTRE

attend a job interview.

A month ago, the family received a much-needed, secondhand fridge to replace their old one when it finally quit.

Lin or another of her fellowworkers tries to be available just to listen for a few minutes, when either Mr. or Mrs. X drops by. A little time is surely not too much to give to folk who are trying to make it through.

The family, in turn, has helped ASSIC by donating articles which they themselves no longer need; recently they gave a pair of lamps which they thought someone else might be able to use.

As a community support worker, Lin is also involved in assisting people to deal effectively with a variety of paperwork including, for example, disability pensions, family benefits, housing applications, welfare and much, much more.

Lin also helps to bring to Acton other special services needed by clients. The Halton Sexual Abuse program is now offering group support for adult female survivors and there could be other groups formed as people come forward. Adult offenders and teen survivors of abuse are two possibilities. "I know they're out there," says Lin, "but where are they? It's a hard job to get them to come forward."

TEAM stands for Teen Education And M rhood — a group which offers su ort to young mothers so they can cope with the demanding fact of being a young parent while at the same time continuing their education. As a support worker to these young moms, Lin seeks to provide assistance and advice as needed. She notes that sometimes, just being there to listen is the difference between winning and losing.

These are hard times; the bills are piling up and the pressures are getting to be too much to handle. I don't think I can take it

SPECIAL



WOOLLY WONDERS: ASSIC community support worker Lin shows off some of the lovingly knitted hats, mitts and colourful throws that will warm some lucky Acton residents this Christmas. (Eric Balkind photo)

## Messages from your local Fire Department

Is your address clearly visible for emergency crews and police?

Every second counts during a fire. Put address numbers clearly on your house and mailbox where firefighters can see them.

Install a light above your house numbers - not hard-to-read lettering.

Use colours that contrast, such as black and white.

Whether you live in the city or the country, you should identify your property clearly.

Remember, if we can't find you, we can't help you.

\*\*\*

Every child is curious, but curiosity about fire can be deadly. Teach your children the dangers of playing with matches and lighters. Teach

them that matches are not toys and that they are safe only in the hands of an adult. Keep all matches, lighters and candles out of the reach of young children.

Remember, the child who plays with matches and lighters may never grow up.

### LET ME SEW I FOR YOU

Repairs & Alterations Special on bundles of minor repairs; buttons, seams, hems.

CALL ROBERTA at 853-0860

# TUCKER JOHNSON LTD.

659 Wellington St. W., Guelph (Halfkm. west of Hanlon on Hwy. 24)

"FACTORY AUTHORIZED **VOLKSWAGEN SALES & SERVICE"** 

824-9150

An "I Care" Service Award Winner

#### At only 60¢ a week, much more, where do I go for help? Well, you could drop into the Acton Social Services and Inforit's the best value mation Centre and speak with Lin; she doesn't promise miracles but she will do her best and — her best is pretty good. in town.



Our six-month introductory period will soon be complete, and now is the time for you to sign up as an Acton Tanner subscriber, so that we can continue to deliver to you all the local news and information in a concise, interesting and accurate weekly paper.

Hundreds of readers already have signed on to support our community's only independent news voice. Fill in the order form below, then bring it in or mail it to us. We don't need your payment yet, but we do need your name.

So come on, sign up as a Tanner subscriber. After all, at just 60¢ a week, it really is the best deal in town!

#### I SUBSCRIBER ORDER FORM I

Complete this form and return to The Acton Tanner, 7 Mill St. E., Acton, L7J 1G8. Subscription prices include G.S.T.

☐ TWO MONTHS AT A TIME (\$4.80)

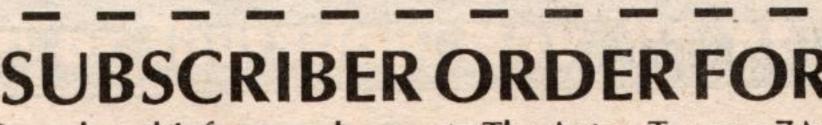
☐ Payment Enclosed ☐ Collect From Me

NAME

X

**ADDRESS** 

PHONENO



☐ 12 MONTHS FOR THE PRICE OF 11 (\$28.80)

POSTALCODE

≥\$

835845526

OIL, LUBE, FILTER

WINTER TUNE-UP — \$45.95

(Most Cars)

FIRSTAUMO SERVICE CHANTRE

Highway 7 between 5th & 6th Lines /·(e) (e) //