

Police to crack down on bush parties

BY RICK SOUTAR
The Acton Tanner

Halton Police are planning a crack-down on local area bush parties over the coming month in an effort to cut down on teenage alcohol abuse.

Police say there will be zero tolerance for anyone consuming or possessing alcohol at bush parties. The fine for all underage drinking offenses is \$105. Police say the crackdown is necessary because there is a rise in thefts, vandalism, mischief and drunk driving offenses associated with the bush parties.

The primary goal however, is to

prevent any more tragedies like the "Mother's Day crash" in Caledon last year, when eight teens died in a collision after attending a bush party.

Constable Bob Paterson, of the Caledon OPP, says there is a general campaign to combat drinking and driving, but teens in particular are being targeted with awareness and education programs.

"We know what the problem is and we're trying to address it in several different ways," Paterson says.

On May 18, 1,300 kids at Humberview High School witnessed a mock demonstration including a car crash, a fatality and an arrest. Two weeks ago the Guelph OPP showed a film at Erin High School depicting a fatal car crash. There are plans to continue the educational campaign for responsible drinking until school breaks for the summer.

In addition to increased patrols and zero tolerance for alcohol related offenses, there is also a push to toughen up municipal by-law enforcement for such things as noise violations.

There were reports of a bush party this past holiday weekend on the 9th Line near Georgetown.

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner
This year marks the 10th anniversary of Acton's first drop-in centre, the Parent-Child Resource Centre, located at the Band Hall.

The centre is funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), administered under the Acton Social Services and Information umbrella.

"It's neat to think we've been

around for 10 years. There's an incredible satisfaction to helping an idea come to pass and see it serve the needs of the community," says Mary Piercy, the centre's manager and one of its founding members.

The centre, which provides a support network for caregivers and parents, will average about 85 member families this year from Acton and surrounding area.

The program provides an opportunity for caregivers, parents and children to participate in art and craft activities, circle time, snack and story time and to enjoy playroom activities.

A resource library of magazines and books, covering a wide range of topics around caregiving-parenting, health concerns, creative ideas, etc., is available.

Also offered are caregiver theme kits, which consist of activities for songs, games, puzzles and crafts relating to a theme, such as dinosaurs for example. Centre members have a Toy Lending Library open from 1 to 2 on Wednesdays and 10 to 11 am Fridays.

A number of workshops for parents, such as self-esteem, stress management, breast concerns and safety issues like seat belt regulations, runs in the next few months.

"It's an educational component," says Piercy. "Everyone has the opportunity to sit down as a group while their children are being watched.

"We encourage all the parents to do something — wash dishes, put toys away or sit on our advisory committee."

Bringing the centre to town began in 1983, when Eileen Dix, who then was the program director at the YMCA, gathered with three other individuals who were eager to see a centre in Acton.

A presentation to the YMCA board followed and the morning program began.

The volunteer group began running a parent-child program three times a week under the Day-Care Initiatives project, which funded a drop-in format. The MCSS, which at the time was keen on seeing centres open in the area, granted the money to open a centre in September of 1983.

"We've had tremendous volunteer input. It's been incredible. If it wasn't for them and a dedicated staff we wouldn't have stuck around this long," Piercy reveals. She also extends a special thanks to the Acton Citizens Band for offering their hall when the YMCA closed four years ago.

The centre is open Mondays and Fridays from 9:30 to 11:30 am and 1 to 3 pm and on Wednesdays from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm.



Lindsy Nuttal, 4, played with the cash register at the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre recently. (Doug Harrison photo)



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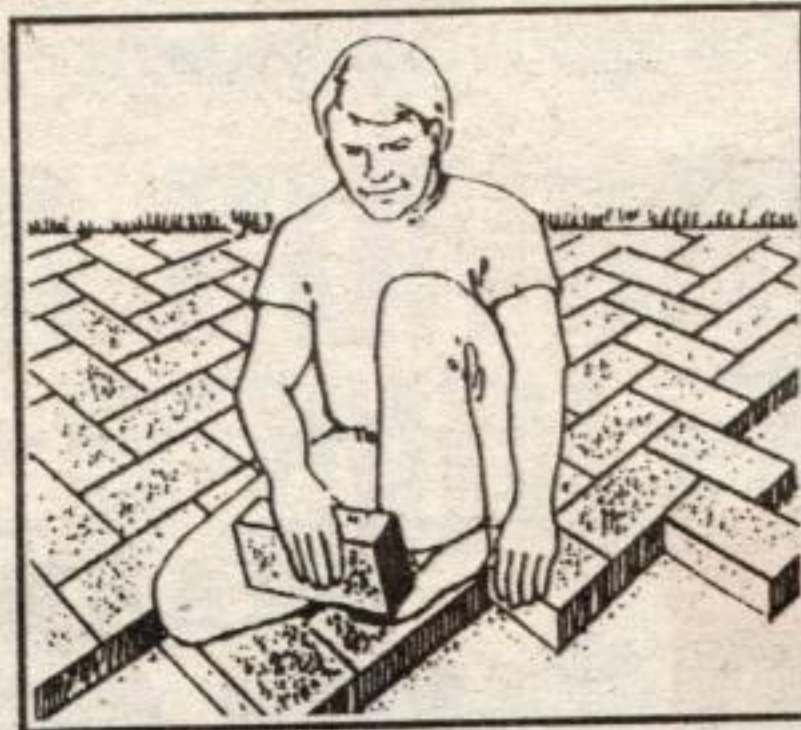
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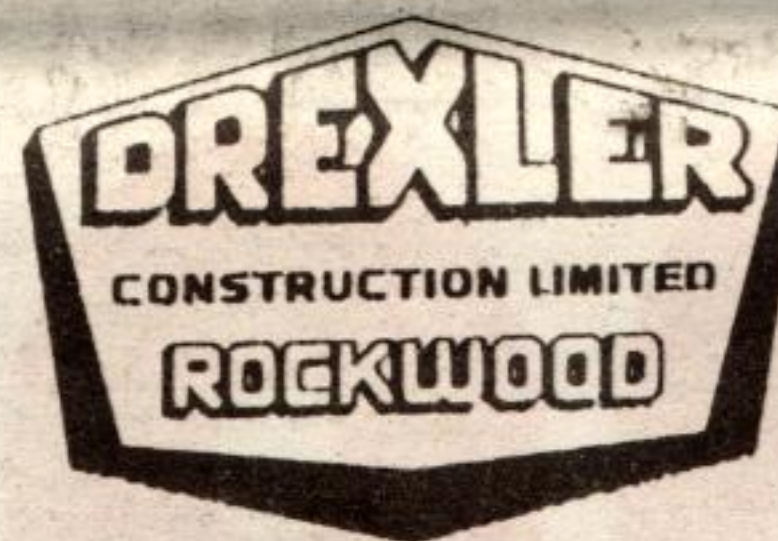
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