

Playshop expansion?

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

With Junior Kindergarten cancelled as of September 1996, providing the enactment of provincial enabling legislation, the Preschool Playshop program is hoping for full-day programming Mondays through Thursdays starting next fall, says a Town official.

The playshop, which lost half its clientele when JK was made optional for Acton youngsters this past September, budgeted for only morning classes from 9 to 11:30 Tuesdays through Thursdays with a limit of 16 kids (eight kids each for teachers Linda Neary and Barb Robinson).

Stacey Green, recreation supervisor with the Town's recreation and parks department, says afternoon classes could be added if the numbers soar in the August lottery after this school year. But, she adds, the ratio will not change.

"With the space of the facility (located at the Prospect Park boat-house) we want it to be comfortable for the kids and we want a quality ratio," Green explains, adding there are still programs running at the Salvation Army and Acton Parent and Child Resource Centre at the Band Hall.

"We'll definitely be ready to pick up the excess kids from JK if they don't go to those programs."

Neary, who's in her ninth year co-running the playshop, says she would love to pick up more hours.

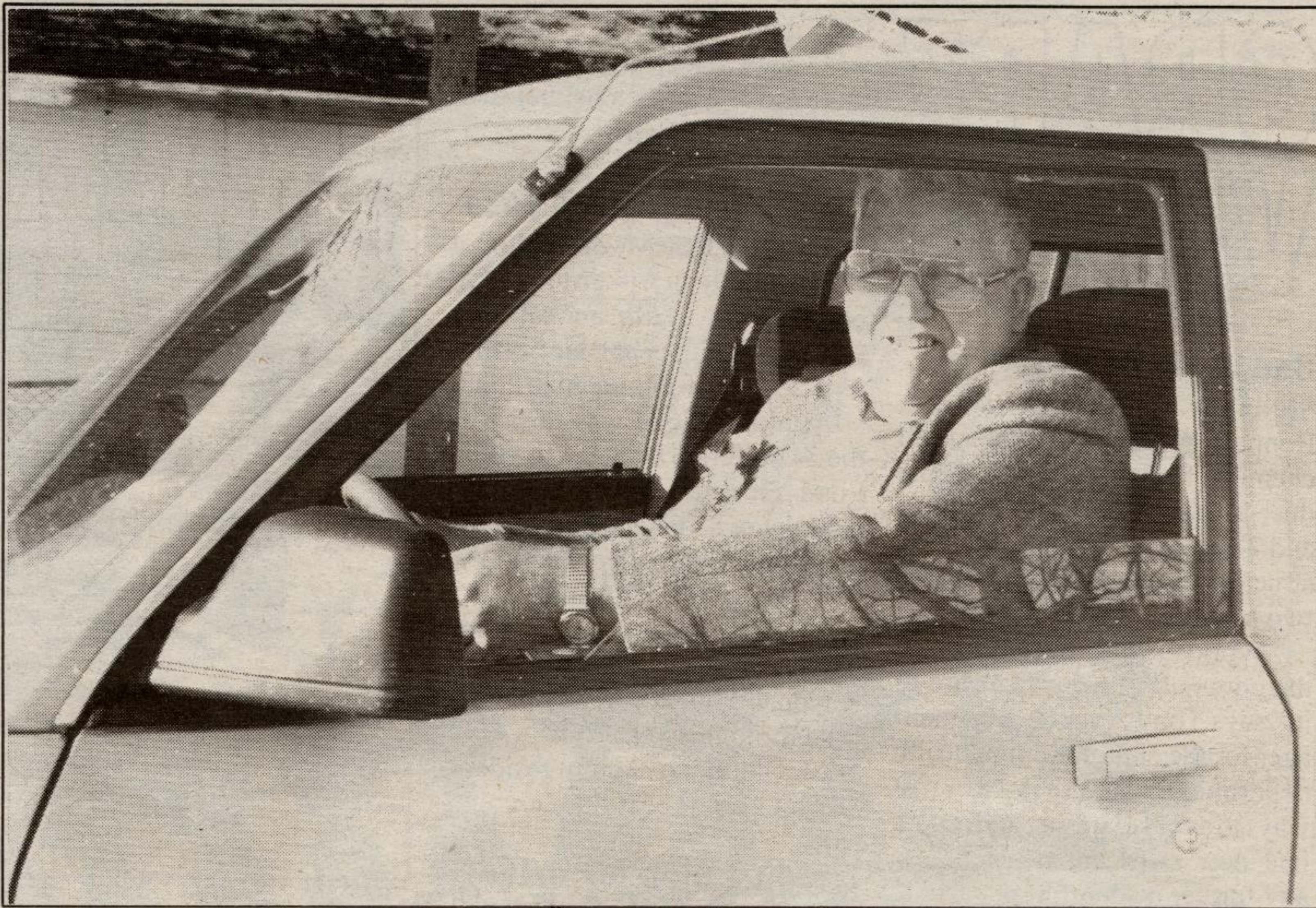
"I think there's going to be an increase in numbers next year," she predicts. "I was surprised JK was cancelled. I thought the Halton Board would have stuck with it."

According to Green, a two-year supervisor, a survey conducted recently showed most people prefer the playshop to Junior Kindergarten, but because of financial considerations went the JK route.

"Having JK cancelled is good for us to continue quality programming," Green remarks. "The program has run over 10 years, so the leaders are experienced."

As for those critics who don't feel the playshop allows for parent-child interaction like the now-defunct Acton Co-op Nursery, Green says parents are always welcome to participate in the preschool playshop program.

"There's definitely a parent component here," she says.



KEEPING BOTH HANDS ON THE WHEEL: Driving instructor Keith Black says car accidents, especially those in winter, can be avoided by knowing how to drive in poor weather conditions.

Caution key to safe winter driving

BY KAREN WETMORE
The Acton Tanner

As the season changes to winter, the roads change too. Snow and ice will offer hazards to all drivers for the next few months.

To help drivers get around safer, Keith Black, a 28-year driving instructor, shared some winter driving tips with the *Tanner* last week.

"You should do a mental inventory every time you go out in your car, no matter what the season," says Black, including checking the weather conditions, amount of traffic and time of day.

Black says very few car "acci-

dents" are accidentally caused and are, in effect, collisions. With 900 Ontarians killed in collisions in 1994, practicing safe driving habits can mean the difference between life and death.

"Be prepared to yield 100 per cent of the time," says Black, describing the co-operative model of driving. "If someone can't drive well, pick up for them and drive defensively."

In the winter months, there are different situations which can either be improved or even avoided by following Black's advice.

• **Stopping** - In winter, sudden temperature changes could prove dangerous on a damp road surface, causing black ice. Accelerate and brake slowly.

Slow down much sooner when coming up to an intersection to make sure you will be able to stop.

• **Turning** - Black says to avoid making left turns if possible where there is poor visibility or heavy traffic. And never start to turn the wheel until starting the turn itself. If you get hit from behind, your car won't be pushed into oncoming traffic.

• **Passing** - Passing is more risky during the winter because of random ice patches on the road. If you are going to pass someone, pull out when the car you want to pass is five seconds ahead of you. That way, if it's not safe to pass, you can easily switch back into your lane again.

• **Skidding** - A car skids on slippery pavement when the back end moves faster than the front, says Black. It's most often caused by over-steering or braking on a curve. If you find yourself skidding, there are three things you need to remember to do and do them at the same time:

"Take your foot off the accelerator and the brake - what I call the kick-back rule," says Black. "In a standard car, put the clutch in so the car is in neutral."

Focus on where you want to go. If you focus on a nearby hydro pole, chances are you're going to hit it. And at the same time, steer the car into the skid.

Black advises drivers to just stay at home if the roads are icy, or during a blizzard or heavy fog.

"Change your lifestyle, or you may not have a lifestyle," he says.



Season's Greetings To All

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A BERMUDA SHOWER which turned into a downpour and the most rain in one day in 50 years on the island, and started while we were on the fifth hole of our golf game, still does not change our mind that BERMUDA IS A 'MUST-DO' for all tourists! Each trip there shows yet another interesting part. Beautiful flowers everywhere, lots of greenery, and nice breezes—the RIDE ON THE HARBOUR FERRY is a beautiful way to see the sites, or you can RENT A SCOOTER and go on your own along the picturesque narrow and winding roads. (You must be careful, though—one gentleman travelling on our AIR CANADA flight home had gone only 11 feet on his rented scooter before he fell off and broke his foot—accidents do happen on these so you have to understand them before attempting to ride one.) Incidentally, the weather was 74 and sunny with a nice breeze the day after the rain, and the ATLANTIC looked calm and inviting!

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NOW IT'S DEREGULATION FOR THE BUSES! Not that it will affect a lot of people, but those it does will squawk loud and clear if and when the Ontario government carries out deregulation of the bus industry. There is now a PROTECTIONISM IN THE INDUSTRY, giving exclusivity to companies in many areas. The 'OPEN ROADS' policy would give open competition but also will allow bus carriers to 'drop' unprofitable runs, in some cases.

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ST. MAARTEN IS COMING BACK into the swing of the tourist market after their HURRICANE CLEANUP as AIR TRANSAT HOLIDAYS announces they will be returning there 'full-swing' in January with SOME GOOD RE-INTRODUCTORY FARES! Great Bay Hotel and Casino, a popular all-inclusive, is a good one they are featuring.

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