

# Two families benefit from informal co-op

BY KAREN WETMORE  
The Rockwood Miller

Laurel Sparrow had just moved to Rockwood when she met a woman who wanted to start a co-op childcare. Sparrow joined and met Lorna Tonelli, the only other member. When the woman who started the co-op left it, Sparrow and Tonelli kept in contact.

"We were all very busy, so we decided to get together and look after each other's kids," said Sparrow at Tonelli's home last Friday.

Since the fall, the two mothers have worked out a schedule where each takes care of the children on alternating Tuesday mornings, while the other has the time for herself.

"It's amazing what you can do with that three hours - or not do," said Tonelli.

In addition to the babysitting, the two mothers and their four children have made trips to the mall together and spent time at each other's homes. By coinci-

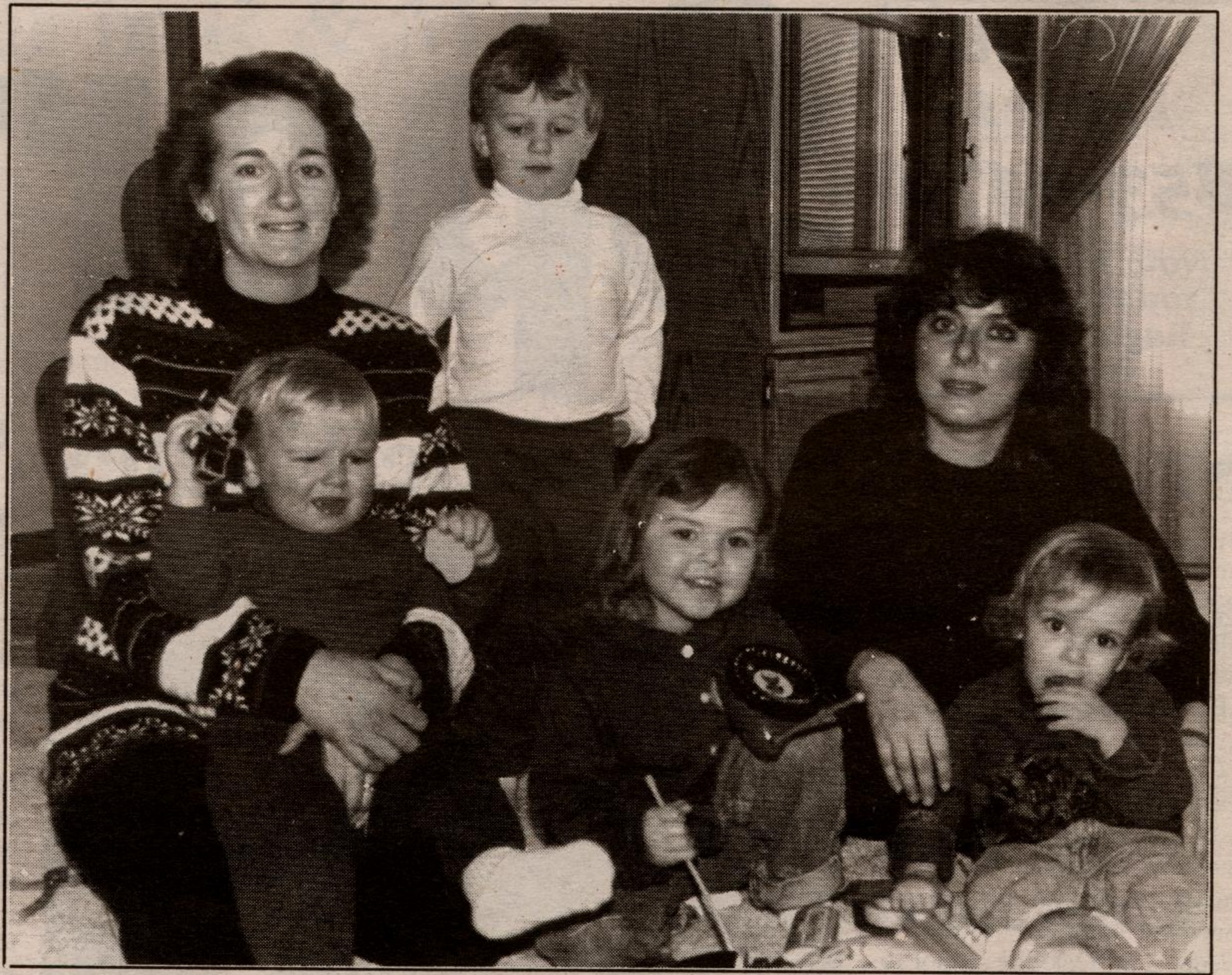
dence, Sparrow's three-year-old daughter Kimberleigh is the same age as Tonelli's son Derek, and William Sparrow at 20 months is just two months older than Brent Tonelli. This gives the mothers someone to talk to about parenting who knows exactly what the other is going through, said Sparrow.

"I know what it's like to be stuck at home with the kids and no car," added Tonelli. "It can be very isolating in Rockwood."

Both women agree having the children together has been good for all of them. Tonelli said it has helped Derek to be less attached to her, which will be good for him when he starts school.

Both Sparrow and Tonelli are interested in having other parents and their children get together with them. It's a way to meet new people and possibly share some babysitting in the future.

If you are interested, you can call Sparrow at 856-1176 or Tonelli at 856-2268.



**WORKING TO PLAY TOGETHER:** Lorna Tonelli, left, and friend Laurel Sparrow, far right, spend time together with their children: 20-month-old Brent on Tonelli's lap with brother Derek, 3, and Kimberleigh Sparrow, 3, and her 18-month-old brother William.

# Neighbour helps put fire out

The fast actions of a neighbour are being credited after a kitchen fire started in a home on Hwy. 24 at the Fourth Line last Wednesday.

The fire started from a pot left on the stove. The homeowner got himself and his children out of the house and went to a neighbour's to call the fire department. The neighbour went back to the burning house with a fire extinguisher to try to put the fire out.

"The fire and damages could have been a lot more extensive if the neighbour hadn't acted so quickly," said Dave Sherratt, Township of Eramosa fire chief.

Damage from the fire amounted to between \$15,000 and \$18,000. The helpful neighbour was treated for stitches on his hand. He cut himself while breaking the kitchen window in order to use the fire extinguisher.

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Upstairs, the front bedroom boasts a boxed out window seat. A computer room provides a quiet area for study. French doors lead into the master bedroom which features a walk-in closet and a four-piece ensuite with a swirl tub set into a bay.

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