



Senior Lifestyles



Mixing Colours program promotes safe use of alcohol and medications

The Halton Regional Health Department has launched a new program called Mixing Colours which promotes the safe use of alcohol and medications by older adults. Mixing Colours gives seniors the information needed to help them become active participants in their own health care.

A growing problem with the over 55 age group is the unsafe use of drugs and alcohol. Improper use of medications and alcohol by older adults can lead to confusion, increased falls, emergency hospitalizations, institutionalization, and incorrect medical diagnosis.

Research on substance use in the elderly has revealed some startling trends. Twenty to 30 per cent of prescribed drugs are taken by seniors who account for only 12 per cent of the population. Twenty per cent of hospital admissions for seniors are due to the misuse of medications. An estimated 50 per cent of seniors are using medications improperly.

Although the Ontario Drug Benefit Program has guaranteed seniors access to needed prescriptions it has resulted in some problems of excessive and inappropriate medication use. Seniors need to ask questions about their medications in order to avoid unnecessary health risks caused from both excessive drug use and drug misuse. Many seniors do not have or use a medication record; they do not know why, when, or how, they should take their medicines.

The Halton Regional Health Department hopes to work with seniors, physicians, pharmacists, hospitals, community agencies, and the Elderly Services Advisory Council of Halton in an effort to get more seniors to ask questions about their medications and to think about what can be done to prevent future problems, for example, encouraging seniors to use a medication record.

For more information about the Mixing Colours Program, call the Halton Regional Health Department and ask for the Seniors Health Program, call 519-853-0501.



Kelly McArthur, manager of Acton IGA, did his part with help from Marnie Manes as they ran the barbecue at the annual Acton Seniors' Picnic, June 20 which was held in Prospect Park, Acton.

TED BROWN Independent/Free Press

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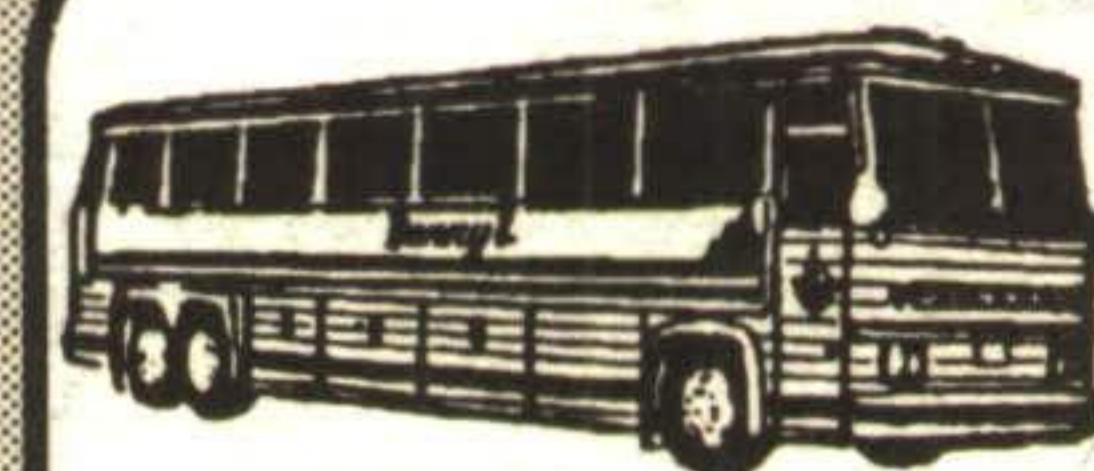
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Seniors Jubilee	Toronto	Aug. 16th
Classic Muskoka Cruise		Aug. 23rd
Blue Jays vs. Chicago	Skydome	Aug. 26th
My Fair Lady	Huron County	Aug. 30th
He Won't Come In From The Barn	Blyth	Aug. 31st

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