

# Women's Place passes

Halton Women's Place passed another hurdle Tuesday.

The Halton Health and Social Services Committee agreed to purchase a one year service agreement on a daily (per diem) basis of \$15.

The agreement is to start Dec. 1, 1979 and expire Dec. 31, 1980.

The motion is subject to the approval of regional council which meets Aug. 15. Afterwards, it will be forwarded to the Ministry of Community and Social Services for approval.

Halton Women's Place will be located in the structure which currently houses the detachment of Halton Regional Police at 48 Hugh St., Milton.

Rennie Vivian, Halton Health and Social Services Administrator, said in a report to the committee, "The purpose of this undertaking would be to provide emergency shelter accommodation for abused women and their dependent children along with the provision of the support network required."

"The per diem is based on the operating budget of Halton Women's Place to a maximum of \$15 per day as specified by the Ministry."

He said, "Halton Women's Place will be responsible to raise the difference between actual costs and revenue received via a purchase of service."

Margaret Weightman, supervisor of finance in the Health and Social Services Department, presented a report showing the department spends approximately \$125,000 assisting abused women and their dependent children.

"The purchase of service agreement with Halton Women's Place would, at maximum, increase gross spending by approximately \$59,000 per year."

In reply to committee members' questions, she said the \$125,000 would drop with the approval of accepting the services of Halton Women's Place, since it would be doing work previously done by the department.

However, Mrs. Weightman said she did not know how much the figure would drop.

Regional Chairman Jack Raftis attended the meeting held in a committee room at Halton's headquarters in Oakville.

He asked what the intent of Halton Women's Place would be.

Mrs. Weightman said

## Omagh Halton people tour

By Mrs. Cecil Patterson

Five young 4-H members from Halton county had a pleasant week's visit to Buffalo County, Wisconsin, USA, returning home early this week. Chaperone and chauffer for the trip was Allan Brownridge with Mary Jean Robinson, Elaine White, Randy Fish, Marilyn McNabb and Beverley Wingfield.

This annual exchange visit is awarded to members with high standing scores. Next year Halton will host the group from the USA.

Sincere sympathy is extended to the family of the late Clifford Hunter who passed away in Milton District Hospital Thursday, July 26 after a few weeks' illness. Mr. Hunter was a well known retired dairy farmer in the Georgetown area.

He is survived by his wife and son Thomas and family and Carol (Mrs. Wm. Robinson) and family.

Funeral service was held on Sunday, July 24 from St. Stephen's Anglican Church Hornby.

Mr. Tom Hunter was a popular teacher at Percy Merry School for several years.

studies of where an emergency shelter for women are in operation, show the repeater rate is around six and 11 per cent.

In Halton, which has no shelter, the number of people who return to the department for help is around 50 per cent.

Emergency shelters do work, she said.

They offer a refuge for women fleeing an unhealthy home situation. They give them a place to turn to, for them and their children.

They give them time to patch up their disagreements with their husbands, or they allow them a time to look for alternate accommodation and employment.

Also, Mrs. Weightman said, they bring the woman into contact with service agencies which can lead to conciliation with their husbands.

The service groups can also provide social services and assist the woman to relocate herself and her children.

Mr. Vivian said many of the situations of women fleeing to shelters are emotional.

At the time the disturbance takes place, she

may want her husband to be locked up. A few hours later, she may want him released, he said.

Mr. Vivian said wives are reluctant to lay charges against their husbands. Consequently, the police are limited in what they can do.

He said a shelter in Halton is necessary.

There is none in Halton at present.

Walter Mulkewich, chairman of the committee, said women in distress are either housed in motels or referred to emergency shelters in Toronto or Hamilton.

He said he is concerned that the terms for a support system to Halton Women's Place be established at the same time the shelter is, in order that women can either be conciliated with their husbands or alternate arrangements can be made.

Councillor Bonnie Brown of Oakville, a member of the committee, said the women who seek shelter is one who has frequently had to endure beatings for years.

She had to stay with her husband because

there was no economic alternative for her and her children.

A shelter allows her an alternative and a place to go to take what steps she can to mend her life and to take care of her dependents.

Mr. Vivian said the process of reconciliation may take days, months or years.

It depends on the couple.

Sometimes the man and wife patch their differences. Sometimes they can't.

Speaking from experience as the region's representative in court cases involving couples and their children, Mr. Vivian said today many couples seem to think that if the food served is not agreeable, it is cause for separation.

The advantage of a support service attached to the home is in bringing such people into social agencies which can make the couple see reason and to help them mend their

lives.

Mr. Mulkewich said he wanted a shelter and a support system the region can live with. Thus, it is necessary that the terms be spelled out.

Assuming regional council approves the motion and the Ministry is favorable, a formal agreement will be drafted.

"We have to be satisfied that the purchase of service is what we want," he said.

Replying to Milton Councillor Gus Goutouski's question about the number of cases from the south as opposed to the north, Mrs. Weightman said many of those who turn up in the south are from the northern part of the region.

The reason is, the serv-

ices are not available.

Thus, women come to Oakville and Burlington where the services are. She said Milton is the site chosen because the building is available.

Mrs. Brown said Halton Women's Place has been looking for months and the police building in Milton is the only one available which is suitable.

Plus, it is next door to the new police office and is handy to court which is located in town.

She said renovations to the building will cost \$10,000.

The building has to be renovated in order to be suitable for women and their children.

The work will make the building suitable for 12 women.

She said the shelter will

be staffed 24 hours a day, to ensure there will be someone on duty at all times in case of emergency.

This works out to a full time supervisor and approximately five staff people.

Mrs. Weightman said it is necessary the staff be professional in order for the shelter to be able to handle the case load.

Mr. Raftis summed up, after he heard the answers to his and committee members' questions.

"It is a humble beginning. Hopefully, it will help," he said.

"There is a great deal of work that has to be done in an area where no work has been done."

He said this service should have been introduced earlier.

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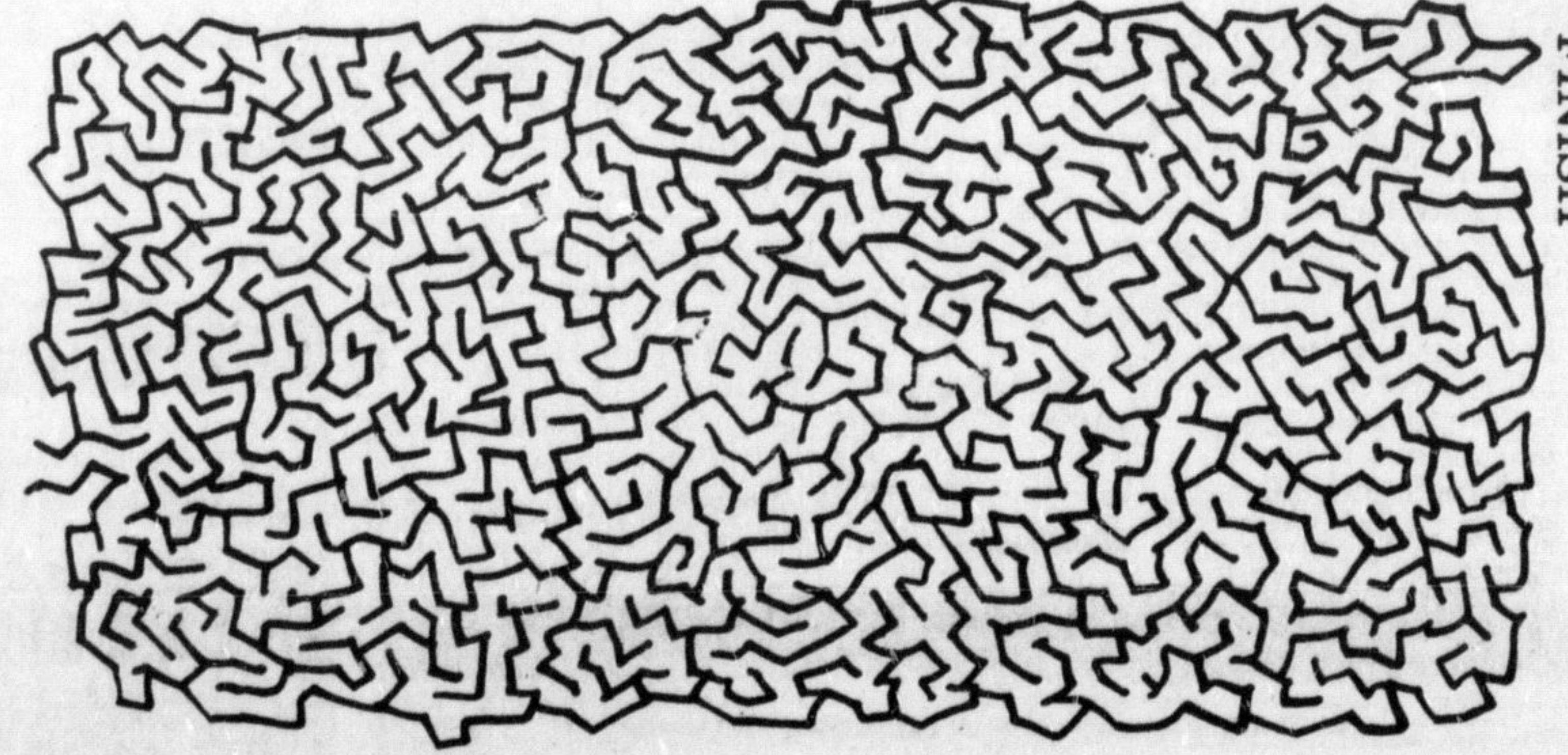
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