



Welcome to Milton. The Welcome Wagon service celebrates 50 years of service in Canada this year, and the service in Milton has completed nine years. Hostesses are Marj Mowbray and Bev Gibson (seated) and Bunny Putnam.

Greet 5,000 newcomers in 9 years

By Roy Downs
Over 5,000 new families arriving in Milton over the past nine years have been extended a warm welcome to our community, thanks to Bev Gibson and her team of Welcome Wagon hostesses.

Mrs. Gibson is often a new family's first official contact with the town, and she enjoys her work immensely. She gets a real pleasure out of helping newcomers get acclimatized, and carries a large basket full of gifts from local merchants and helpful information about the community.

This year Welcome Wagon is celebrating its 50th anniversary of service in Canada. Originated in the States

in 1928, it spread to Canada in 1930 and today is an all-Canadian company headed by Pauline Hill of Toronto. Welcome Wagon has been a Canadian-owned since December of 1979, and is wholly owned by its employees.

Honoring her service to her community, Mrs. Gibson recently won a three-day trip to Montreal, for having the best representation for a community Milton's size. She was one of 35 winners who spent three days at the Chateau Champlain and attended a one-day convention of WW hosts and hostesses.

(Yes, men are now joining the ranks, there was one male host from North Bay at the Mon-

trepreneurial event.)

Welcome Wagon today boasts 1,000 representatives in Canada and covers some 450 communities. The nationwide greeting service has welcomed millions of families to their new homes.

Expansion in recent years has thrust WW hosts and hostesses into new fields — new parents, couples planning marriage, and college freshmen in many communities also receive a WW call.

The local hostesses also sponsor a Newcomers Club, which is mainly a social group that meets monthly, helps new residents make new friends, and teaches members more about the town. Mrs. Gibson spearheads the

club but it is autonomous and has its own executive to operate the club and plan its programs.

A Welcome Wagon call usually lasts about an hour. Newcomers are first presented with the "civic basket" — an impressive pile of information about the community library, Scouts and Guides, fire department, conservation authority, churches, Y programs, and hospital. The packet includes a letter of welcome from the mayor and a list of all community groups, services, schools and sports organizations plus a brochure on town recreation programs.

"I am really proud of our civic section," Mrs. Gibson said. "It is very complete. Often people will ask me questions that aren't covered in the

newcomer visits the service to include apartment buildings.

Mrs. Gibson reports most newcomers are extremely happy with the community. "Oh, I hear a few complaints, but most of them are very enthusiastic about Milton and anxious to get involved in the town," she said.

The WW supervisor received a second honor last month, when she was asked to speak to a Manitoba WW group holding a convention in Toronto. Mrs. Gibson talked to them about her work with her sponsors.

But after nine years of fielding new residents' questions, she has accumulated most of the answers needed.

The balance of her presentation includes gifts and information on local merchants, who pay the WW service a set fee per call for advertising their business. Usually a merchant sends a small gift with the hostess, plus a card allowing a second gift or a discount if the

newcomer visits the service to include apartment buildings.

"I have a really good group of sponsors," Mrs. Gibson said. Nine of her 26 current sponsors have been enrolled since the WW program was launched in Milton in April of 1970.

"They represent a good cross section of the town," she pointed out.

Assisting hostesses are Marj Mowbray and Bunny Putnam.

With the addition of the third hostess recently, Mrs. Gibson has expanded the welcoming

Farming in the Past

This Sunday, July 27 Mountsberg Wildlife Centre will present Farming in the Past. The program which runs from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. will include a film show illustrating farm and crop management of the past.

Halton study back for a report

Regional staff and area social service agencies are going to spend the summer months studying the study recently completed of family counselling services in the region.

Councillors approved a recommendation by the Health and Social Services Committee to refer the 53-page document to regional staff for cost analysis and evaluation of other impacts on the region.

The study was presented to the Social Services Committee June 24. It is recommended that a purchase of service agreement be negotiated with a single social

service agency in Halton to provide family counselling services throughout the region and that the counselling service operated by the region be phased out.

Regional staff and interested agencies in the region are expected to report back by the end of August on the recommendations of the study.

Not all regional councillors were pleased with the idea of referring the study for further study by the staff.

"Why should we send it back if we already agree that it is what we want," argued Oakville councillor Laurie Mannell.

Coun. Walter Mulke-wich, chairman of the Social Services Committee said the new study "has information that has never been found in any document that has come before this council."

"For the first time we have a complete study to base our decisions on," he added.

The study, conducted by Social Policy Research Associates, of Toronto, revealed there is confusion currently caus-

ed by the number of agencies in Halton providing family counselling services.

"A single agency is recommended in order to remedy the main weaknesses noted in the current system: confusion in the delivery of service because of the relatively large number of agencies providing family counselling," said the report.

Currently, seven agencies are involved in providing family counselling services in Halton. These

include the Oakville Family Service Bureau, the Region of Halton Family Counselling Division, the Burlington Counselling and Human Relations Institute, the psychiatric departments of Oakville-Trafalgar and Joseph Brant Hospitals, the North Halton Mental Health Clinic and family service agencies in Hamilton.

Mulke-wich added that a recommendation is expected to be made to council on Sept. 9 after the summer review.

Standard report card is coming

An end may be in sight to the confusion of parents wondering just how well their children are doing in school.

Halton Board of Education has received a draft standard report card form to replace the assorted forms being used throughout the region.

Harold Braithwaite, Administrative Assistant to Dr. Bob Dixon, Superintendent of Program, said four specific forms would be used on a test basis for the next three years.

A student progress report in the junior and intermediate divisions and a student achievement form in each division.

The progress report will be used throughout the year and the achievement report will be used at the end of the year and will be included in the Ontario Student Record file kept on each student.

Grades will be classified as 0 (outstanding), G (Good), S (Satisfactory) and D (Significant difficulty).

Braithwaite said the report would be accompanied by an envelope advising parents to contact the school if they have any concerns.

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