

Author will speak about challenges of senior care

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

The retirement years should be golden. But too often they are tarnished by difficulties finding in-home or nursing home care.

To help, the Nassagaweya's Women's Institute is hosting an evening with Sandra Stanisz, author of *Caring for Seniors in Halton and Hamilton-Wentworth*.

The presentation will be held tomorrow (Wednesday, October 6) at 7:30 p.m. at Brookville Hall on Guelph Line, five miles north of Hwy. 401.

Waiting lists are just one bane of the search for in-home care, reported Ms Stanisz. And though the necessary resources are usually out there, accessing them can be a headache.

"You get to where you know you can get some help and then there are waiting lists," she said.

A lack of coordination among the various services can mean having to go through a frustrating assessment process each and every time, added Ms Stanisz.

"Some services won't overlap, so you may have to get a service to do housework and another one to do meals," she said. "And every time you have a service, you have to be assessed."

Money is often tight

Nabbing a much sought after spot in a senior's residence can also be a hassle, especially if money is tight, said Ms Stanisz.

"The senior seniors don't have a lot of money. They are the ones in their eighties or more," she said. "There is some subsidized housing, but there is a list."

That means seniors can be forced to go straight from their own home into a nursing home.

These were the problems Ms Stanisz saw people running into through her work in long term care residences.

The Flamborough resident is now poised to administrate

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SANDRA STANISZ

Village Manor, a new retirement home in Waterdown.

"I saw a real need in the lack of information that is available for seniors and caregivers," she said.

She wrote her book to help people sift through the options and come up with the best solution for them.

For that reason, her public appearances are less formal talks than they are personal chats with seniors and caregivers.

"They tell me their situation and I'll give them suggestions and help them that way," she said. "I prefer an interactive type of thing."

Aside from resource information, the book contains a handy list of questions caregivers and seniors can ask when looking for a retirement or nursing home.

Searching for care can be a heart-wrenching experience both for the caregiver and the senior, said Ms Stanisz.

"It is exasperating, it is emotional, especially when your family (member requiring care) has any kind of dementia," she said. "You almost have to get to know a whole new person."

It is also hard on the senior, who may find it difficult to let go of their traditional role as parent.

"There is really a loss of identity for a senior when they start to have care," said Ms Stanisz.

Her book is available at Indigo and Chapters stores.

For more information on the upcoming seminar, call Katharine Garwood at 854-2470.

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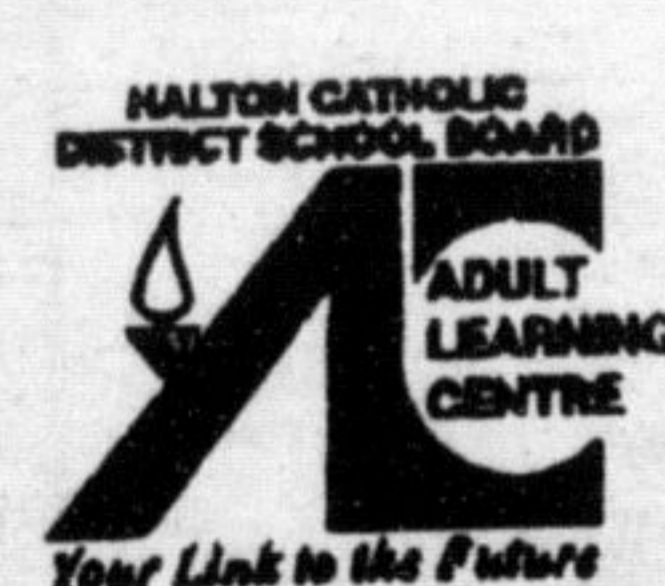
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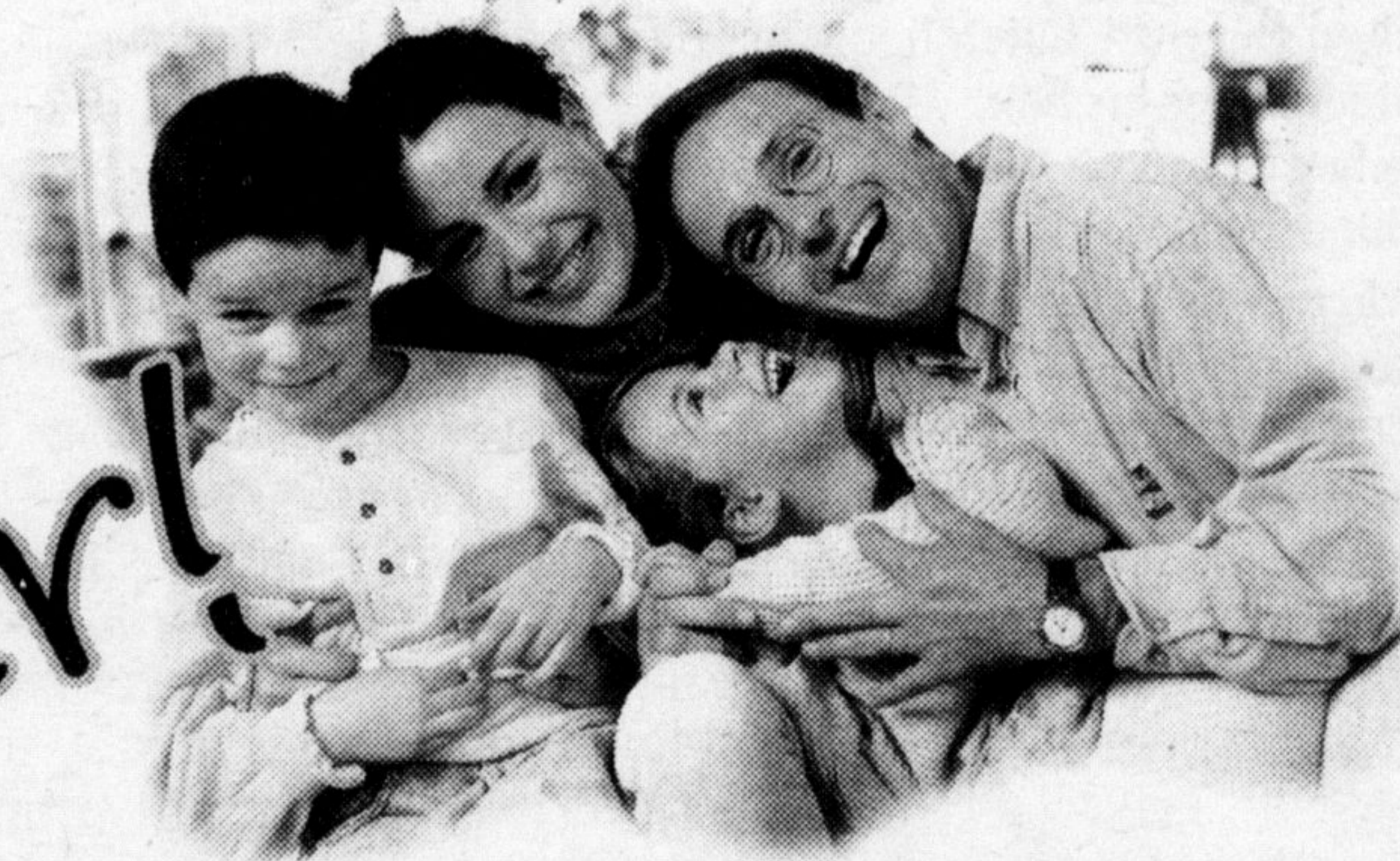


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