

# New computer program bonds police and learning disabled

By DENNIS SMITH

Special to The Champion

"Bridging the chasm" for problem children is important, says the founder of the pioneer Computers for Kids program.

Computer education can be a great help to children who're learning disabled or economically deprived, Bob Sharen told a Burlington forum Wednesday.

"If you reach out to problem children, they'll reach back," he said. "But it takes a little while."

The speaker outlined his group's experiences at two forums sponsored by the Community Partnership Prevention Network. The Halton group is hoping to organize its own Computers for Kids program.

Mr. Sharen's group is based in Grand Bend (Lambton County) but has helped families from Toronto to Windsor to Walkerton. He said they've placed more than 300 computers either at youth and adult centres or at homes.

Besides donations of equipment, obtaining trainers for the program is also important, he noted. Mr. Sharen cited mentoring by off-duty police officers as a particularly successful part of the program.

"Usually these children only saw officers coming over to say someone had died or to make an arrest, and the cops had come to view the kids as punks," he said. "But here, they could see them as ordinary kids with problems that can be helped."

Former Computers for Kids students can be recruited as trainers or other high school students can do instruction for their community service credit, Mr. Sharen suggested.

Besides helping the learning disabled, the computer program also helps alleviate social problems, he said.

Mr. Sharen cited statistics that showed many youths in prison or reform institutions, living in poverty or killed in car accidents, are learning disabled.

"They look like anyone else but the learning disabled get all sorts of labels, like stupid and ugly," he said. "It's very frustrating and debilitating. Often, they know what to do but can't get it out."

But some children who don't do well in regular school can succeed with computers, where hand-eye control is required, he added.

The Lambton program was started with the help of area citizens, sponsors and health organizations and is part of the local community policing committee.

Mr. Sharen cited a variety of potential sources for donations of money, equipment and expertise. His suggestions included service clubs, hospitals, bereaved families, police, funeral directors, churches and even liquor and wine stores.

Donors and sponsors are currently being sought for the Halton Computers for Kids programs. Anyone interested in helping out can call Deb Bechard at 632-6531, ext. 30.

# HIGH SCHOOL REPORT

## GRADE "A" NEWS AT MILTON DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL ADVERTISEMENT



Jacqueline Bass



Marissa Cheskey

### Grade "A" News By Jacqueline Bass and Marissa Cheskey

Everyone certainly had a surprise waking up to snow on Wednesday morning. We're sure that all of the students were hoping for much more snow than actually fell, to relieve them from another hectic school day. Let's look on the bright side, at least we used Monday afternoon for homework and studying. It's not like either of us started our Christmas shopping or anything.

This week was a spirited one at M.D.H.S. We had our first "Pep Rally" and school Fashion Show of the year. This took place on Wednesday morning during the TAP period. Sports teams were recognized for their achievements and the cheerleaders performed their routine and cheer for the school. A bigger fashion show will be taking place later on in the year in conjunction with Boardtopia. Student Council is working on picking out the school clothes for this year and will keep students posted as to when orders can be made.

Speaking of spirited sports teams, the Senior Boy's Football season has adly come to an end. The boys were dedicated and put forth their best effort to make the team a success. We would also like to mention the coaches and applaud them for their hard work and enthusiasm. Better luck next year! We would also like to wish the Junior Boy's Football team good luck as the season continues for them.

Last week some spooktacular events took place at M.D. in honour of Hallowe'en. One of these was the second annual Haunted house. It was reportedly very scary according to many of the students brave enough to enter. On Wednesday morning each homeroom selected a few class members to carve and decorate their class pumpkin. The winning pumpkin, "Veggie Head," decorated with various vegetables, hence the name, was submitted by Ms. Carney's homeroom. Second place went to Ms. Graham's homeroom for "Buddy," the costume contest was held on Friday and all students were welcome to dress up. The winners were as follows: Terry Bullen for most original in his "When Animals Attack" costume, Joe Aquinas for funniest in his "Girlie-Girl" costume and scarlets went to Trevor Tobin. thanks to everyone who dressed up and also to Student Council for hosting all of the above events.

Lastly we would like to recognize Mrs. O'Reilly's Entrepreneurial Studies class who have been quite busy gathering ads and sponsors for the Millenium yearbook. Thanks to them we will now have a full colour yearbook. congratulations to Nancy Coffen and Jean Kiathavisack who managed to collect the most ads out of the entire class. For their efforts they will each receive a yearbook free of charge.

We would now like to remind everyone that Monday is not a short day. You'll just have to turn to Mother Nature and ask her very nicely for more snow!

## DATELINE DRURY AT E.C. DRURY HIGH SCHOOL ADVERTISEMENT



### DATELINE DRURY By Candice Hugo, Kristyn Di Girolamo, Sarah Hamilton

Hello again! We hope that everyone had a happy and safe Halloween. As everyone knows this was the last Halloween of the millennium and Drury's Pumpkin Patrol ended this century with a bang. On Monday morning Drury students gathered and emptied car loads of non-perishable food items that were generously donated by the community for the food bank. On behalf of E.C. Drury's Student Council and Student Athletic Society we would like to thank all who contributed and we would also like to thank A&P for allowing us to borrow shopping carts for this year's Pumpkin Patrol.

Senior students who participated in this event will be able to add this act of community service to their student profile. Over the past few weeks graduating grade twelve and grade thirteen students have been organizing and recording all their accomplishments through high school. This self profile aids teachers and students when scholarship deadlines arrive. Don't forget to get those student profiles into student services as soon as possible!

In order to prepare for post secondary education seniors have also been attending university and college seminars. These seminars provide graduating students with useful information about post secondary programs, residences, tuitions and extra curricular activities. Being able to talk with specific college and university representatives allows students to select the schools that interest them and provide the programs they seek.

To further prepare for next year, graduating students from Halton high schools attended a University Information Program, this past Tuesday. Students had the opportunity to select the three universities that most interested them and meet with representatives one on one. It was the first time that details such as specific programs and career planning could be discussed.

Informative events such as these make the transition to College and University easier on students.

It was also enlightening when grads offered valuable first hand information on all aspects of life after Drury for senior students on Grad Day.

Well, now that you have been informed of all the future career planning that has been going on this year, we look forward to seeing many of you at tonight's 1998-1999 commencement. Hope you all have an enjoyable weekend. Watch for us next week!

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