



Community Page

Nursery school looks back on 40 years

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

Jeni Marinucci fondly remembers her days as a carefree toddler attending Milton Community Nursery School in the mid-'70s.

She remembers the field trips, the friends — many of whom she went to high school with — and the fact she was lucky enough to have her grandmother as her teacher.

"I don't know why, but while I was there I referred to her as Mrs. Manford and the people there didn't know I was her granddaughter," Ms Marinucci said, laughing.

When she had her first child almost six years ago, Ms Marinucci didn't have to give it much thought — she knew she wanted her daughter, Sofia, to have as good a time as she did. So, when Sofia turned two-and-a-half, she followed in her mother's footsteps and went to Milton Community Nursery School. And when eight-month-old Nicolas Marinucci is old enough, he too will attend.

Milton Community Nursery School has become quite the family affair. And both Ms Marinucci and her grandmother, Elsie Manford, say it has some of the most caring, qualified workers around.

Both women will be among the visitors at Saturday's 40th anniversary open house at the school, which is located at St. Paul's United Church, 123 Main St. E.

Former students and parents are invited to drop in between 2 and 5 p.m. and re-live some old memories. The celebration will include children's activities, a clown, refreshments, and a chance to tour the classrooms. No registration is required.

Milton Community Nursery School accepts children when they're two-and-a-half and toilet trained up to age five.

There's also an enrichment class for junior and senior kindergarten students, which runs for a few hours a few days a week.

Supervisor Jackie Ward explained that the school is a co-operative school, which means parents play an active role in many capacities, from working in the classrooms to cleaning to serving on the various committees.

"It's a very warm, inviting environment," she said.

Since parents make up the board of directors, decisions are made by the people who are directly involved, said Ms Ward, who's been working at the school for the past 14 years.

"They have a lot of input into the direction the school's going," she said.

That's one of the reasons Ms Marinucci knew she wanted to send Sofia — who's six next



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Jeni Marinucci shows her daughter Sofia a book she received from Milton Community Nursery School in 1975 as her grandmother Elsie Manford, a former teacher at the school, looks on. The scrapbooks in front are Sofia's artwork.

month and in the kindergarten enrichment program — there, she said, explaining she liked the fact that her presence was welcomed at the school.

That meant she could stay with her daughter until she felt comfortable being on her own.

"I really felt comfortable leaving her there — it was almost like leaving her with family," she said.

It's not only the kids who benefit from the parents helping out, Ms Marinucci said. At times it was her link to sanity, she said, because the school connected her to other moms experiencing the same difficulties and joys raising their

children.

Ms Manford's years as a teacher at the nursery school spanned 1964 to 1979.

"I always enjoyed working there," she said, adding the kids made it a rewarding place to work. "You can't help loving the little guys because they look up to you — well, most of them."

Ms Manford said she often wishes she'd known about the school when her children were young.

She said she would've benefited from the friendships and idea-swapping with other young moms. But she's glad her granddaughter has that

opportunity.

"I'm so thrilled it's still going and that my great-grandchildren are going there."

As for Ms Marinucci, she said she's going to miss the school during the couple of years between Sofia's nearing graduation and Nicolas' enrollment.

"It really has come full-circle. It's part of our family life."

For more information on the open house or the school, call Milton Community Nursery School at (905) 878-7007.

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Programming Schedule — Tuesday, February 22 - Monday, February 28, 2005

Tuesday, February 22	Wednesday, February 23	Thursday, February 24	Friday, February 25	Saturday, February 26	Sunday, February 27	Monday, February 28
2:00pm-5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	4:00pm-6:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	1:00pm-6:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	4:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	8:00am-4:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	10:30am TVCogeco Sports:	1:00pm-6:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA
5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	6:00pm Simply Halton	6:00pm Simply Halton	5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	4:00pm TVCogeco Sports	HS Sr. Basketball Finals	6:00pm Living Healthy:
6:00pm Osler Health Connection	6:30pm Plugged In! EXTRA	6:30pm Osler Health Connection	6:00pm - 7:30pm Plugged In! EXTRA	HS Sr. Basketball Finals	1:30pm-5:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	7:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA
6:30pm Optimist TV Bingo (Live)	7:30pm Swap Talk (Live)	7:00pm Living Healthy:	7:30pm TV Cogeco Sports: AHL	7:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA	5:00pm Living Healthy:	8:00pm SportsZone Live
7:30pm Simply Halton	8:30pm Auto Experts	Teenagers and Mental Health	Hockey: Rochester at Hamilton (Live)		6:00pm Teenagers and Mental Health	
8:00pm Halton Hills Council Feb 21	9:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA	Halton Region PPW Committee	10:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA		6:30pm Osler Health Connection	
Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA		11:00pm-Midnight Plugged In! EXTRA			7:30pm Simply Halton	
					8:00pm Plugged In! EXTRA	
					Midnight	

Live AHL Hockey: Rochester at Hamilton - Friday, 7:30pm on TVCogeco!