



Summer is super. Milton Parks and Recreation Department is ensuring a super summer for handicapped children through several integrated programs. Stephen Tellier, 7, is one of 25 handicapped children participating in the special needs program. Last week he and a busload of other children went for a swim at Kelso as part of the agenda for Camp Mildaca.

## High standards mark success of special needs parks program

By Jane Muller

High standards and enthusiasm are the backbone of Milton Parks and Recreation Department's special needs program, according to co-ordinator Maureen Devlin.

The 24-year-old co-ordinator is the first of her kind to be hired by the town to organize a program for physically and mentally handicapped children. Although these children have been included in programs in the past, no one has had the specific job of co-ordinating leader education and activities before.

Maureen, who is the model of the enthusiasm she promotes in the 10 special needs program leaders, is extremely pleased with the departments commitment to handicapped children.

She commended Bonnie Ward, Milton Parks and Recreation Department Supervisor, for her hard work over the winter convincing the need for this program to be expanded this year.

"Bonnie really pushed for this program," Maureen explains.

The co-ordinator boasts the program's success which she attributes to her staff, Bonnie's background work and the program's standards.

"If you have high standards it can only be successful," she suggests.

In order to instill expected standards upon program leaders, a week-long training session was arranged prior to the start of the program.

Maureen visited the parents of the 25 handicapped children who will take part in special needs at different times during the summer for interviews concerning specific handicaps. Each child was photographed as part of training week.

"Training week went well.

"It was intense, but they needed it," Maureen said.

She stresses that participants in special needs are supervised 100 per cent of the time and are always engaged in some sort of activity geared to individual abilities.

"They are integrated into all the programs, physically and socially to the extent of what they are capable of doing. The goal is to give them as much exercise and activity as needed."

Leaders are always right there to help these special children who participate in several Milton Parks and Recreation Department summer programs.

Evidence of the in-

tegration of handicapped children into these programs can be seen at J.M. Denyes playground, Camp Mildaca day camp and pre-school program at Robert Baldwin School.

One of the leaders who floats between each special need program is Gillian Whitechuck, who is herself special. She has impaired hearing which gives her a special edge in dealing with children who are handicapped.

"The leaders are definitely a strong point in the program. They do extra work. Their interest and enthusiasm makes them want to do more. They make equipment like booklets. They are very creative people."

Maureen has witnessed the other children involved in summer

taking over in the care of their handicapped counterparts, making friends easily. She says the entire program benefits all and the experience will be a lasting one for those children.

Of the handicapped children enrolled in special needs, about seven or eight come from Georgetown and Acton where a similar program may be started. A representative from Halton Hills Park and Recreation Department visited Maureen recently to discover the means of the program's success.

Maureen stressed to her a positive attitude and enthusiasm in abundance make the program as good as it is. Maureen's expertise in the field of special education stems from her post-secondary education. She completed a two-year Sheridan College course which qualified her as a children's program specialist and this fall she will return to York University for her third of four years which will leave her with a Bachelor of Arts degree in special education.

"I've always lived in town," she said.

"I have worked with Parks and Recreation for four or five years.

"I think Milton really needs this big summer program and I'd like to see a lot more people in the community knowing about the special needs program."

Maureen is convinced there are more handicapped children in Milton than the 20 enrolled this summer.



Special co-ordinator. Maureen Devlin, 24, is in charge of Milton Parks and Recreation Special Needs program which involves handicapped children.



Rotary's new officers The Rotary Club of Milton inducted Bob Farrell (centre back), as its new president at a meeting last week. Officers shown on the steps of the Kernighan-Martin House, a town-owned facility beside the mill pond which Rotary plans to develop as a community centre are (left to right) Frank Clements, George Jenkins, John Ostler, Ernie Davidson, Bill Hamilton and George Kendrick. Missing are Don Caughill and Hugh McLeod.

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