



Four area Milton scout packs celebrated Scout/Guide Week last week by holding their annual banquet complete with songs, skits and fun. Here, cub members from the 6th Milton Pack perform a skit at the Lions Hall. The remaining four scout packs will hold their banquets over the course of the next month.

## VON service includes 'friendly' volunteers

One morning a week Annie drops in on an elderly woman, who is virtually a shut-in during the winter months. They sit and chat about their families and their lives over a cup of tea.

Annie is a volunteer friendly visitor with the Victorian Order of Nurses. She has been visiting the same woman, in her mid-80s, every week for the past two years. The relationship that has developed is not one-sided, the two have become good friends.

The VON Friendly Visiting program services more than 100 seniors a year region-wide. "The elderly population is increasing every year," said Ida Currie, Co-ordinator of Volunteer Friendly Visiting. "It is overwhelming the number of shut-in elderly who need this service."

The idea for the program came about in 1983 when several VON's reported that the elderly they were visiting wanted them to stay longer

and talk with them. So Mrs. Currie stepped in to try to bridge the gap between home and nursing home. Since its inception more than 250 elderly have been matched with friendly visitors.

"Visitors have to be warm, caring and good listeners," she said. "They have to make available three hours a week to visit and take the shut-in shopping, or just have a conversation with them."

It's important that the elderly have contact with someone besides their families. A friendly visitor can help to relieve some of the pressure that the family might feel, and provide the elderly with a refreshing change.

Mrs. Currie is always looking for volunteers - men, women and even couples. "Once we have the volunteers we have no problem finding clients to be the recipients of the service." She does some careful screening before making matches.

Prior to the match, volunteers are given all the personal information about the client's handicaps and how to help them. Confidentiality is maintained, but they must know the client's limitations. Volunteers require two references.

Interested potential friendly visitors should call 878-5773 for more information regarding the service.

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## Masked ball expected to generate funds

While the masked ball being presented in March by Milton Arts Council will have plenty of entertainment value, it is hoped it will increase the monetary value of the organization.

Incorporation is an immediate goal of the arts council but funds are needed to complete the process. Once incorporated, the group can apply for grants. The first fund raiser of this year is being met with good support, according to council member Bill LaFerla. Tickets for the ball, Saturday, Mar. 22, are still available at a cost of \$25 per person from Kelso Travel and Milton Book Exchange.

"Some groups have been booking tables together," Mr. LaFerla said. Masked ball goers could find comfort in numbers, he suggested. The event includes dinner and a dance with the group Rhythm and Reeds entertaining at Halton Hills Place. The hall can accommodate more than 250.

The arts council, in conjunction with Milton Performing Arts For Children, will present a children's concert in late April. An outdoor summer concert series will be back with the first slated for Saturday, June 21 at Victoria Square. The time and location coincide with the hospital auxiliary's annual Strawberry Social. Subsequent concerts will be held on Sundays with the location being alternated between Campbellville pond and Victoria Square.

The five concerts will showcase local talent. According to Mr. LaFerla, Gerry Arpa has already confirmed he and his band will be part of the program.

Looking ahead to the fall, the arts council is currently negotiating with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, in hopes of organizing of a three-part subscription series. Mr. LaFerla said members are "fairly optimistic" that the project will go ahead. It is thought the series will be presented in a candlelight and wine setting at Halton Hills Place. Corporate sponsorship for the series is being sought.

### Gifted problems

The problems gifted children may encounter will be the topic of a meeting of the Association for Bright Children.

Edna McMillan, consultant for the gifted for Halton Board of Education will address the subject. A question and answer period will follow her presentation.

The meeting will be held at W. I. Dick Public School, Monday, Mar. 3 at 8 p.m. For information contact Sandy Van Harten at 632-5822 or Lyn Appgar at 877-5801.

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