

30% OFF Gold Chains

FULL LINE OF JEWELLERY AND REPAIRS

**HOVEIS & JEWELLERS**

SHOPPING WORLD  
488 MAIN ST. SOUTH  
MILTON, ONT. L6T 1A7  
(905) 881-1111

CARRIAGE SQUARE  
245 MAIN STREET EAST  
MILTON, ONTARIO L5T 1P1  
875-2736

## Community Notebook

**Graffiti Dance:** Robbie Lane and the Disciples will be featured at the Showcase Milton Graffiti Dance '89, presented by Milton Chamber of Commerce and FM 108. Tickets for the original Graffiti Dance last year sold out fast and organizers are expecting the same this year. They can be booked through the Chamber by calling 878-0581. The cost is \$15 per person for the event on Saturday, May 13 at John Tonelli Sports Centre. A costume contest will be introduced this year so come prepared.

**April Fool's:** When the Kids News programs resume at Milton Public Library on the first day of April, organizers will be taking advantage of fact it will be April Fool's Day. That Saturday, participants can join in an hour of "completely foolish activities". Pre-registration is necessary. The program is open to children aged 6 and up. For information call 875-2665.

**Volunteers Wanted:** Anyone interested in volunteering at the Senior Citizen's Recreation Centre is invited to attend a meeting at the centre, Thursday, Mar. 30 at 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch if you like and hear about the volunteer opportunities at this lively gathering.

**Musical Celebration:** Halton secondary school students will show off their musical talent at Showcase 89, A Musical Celebration. The annual event will feature outstanding bands, choirs, jazz bands and jazz choirs at the Great Hall, Hamilton Place, Tuesday, Apr. 4 at 7:30 p.m. The Halton Wind Symphony, which comprises students from every Halton high school will be performing, as well as a 200 voice choir. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for students. Call 335-3663, ext. 271 for tickets.

**Future of Garbage:** How to deal with our garbage will be the topic of a Wednesday, Apr. 19 presentation sponsored by the Holy Rosary Catholic Women's League. Guest speaker will be Linda Friesen, environmental approvals coordinator with the public works department of Halton Region. Her one-hour presentation will begin at 8 p.m. at Holy Rosary Parish Hall, 139 Martin St.

**Library Annual:** Milton Public Library will hold its annual general meeting Wednesday, Apr. 5 at the library, 45 Bruce St. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. with a tour and reception. The hour-long meeting will commence at 8 p.m. R.S.V.P. by March 29 to 875-1550.

**Show on Ice:** Members of Milton Skating Club and several special guest performers will present "A Dream Fantasy" at John Tonelli Sports Centre. There will be three shows including Friday, Mar. 31 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday at 2 and 7 p.m. Cost is \$5 for adults; \$3 for students and seniors; \$2.50 for children under 12; children under 4 years are admitted free of charge.

## Aging:

*How can we care for our parents when we can no longer do it ourselves?*

By MICHAEL ROWE

**Special to The Champion**  
**T**HERE TENDS to be pain and recriminations on both sides when a son or daughter has to place their parents in the care of a home for the aged, but as Margaret Strecker, the administrator of Halton Centennial Manor points out, it is important not to stereotype.

There are recalcitrant new residents just as there are those elderly persons who are desperately lonely... perhaps the spouse is dead and their children are busy raising families of their own, perhaps they never married and now feel useless and friendless -- who may benefit enormously from the companionship and care which a home provides.

### 'Home'

Ms Strecker is a tall and elegant brunette with a soft, cultivated voice, who exudes, simultaneously, quiet authority and a genuine concern for the dignity and care of her charges.

Walking through the halls with their blue-grey walls and stern carpeting, she addresses a number of residents by name. They, in turn, are pleased for someone new to talk to, exchanging banalities about the weather and sundry aches and pains as though this were a neighbourhood anywhere and not an institution. This atmosphere, emphasizing "home" rather than "a Home", is carefully cultivated at the Manor.

There is a well-nurtured tradition of guilt in this country when it comes to the placement of the elderly in institutions. Possibly this is a carry-over of an old-country attitude of families "taking care of their own", something which was much easier in a day where there was a stay-at-home mother and working children.

### Dual-career

There is also, in the minds of many, the feeling of something sinister about homes for the aged, some feeling of warehousing the elderly until they are ready to die. "You just want to put me away!" is an often-heard complaint when a son or daughter wonders aloud whether or not the parent is able to take care of themselves.

The reality of our time is that dual-career families are less a frivolous luxury than an economic necessity, and there is often little space, time, or money, when a parent becomes incapacitated. Having them move in with the children is impossible.

For the parents, however, the announcement that they must leave their home and move into "an institution" must sometimes feel akin to being buried alive.



This group of Manor residents ring along with Joan McKinnon (left) twice a week. The hand bell choir called the Bells of Halton travel outside the home to perform. Members include from left, Bert Carney, Rosaline Filppance, Barbara Lawlor, Lillian Moreton, Reg Back and Paula Gray.

Photo by SYLVIA GEISER

Incapacitated though they may be, they feel fiercely that they are well enough to live in the community. If there is brain impairment, there may be accompanying paranoia and the feeling that there is a conspiracy afoot to imprison them and that no one believes it.

"Every case is different," says Ms. Strecker reasonably, and there is ample evidence of this at the Manor.

The majority of residents appear to be happy and occupied with a variety of projects. There is nothing of the almost funereal air which permeates some homes of comparable size. Groaning under the weight of staff shortages and underfunding, these others have neither the time nor the ability to offer one-on-one care with any degree of passable sincerity, however much they would like to. The Manor addressed this problem directly when they hired Sylvia Geiser to run interference when it came to settling new residents in.

### Comfort

Her position is custom-tailored for the comfort of the residents. She provides a sounding board for the complaints and fears of the new arrivals as well as putting a name and a face to the institution. As a result, the residents feel there is someone

who cares for them, and that they are more than just bricks in a wall.

"There is a genuine feeling of love here," says Ms Geiser. "I also try to involve the families as much as possible, which makes the adjustment to the new life that much easier." The Manor organizes Sunday brunches, "and it's wonderful to see the families sitting with the residents. Also," she adds, with a smile, "the food is great."

### Relic

The actual structure which houses the Manor is a relic of another time. Neither building, for instance, was built in anticipation of the number of wheelchairs which would be needed. Some rooms have clothing lockers outside the rooms.

"There was this notion many years ago," explains Ms Strecker, "that the way to 'bring a resident out of himself' was to actually force him or her to leave their rooms in order to do basic things like getting dressed."

She grimaces. "Well, we don't think that way anymore."

Many rooms are done up like sitting rooms in "granny apartments" with lace doilies on drop-leaf tables and photographs of grandchildren everywhere.

The striking thing about the scenario at

• see MANOR on page 8

**MILTON MALL**

**SEE WOODWORKING IN ACTION!**

**This Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday  
at Milton Mall**

Note: Milton Mall will be closed this Friday, Good Friday, March 24