

# Plan leisure time now for the 'best' of your life

Leisure in retirement can lead to an exciting love affair with life. Retirement can provide freedom from the deadlines, routine and stress of normal working life. Finally, there is time to pursue personal interests, to explore new ideas and activities. Finally, there is time for oneself!

Some people feel that retirement is nothing but unemployment and a feeling of "not being needed" anymore. They are not prepared for the sudden increase in available free time. The key to a successful retirement is the lifelong development of personal interests that can be enjoyed throughout the rest of one's life. It is never too early to prepare for leisure in later years.

## Key to happiness

Adequate income and good health are obviously important ingredients of a secure retirement, but they will not assure happiness. It is the satisfying use of leisure time that makes retirement worth living.

If leisure is the key to satisfaction in retirement, what does leisure mean? It means something different to everyone. In its broadest sense, leisure is a personal philosophy of life. It is a state of being, characterized by freedom of choice, in which the individual is uniquely what he or she wants to be.

Leisure may be a physical or intellectual activity. It includes sports, hobbies, play, education, social activities with family and friends, community involvement or the pursuit of a new career.

The biggest adjustment to a retired life concerns the increased amount of "free" time. To prevent boredom and loneliness, unscheduled time requires planning and management. If unplanned, leisure time may also be frittered away in routine household or family activities that bring little enjoyment. As a recreation leader in Thunder Bay pointed out, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail".

Among the first steps in leisure planning is to determine how many additional hours of unscheduled time will be available. Before retirement, the average person working a 35 hour week will have four hours per day of leisure time.

## Triple the time

This adds up to about 1,000 hours per year, exclusive of weekends and vacations. After retirement, free time escalates to about 3,000 hours per year. Unfortunately, the same statistics may not hold true for the full-time homemaker whose spouse retires. They may find their leisure time remains the same and, unless the retired spouse shares some of the additional household chores, free time may actually decrease.

Planning for leisure doesn't mean planning to be busy all day, every day. Some activities, such as reserving time on the tennis court, buying tickets for a play or inviting friends for a barbecue, require advance planning. But leisure should involve some spontaneity.

Being flexible enough to take advantage of the unexpected provides the freedom for a picnic by the lake or a walk in the park. It's also important to allow for unexpected emergencies such as looking after a sick grandchild. A balance in life is the true goal.

Effective decisions regarding leisure are made by choosing from several possible alternatives. Saying "yes" to every offer to serve or participate will make

you busier than ever. Time for an enjoyable walk, swim or, read can become very elusive.

When planning for leisure in retirement, it's helpful to identify those activities you enjoyed while working. If you enjoyed meeting people on the job, becoming a community volunteer may provide the same satisfaction. Consider the opportunities that work provided, such as travel, companionship and keep-

ing up to date on current events. Alternate activities, offering similar opportunities, should be explored in retirement.

Studies have shown that the degree of contentment in retirement is directly related to the satisfying use of leisure time. Leisure activities provide a sense of self-worth, accomplishment and pleasure, and it is important to explore new opportunities before you retire.

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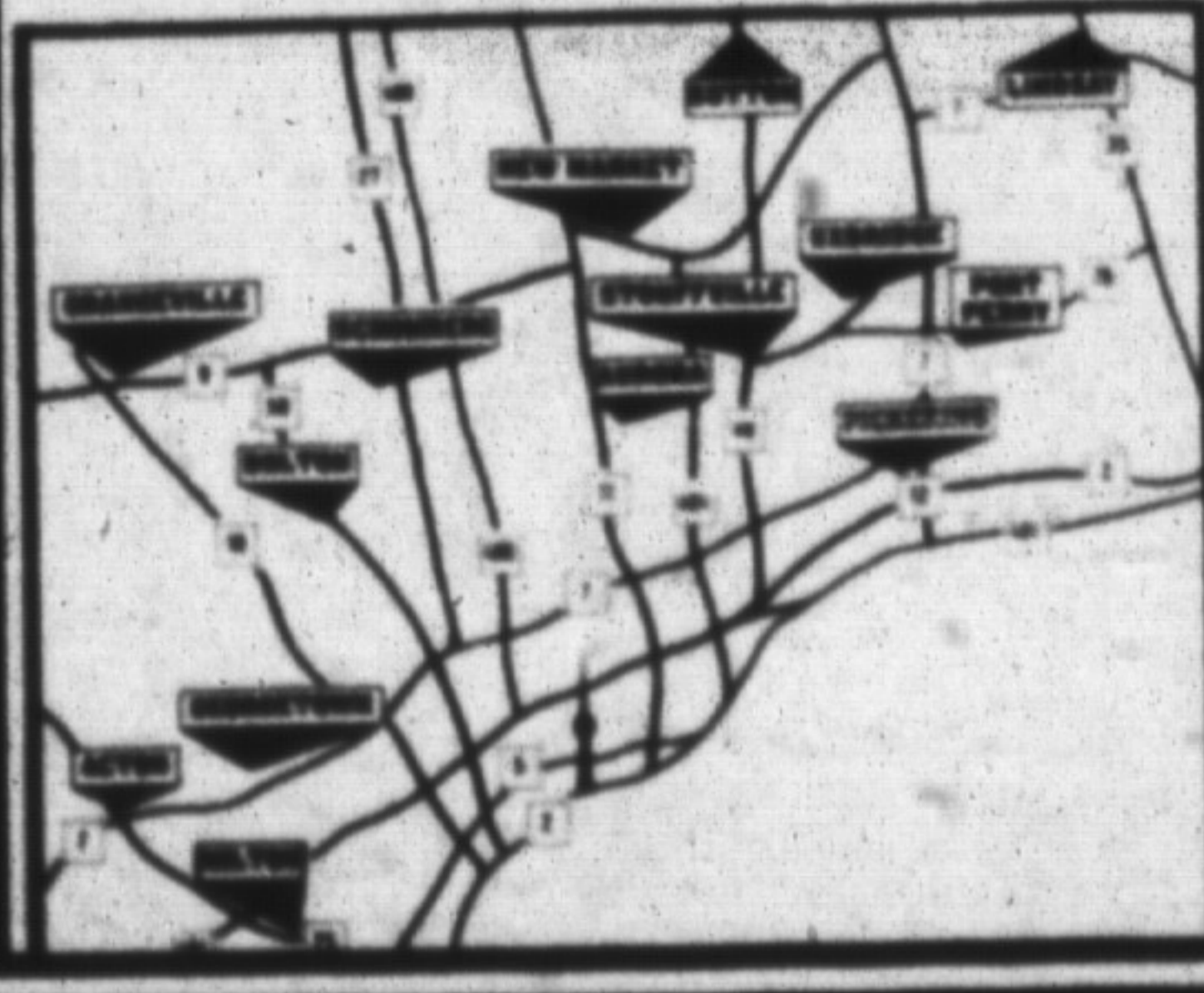
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## Directory needs input

Seniors in Milton are being asked to help update the Halton Seniors' Directory to best suit their needs.

The Elderly Services Advisory Committee (ESAC) of the Regional Municipality of Halton is a committee of Regional Council which provides advice on the planning and development of services for seniors in Halton. ESAC publishes the *Halton Seniors' Directory* which provides information and phone numbers for a wide variety of services available to seniors.

ESAC is interested in obtaining feedback on the use and format of the directory to ensure that our next publication will best meet your needs. We are conducting a survey in Milton to assist us with planning our next update. Please help us by answering the following questions.

- Are you a: SENIOR ( ) FAMILY MEMBER ( ) OTHER ( )
- Were you aware that there is a Halton Seniors' Directory outlining the different services for seniors? YES ( ) NO ( )
- Do you have a copy? YES ( ) Obtained from: \_\_\_\_\_ NO ( )
- If you have a copy, (a) how often do you use it? NEVER ( ) SOMETIMES ( ) OFTEN ( ) (b) is the calendar flip style format easy to use? YES ( ) NO ( ) Alternate suggestion \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) is the information contained in it SUFFICIENT? ( ) Comment \_\_\_\_\_ TOO MUCH? ( ) Suggest \_\_\_\_\_ TOO LITTLE? ( ) Suggest \_\_\_\_\_
- What colour paper is the easiest to read? YELLOW ( ) WHITE ( ) GREEN ( ) OTHER ( )
- What size of print is the easiest to read? THIS ONE ( ) THIS ONE ( ) THIS ONE ( ) THIS ONE ( )
- Other comments/suggestions? \_\_\_\_\_

You may drop off your answers or mail them to any of the following locations: Halton Seniors' Directory, Elderly Services Advisory Committee c/o The Canadian Champion, 191 Main Street, P.O. Box 248, Milton, L9T 4N9; or c/o Seniors Citizens Recreation Centre, 21 Charles Street, P.O. Box 1005, Milton, L9T 4B6.

Send in or drop off your answers by September 17, 1989.