

# Lifestyle

Wednesday Nov. 15, 1989

## Community Notebook

**Night Out:** Looking for an evening of entertainment right in your own backyard? There are still tickets available for the Milton Players Theatre Group's latest offering *Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*. Wednesday (today), Friday and Saturday evening performances have not been sold out and tickets can be purchased at The Paper Factory or at the door. Cost is \$8. The shows are at 8 p.m. at the St. Clair Masonic Hall.

**Fragrance of Christmas:** A sensual delight awaits admirers of perfume at Green Ginger this Saturday and Sunday (Nov. 8-9). The designer clothing store is presenting a Christmas perfume promotion featuring Aileen Wesseling of Givenchy. There will be free gifts offered with purchases and many free samples between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

**Annual Chamber Meeting:** The Hon. Otto Jelinek, Minister of Revenue, will discuss the proposed federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) at the annual general meeting of Milton Chamber of Commerce. The speaker will follow dinner and the presentation of annual reports and elections. The Thursday Nov. 23 dinner meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. at Halton Hills Place. Cost is \$15 to members and \$18 to non-members. R.S.V.P. to the Chamber by Monday Nov. 20.

**Roasted Councillor:** Local councillor Bill Johnson takes the brunt of the jokes when he's roasted during an annual United Way of Milton fundraiser. The roast will combine with a Monte Carlo night Friday Nov. 24 at the Optimist Centre. Close to 150 tickets have already been sold, leaving less than 100 to go. Cost is \$40 per person. Organizers say the response has been excellent and warn those who want to attend to buy tickets soon before they're sold out. Call Peter Duffus at 876-4747 for tickets.

**Coming Events:** Anyone organizing an event in this community should be aware of the Special Events Calendar at Information Milton. Groups which hold events are encouraged to register the date of the activity on the calendar. It is hoped this system will prevent conflicts and allow organizers to choose dates when there is not already a major event scheduled. Call 875-INFO (4636) or drop by Information Milton, 311 Commercial St. (Optimist Centre) to record your event.

**Unfrazzle Your Life:** A free group for mothers is being offered at CHERISH Parent/Child Centre which includes care for pre-school children. Speakers, discussions and crafts round out the program. Transportation is provided. To find out more call Susan Stuart at 878-2375.

**Arthritis Relief:** Marie Peacock of Milton would like to share with fellow arthritis sufferers a remedy which has worked for her. She says the pain in her knees is eased when she takes three 270 mg tablets of garlic a day. It's available at the Health Shoppe in Laurier Plaza.

**It's Your Place:** Youths between the ages of 10-14 years are invited to join in the fun of MY Place, a program full of activities. MY Place runs every second Friday evening until June. The next event will be held Nov. 24. To find out more about activities planned call Barb Robb at town hall, 878-7211 (ext. 186).

## How to deal with difficult people

By KAREN SMITH

**S**HERMAN TANKS, snipers and explosives may resemble someone you know.

The key to handling that person is by using organized defensive tactics, according to an Oakville teacher.

Dealing with difficult people was the topic of a recent Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) seminar led by Rod Witzel, a veteran speaker and special education instructor for the Halton Board of Education.

Adult bullies give everyone a headache, said Mr. Witzel. Coping with them starts within ourselves.

"You can't change difficult people, so you have to change yourself," he told an audience of about 30 people at the Halton CAS office in Oakville. "You can influence them."

### Different approaches

A different approach is required to handle each type of difficult person, but one rule always applies, Mr. Witzel explained.

"You have to program your mind day by day to replace your old habits with new ones," he said.

Among the worst types of difficult people are what Mr. Witzel calls the hostile-aggressive trio — Sherman tanks, the sniper and the exploder.

Sherman tanks come out charging (not always physically), but their body language expresses attack. They are verbally abusive, abrupt, intimidating, overwhelming, arbitrary and arrogant in tone.

It doesn't stop there. They attack you and what you have said or done, they possess tremendous power in interpersonal situations and they demean others to create a sense of self-importance and superiority.

Your reaction to them is usually confusion, mental or physical fight, sense of helpless frustration, tears, rage or fear.

If it sounds like a situation you're in, Mr. Witzel suggests you stand up to them.

"Don't fulfill their expectations that you will collapse before them," he said.

Ensuring you make genuine and solid contact with them and realizing that the fear and confusion you feel is natural are the first steps in coping with the Sherman tank.

### Look directly at them

Also, give them time to run down — look directly at them and wait. Cut them off. If they cut you off, say firmly and loudly — "You interrupted me." Get their attention carefully (call them by name), get them to sit down and speak from your own point of view, but don't try to personally defeat them.

"Remember, they're much better fighters. The also respect people who stand up to them, but who don't defeat them," added Mr. Witzel.

Snipers, on the other hand, don't come crashing down on you. Their weapons are rocks hidden in snowballs — soft-spoken remarks, not-too-subtle digs and nonplayful teasing.

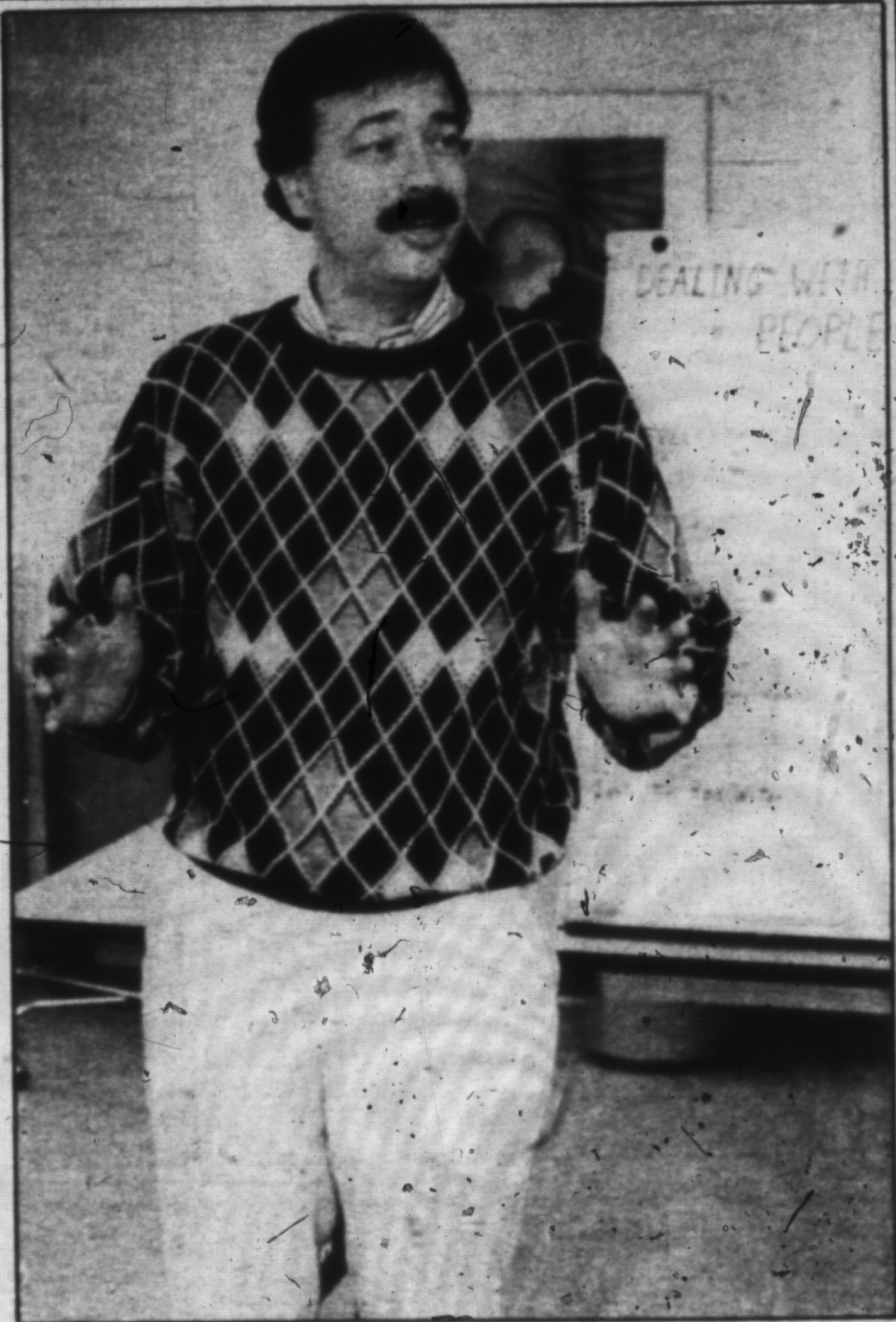


Photo by Riziero Veroli  
Rod Witzel, a Halton Board of Education teacher, recently showed a group of Halton Children's Aid Society members how to deal with difficult people. Mr. Witzel presented a seminar on the subject at the organization's new Oakville office Thursday evening.

**"You can't change difficult people, so you have to change yourself."**

— Rod Witzel

Your impulse is probably to ignore or laugh off the barb, said Mr. Witzel.

Your sense of politeness will urge you to go along with the masquerade and not be disruptive.

But instead, what you should do, according to Mr. Witzel, is use any behavioural props you need (smile, raise your eyebrows) to get over this barrier and make sure to say something so the slight will not go by unremarked.

Also, provide the sniper an alternative to a direct contest by phrasing all your responses as questions. This gives the sniper an alternative to fighting.

To complete the hostile-aggressive trio, the exploder is an adult temper tantrum —

fearsome attacks filled with rage, barely under control. Such behaviour often erupts during a discussion that appeared to be friendly and reasonable at the start.

These adult tantrums are grown-up versions of early learned defensive tactics designed to cope with fear, helplessness and frustration, said Mr. Witzel.

"The behaviour remains in the adult because the outbursts still work. This person is sensitive to criticism and ridicule."

### Take them seriously

Three key steps in handling this situation is to give them time to run down, make it loud and clear you take them seriously and announce a break in the meeting.

"You need to buy time to compose yourself, to break the immediate pattern of interaction and to help the exploder regain self-control. Another option is to suggest that you both move to a more private place to continue the discussion."

Overall, Mr. Witzel said, in handling any type of hostile-aggressive person, be clear that you are in the presence of hostility before applying the coping steps.

*We've Got 'em All!*

**Santa Claus & Mrs Claus  
arrive Saturday, November 25 at 12 Noon**

**"May your kids be first in line"**

**Monday - Friday 9:30 am - 9:00 pm**

**Saturday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm**

**878-3900**

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MALL**

**55 ONTARIO STREET  
MILTON, ONTARIO**