

# Lifestyle

Wednesday May 2, 1990

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## Community Notebook

**Generations Sing:** Older adults and children will unite their voices at the second annual spring concert of Interlink, an intergenerational choir. The event starts at 7 this evening at Eastview School Auditorium, 2266 Hixon St., Oakville. The choir was established as part of an Ontario Mental Health Association program to match seniors with children. For information call 845-5044.

**See How They Learn:** A visit to Milton Mall today and tomorrow, will be a learning experience for those who visit the Halton Adult and Continuing Education display. The special presentation has been set up in conjunction with Education Week.

**On Stage:** Milton Players Theatre Group will be acting out some familiar scenes in *The Dining Room*, a play that will be presented beginning this Friday and continuing May 5, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Tickets cost \$8 and are available at The Paper Factory. Location is the St. Clair Masonic Lodge on Hwy. 25 north of Britannia Road.

**Children at Risk:** The 76th annual meeting of the Halton Children's Aid Society will feature Dr. Dan Offord and his presentation of the Ontario Child Health Study: Children at Risk. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 2 at 465 Morden Rd., Oakville.

**Charity Garage Sale:** Support Milton Community and Information Services (MCIS) and pick up some bargains at the same time. MCIS which serves as an umbrella organization to social services agencies as well as Information Milton, will be selling baked goods and household items from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 5 at 311 Commercial St.

**Trout Derby:** Start digging those worms and get ready for the 10th annual trout fishing derby at Kelso Conservation Area this Saturday, May 5. Gates open at 6 a.m. and the fishing starts one hour later. The reservoir has been stocked with more than 2,500 trout ranging in size from 8-24 inches. The derby ends at 3 p.m. To find out more call 878-5011.

**Go Fly a Kite:** There will be kite flying demonstrations, workshops and prizes at Crawford Lake this Sunday during the Spirit Soars Festival. Other activities will include viewing turkey vultures, guided wildflower hikes, native games and jewellery making, live music and barbecued hot dogs. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 6. For information call 854-0234.

**Ride the Rails:** The season will open this Sunday at Halton County Radial Railway Museum with vintage streetcars running the 2 km track all day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is located on Guelph Line, 16 km north of Hwy. 401. To find out more call 1-519-886-0258.

**Garbage Options:** Get the scoop on the garbage crisis at a public meeting sponsored by the Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee (SWISC). Options for waste management will be discussed beginning at 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 9 at Halton Region administration office, 1151 Bronte Rd., Oakville. Call 1-800-363-6098 for more details.



Photo by KRISTA GLADISH

The official opening of Milton's new group home on Commercial Street was done in style last Thursday by Halton Adolescent Support Services (H.A.S.S.). Milton Mayor Gord Krantz (third from left) conducted the traditional ribbon cutting with the assistance of (from left to right) Halton North MPP Walt Elliot, H.A.S.S. board of directors Chairman Denis Delorme, H.A.S.S. Executive Director Ugo Filice, Rev. Charlie Masters and H.A.S.S. housing committee Chairman Don Grierson.

### Ready for occupancy

## Group home opens its doors

*"We're not here to babysit them. We're here to provide them with support and give them the start they need."*

Nick Mawer

By KAREN SMITH

Jenny was understandably upset when her parents announced their decision to get divorced.

At age 18 and living with her two sisters, she probably could have handled it if her mother's boyfriend didn't move in.

The two found it hard to get along. Jenny's father moved out west, so she couldn't live with him.

Even worse, her mother's boyfriend started making advances toward her. Jenny, a student at Milton District High School, had to get out but she couldn't afford to live on her own.

Seeking shelter, Jenny was one of 27 Milton youths who called Halton Adolescent Support Services (H.A.S.S.) during the last half of 1988.

Up until a short time ago, there was nowhere for kids like Jenny (not her real name) to go to escape from unhealthy family situations. But that all changed when H.A.S.S. built a group home on Commercial Street.

Currently, four youths have made the new Milton facility their temporary home. It officially opened its doors last Thursday.

The home will soon be filled to its capacity, said Nick Mawer, one of two full-time mentors at the facility. It can accommodate a total of nine youths — each with their own room.

During their stay, residents are required to treat the home like it is their own. They are responsible for its general upkeep and they

share household duties such as cleaning, cooking, laundry and grocery shopping.

It's not a free ride either. Rent must also be paid.

"We're not here to babysit them," said Nick Mawer, one of two full-time mentors at the facility. "We're here to provide them with support and give them the start they need."

Once a week, the youths attend a life skills group at H.A.S.S.'s main office in Burlington. The group helps them become totally independent.

The interior of the facility is completely decorated and is equipped with all the comforts including a games room with pool and ping pong tables.

To be eligible to stay in the home, clients must reside in north Halton, be between 16-21 years of age and be homeless or living in an environment not conducive to human well-being.

They must be a client of H.A.S.S. with an assigned worker, and be employed, enrolled in school, in an upgrading program, or actively seeking to improve job/educational opportunities.

They also must have no current behaviour patterns which could jeopardize the safety of other residents, the community and surrounding properties.

"We look not at their past, but where they're at right now," explained Mr. Mawer.

H.A.S.S. is dedicated to helping Halton youths improve the quality of their lives. Its primary purpose is to assist people who are experiencing a difficulty functioning in their families, schools or communities.

Formerly known as the Burlington Youth Residences and Services, H.A.S.S. is an incorporated, non-profit organization.

It is governed by 15 volunteers who are drawn from a variety of community endeavours within Halton and is funded by the provincial Community and Social Services and Housing ministries.

Call 876-2500 for more information. To reach H.A.S.S.'s 24-hour crisis line, call 878-9785.

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