

Welfare growth rate starting to subside

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 being tendered on a quarterly basis. Welfare caseloads have been steadily, at times dramatically, increasing since the summer of 1990 in Halton. From January 1991 to January 1992, Halton's case burden shot up more than 56 per cent. There were 2,136 cases at the beginning of 1991 and 3,337 at the start of 1992.

Almost three-quarters of the people on welfare are considered employable, Ms Ewart said, but can't find jobs. Currently 72 per cent are deemed to be capable of working, up from 61 per cent at the same last year. A related statistic indicates that the turnover rate — the number of people getting off welfare in any given month — has slipped too. It's down to 46 per cent of the caseload. Last year it was 49 per cent and in 1990, 61 per cent.

Ms Ewart also pointed out that while unemployment insurance claims were down slightly in March of 1992 from the same time last year, the unemployment rate went up in the same time frame from 9.9 per cent to 10.5 per cent. She believes those who have exhausted unemployment benefits have probably moved onto the welfare system.

For the first three months of 1992 Halton has posted a deficit of \$542,000 in its welfare budget. Ms Ewart is hoping there will be a downturn in cases over the summer, traditionally a higher employment period. If instead current trends continue, Halton will face a \$2 million shortfall on top of its \$29.6 million predicted welfare expenditures by the end of the year.

Ski shot wins photo contest

Kevin Chisholm of Milton came up with the winning entry in the Glen Eden Ski Area's photography contest.

His black and white action shot of a skier just slightly off the ground earned him the top spot. The contest was based on scenic, action and group shots.

Other winners were Jason Nip of Mississauga; Graham Jardine of Oakville; John Rowland of Burlington and Marilyn Field of Oakville.

The slopes closed to skiers Sunday, Apr. 5 after a successful season which began Saturday, Dec. 7 when the ski area's 30th anniversary celebrations began. Resort operators report this year's was the latest closing date in Glen Eden's history.



Photo by VAL ATTANASIO
 It takes a lot of practice to skip like Jennifer Morris (left) and Christa Wilson. The girls are among 11 Burlington Bouncers, a group of skippers who visit Halton schools to promote the Heart and Stroke Foundation Jump Rope for Heart fundraisers. The Bouncers were at Our Lady of Victory and Martin Street schools in Milton last week.

Burlington Bouncers on the road to promote the sport of skipping

By KAREN SASANI
 Special to The Champion

"High, low, medium, slow, Johnny go peppers!" This familiar skipping chant heard in many schoolyards each spring proves the popularity of the game. But the Burlington Bouncers proved that skipping is a fitness tool that can be turned to benefit the lives of others.

The Burlington Bouncers is a team of students who visit area schools to promote Jump Rope for Heart, a fund-raising project for the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Coach Chuck Beaudoin, a Grade 3 teacher at Burlington's C.H. Norton public school took seven of his 11 skippers for a demonstration at Our Lady of Victory and Martin Street elementary schools in Milton on April 23.

The children were amazed and amused with the acrobatics and contortions of the five female and two male skippers. They did cross overs, double unders, leg lifts, and tricks while mounted on a pogo ball.

"Where's the ropes?" asked one Grade 4 student at Martin Street, during a speed jumping display.

During a double dutch performance, one skipper jumped with a single rope inside while two others whirled around.

Mr. Beaudoin has been training precision skipping teams for eight years. More than 60 students tried out

this year. Team members range from Grades 3-7. They began training last October to be ready for this year's demonstrations, and practice twice a week for an hour.

"The kids pick up the tricks from watching others (perhaps at competitions or workshops). I can't do them, but I help them break the moves down. Then it's practice, practice, practice," said Beaudoin.

Most of the students are good athletes to begin with, because the sport needs endurance. They may be cross country runners, soccer players or dancers.

"I also insist on good academics, because they are out of school for these demonstrations," added Mr. Beaudoin.

On their visits, the team displays sample prizes which can be earned by the children who raise pledges for Jump Rope for Heart — skipping ropes, frisbees, beach towels, water bottles, T-shirts and gym bags.

The children with the pledges form groups of about six, and over two hours take turns jumping until they get tired.

Cathy Perro is the regional Jump Rope for Heart co-ordinator. She reported that 52 schools in the Halton area are participating in this, the 10th anniversary of the program in Canada. Last year 36 Halton schools raised \$147,000 for research.

Each school is outfitted with 35 individual ropes, one set of double dutch ropes, T-shirts for the in-school co-ordinators, and participation buttons.

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