



Hey, that hurts!

Aaargh! cries Elizabeth Whelan as she receives an immunization shot at Corpus Christi School. Doris Weeks has been travelling to schools in the area dispensing the vital medicine. Staff photo.

Too few parents aware of need for regular immunization program say Simcoe County District Health Unit officials

Usually Weeks would just give the booster shots to all the 10 and 15 year olds in the area but now she's trying to get records of all the students and make sure they're up to date. After visiting three schools last week she found 120 students who had irregularities in their needle records.

When she's not out on the job Weeks works in the Simcoe County District Health office which is located at the back of the Chamber of Commerce building at 578 King St.

Often takes a scare
Regrettably she said that it often takes a scare before people see the importance of inoculations. Once a case has made headlines people rush to get themselves immunized but once the scare has worn off, so has their

concern. The health office is open for immunization shots for babies, children and adults on the third Thursday of every month.

The location of the health office is not the best says Weeks as she recalled the booming business they did when they were located downtown.

She is concerned about the low number of adults who attend the clinic and adds that it's never too late to be immunized and if adults are behind in their shots she can bring them up to date too. The clinic has several

good points. First of all, it's absolutely free and no appointments are needed. Nurse Weeks also has more experience in giving needles than any regular doctor with a record of 2,767 shots given to elementary school

students just since January. Taxpayers pay Weeks' salary. The federal government provides all the needles and she has to throw some out because people are not using the clinic frequently.

Keep record of childrens' shots

A record should be kept by the parents so they know when their children had the shots. The province now recommends a schedule for immunization. It states that infants should have three injections before they are six months old. Each of these injections is a combined shot for diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and polio. When the baby is between a year and fourteen months it's time for another combined shot for

measles, mumps and rubella. Then at 18 months the baby should receive a booster for diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and polio. This booster is repeated again when the child is four-and-a-half to five years.

Another booster is given when the child is ten years and then at 15 years but whooping cough is no longer in the shot. At 20 and every five years to follow adults should get a polio shot.

Parents are very careful in protecting their children from cars, sharp objects and strangers, but often they fail to give them one fundamental protection. Immunization.

It's certainly no easy task and she says she thinks the program will take at least another two years to complete. "There was no point in giving these children their booster shots if they hadn't received their first injections," said Weeks.

It's not a problem of willful neglect says Nurse Doris Weeks, it's just a matter of knowing. Weeks is the immunization nurse for the Midland Branch of the Simcoe County District Board of Health. She gives needles to the 23 elementary and four secondary schools in Tay and Tiny Townships and has found that a good 60 per cent of the students have missed important needles.

During the first five years children particularly need the protection of immunization. If the immunization program for the first five years is not complete the booster shots in following years will not do their job.

After finding that so many children were behind on their needles Weeks decided to do something about it. She's in the process of bringing all the school children up to date on their needles.



Doris Weeks

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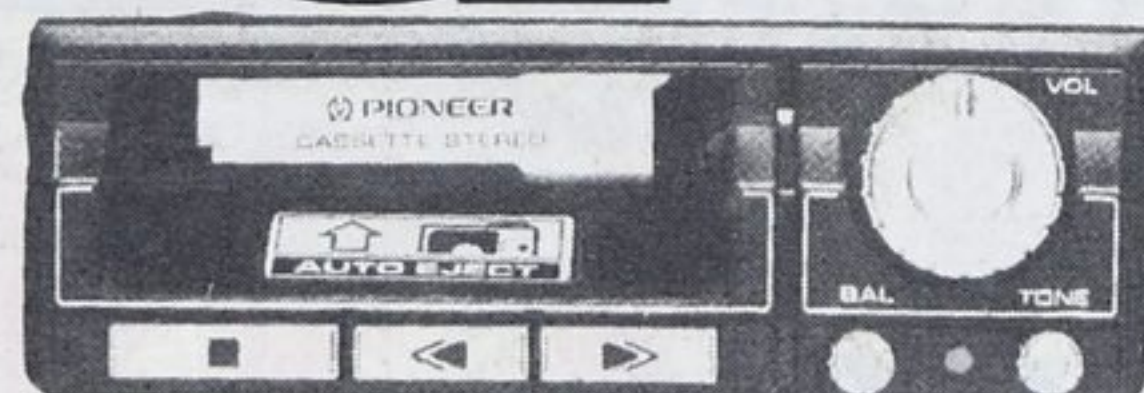
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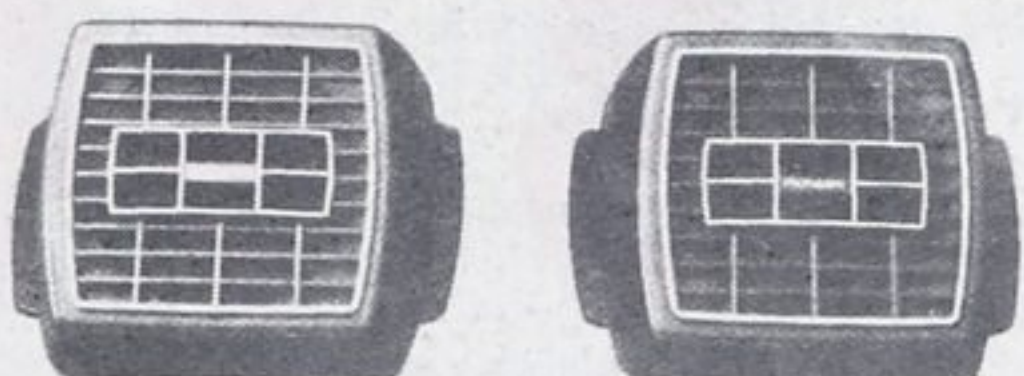
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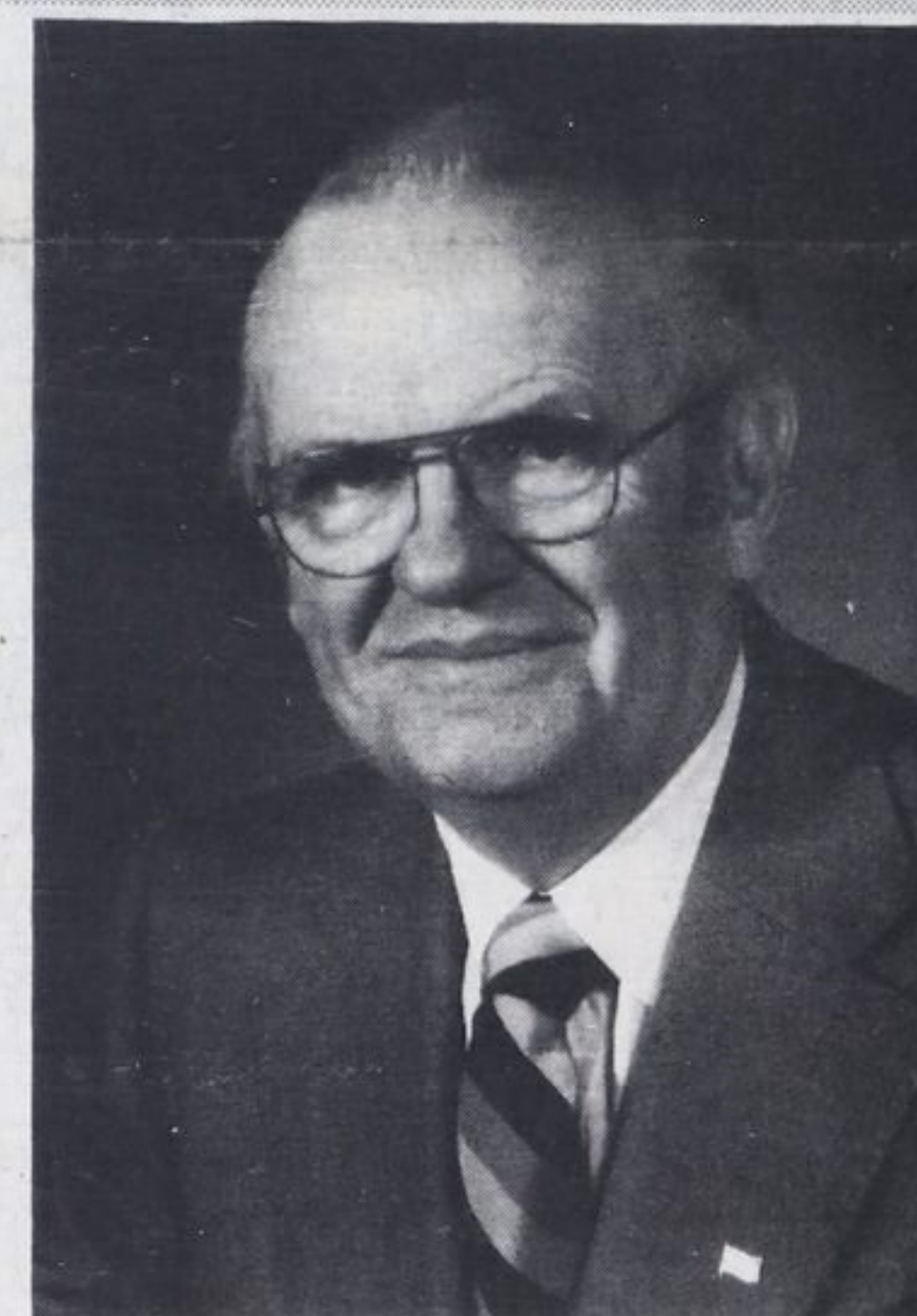
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to the PC Team and to all those who supported me at the Polls on June 9th. The needs of the People of SIMCOE EAST will continue to be my No. 1 Priority.

If I may be of assistance to you at any time, please drop on to my constituency office at 39 Peter St. N. in Orillia 326-3246 or the Contact Centre, Midland 526-9333

Gordon E. Smith

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