

Letters

Family Services volunteer answers

Dear Mr. Editor: Mayor Buck asked a lot of questions in her February 12 article about family services.

Some have previously been answered in your column. Some I'm not qualified to answer, and hope someone will.

However, having been an office volunteer for a few months, may I submit a few answers, being limited as to space.

In 1969 the Richmond Hill Social Planning Council and Ministerial Association responded to the community's need by initiating a steering committee to organize a counselling service which began in 1970, in space given by a local law firm.

By 1974, the Richmond Hill-Thornhill Family Services alone had 463 counselling sessions with couples, 727 with individuals, 53 with families — a total of 1,243 counselling sessions.

Family Services is a voluntary agency.

Twenty-five percent of the cost of funding is raised through client fees (on a sliding scale — 30 percent are unable to pay any fees; of those able to pay, the fee is based on ability to pay.)

Other funds come from educational events, donations from the National Marriage Guidance Council, churches, community

groups, personal contributions and money raised by volunteers.

Twenty-four active volunteers give 52 hours a week, at least, sometimes more, for office assistance. As we all know, the four family life centres will run out of funds by the end of March.

We also are aware letters with 1,900 signatures and a brief were presented to regional council in January by an inter-church delegation, asking council "do everything in its power to assure these services be subsidized in the order of \$100,000 for 1975 in order to assure their continuity".

As tax-payers, we appreciate Mayor Buck's concern about "dipping her hand into another man's pocket" — we need politicians who are careful with money, to offset those who fling it about with reckless abandon.

One can only hope and assume she has dragged her heels equally hard with regard to other area expenditures, for just one instance, the new

headquarters for York County School Board which in architects' drawings looks partly like Drapeau's proposed Olympic Stadium and partly like the Taj Mahal.)

But with York Region's population of 192,850 (mid-1974) the Family Services need for \$100,000 could be met at a cost of 51.85 cents a person in tax money. Not even the price of a package of filter tip or a beer in a bar.

We may all avail ourselves of their services if we wish. If families are helped to stay together, the cost to the taxpayer is lessened by the saving on welfare payments or mother's allowance.

Some of us who work in the offices think it might not be a bad idea if our reluctant politicians spent a few hours in the office discovering what goes on: ("Is there a need? Do the centres fulfill the need? Does the general public support the need?")

Counsellors are interviewing clients in two closed rooms. Dr. Fidler is

in his office, perhaps with a client. Mr. Edmunds likewise (credit counselling department).

All of these come in and out of the small main office for information or consultation with Mrs. Maguire, who in the meantime is supervising three or four volunteer workers in the office and juggling her own work, four telephone lines, an intercom and clients at the reception desk with the "cool" of a head nurse in an operating room, whereas some of us would be a quivering heap of raw nerves disintegrated to a pulp on the floor.

As an office it has a very pleasant atmosphere, but it surely gets congested. In the evenings sometimes all seven rooms in the offices are filled at the same time by counsellors with clients.

I wonder whether people who question the efficiency of the Family Services think we all sit around and pray.

No so. Come and see. LOLA RUFFMAN, 69 Highland Lane, Richmond Hill, Ont.



(Photo by Hogg)

Carrier salesman of the month

Liberal carrier, Brad Holmes of Parker Avenue receives a cheque from his district sales manager, Mrs. Bonnie Quinell. Brad opened up a new route in Oak Ridges, and is now serving 33 new customers in this area.

Brad attends King Senior Public School and is saving his money for a trip his school is planning to Mexico in March. He is interested in stamp collecting and is tied for first place in a chess tournament his school is sponsoring.

Circulate petition

Tri-level school system bothers Richvale parents

By Ivy Reeve North Thornhill Correspondent

Dissatisfied with the existing tri-level system, a group of parents in the Roselawn Senior Public School attendance area want an opportunity to present their views to the York County Board of Education.

"We believe we should make a serious attempt to convince the board a return to the two-level system would be reasonable, practical and most important would benefit the children in this community," explains Mary Atkinson of Orton Crescent.

Mrs. Atkinson and a number of other volunteers in the Richvale area are circulating a petition requesting a meeting with the school board. They hope the petition will be endorsed by a majority of community

residents. "We don't believe that the benefits of the present organization are great enough to warrant the movement of children by bus or on foot from one part of the community to another," Atkinson says.

"We want the board to realize that busing creates hardships for students. Neither the Roselawn nor the Charles Howitt schools have cafeterias, and for the younger children, commuting by bus may result in a long and tiring school-day."

Atkinson estimates that if both schools returned to a policy of accommodating pupils from the kindergarten to the grade 8 levels, most children in the area would be within walking distance of either Roselawn or Charles Howitt schools.

In addition to objections about bus travel, Atkinson says numerous parents have expressed concern about the "problems of adjustment" for grade 6 students who may be "somewhat young to be making the transition to a senior school routine."

It also has been suggested separation of the kindergarten-to-grade 5 from the 6 to 8 levels has "limited the schools' social atmospheres."

Prior to 1963, both schools accommodated pupils from kindergarten to the grade 8 level. Currently, Charles Howitt Public School accommodates children from kindergarten to grade 5, while students in grades 6, 7 and 8 attend the Roselawn school.

Persons interested in signing the petition may contact Mrs. Atkinson at 889-7305 or Janet Battista at 889-6694.

Irving's gossip report in Viewpoint column is like Hollywood rumors

Dear Mr. Editor: I've always been proud of the fact we had a paper the calibre of The Liberal for much needed local reporting.

Alas, the February 19 issue containing 'Rumblings in the blackboard jungle' by Jim Irving and his in depth gossip reporting on rumors can only be compared to types like Hollywood gossip columnists.

The writer, as a taxpaying member of the public and parent who is pro-education but anti-inflammatory reporting — regarding the board, administration or OSSTF, feels you have certainly in this past week's edition, allowed your image to change.

And I for one take ex-

ception to such drivel.

Any of your readers who take an interest in education, and care to be informed, would have been better served had Mr. Irving done more in depth reporting prior to the last trustee elections.

The amount of space given to Mrs. McMonagle's views is ridiculous.

Let us all remember she is but one new member of a large board.

Let us think of the administration and board in positive terms and give them a chance as a body.

Let us have no more rumor reporting, but a little more positive thinking. MRS. E. MCCARTHY, 19 Shadylane Crescent, Thornhill, Ont.

Nurse says Family Services fills gap

Dear Mr. Editor:

I would like to reply to Aurora Mayor Evelyn Buck's column 'Family Life Centre Questions Beg Answers' in the February 12 Liberal. I am replying as a registered nurse.

During my nursing years when I observed a 12-year old patient's asthma attacks repeatedly triggered by a visit from her grandmother, I became interested in psychosomatics — the effect of emotions on the organs and body functions.

It was easy to solve the problem in that case by removing the child from the environment. But even here both would be bound to lose something from the loss of the relationship.

Headaches, high blood pressure, ulcerative colitis, duodenal ulcer, asthma attacks? — in many patients nerve tension plays a part.

Frustrations, anxieties and tension in this fast-paced world and constantly changing relationships are all part of day to day living.

The amount of and how concentrated the accumulation, duration of time and how well we cope with them, determines whether the emotional stress becomes chronic and affects the health and well-being of ourself and of those with whom we are in close contact.

I cannot see that

'Medicine' has responded adequately to the need for specialized help in this area.

OHIP covers counselling by a medical doctor only. How many doctors have the training and the time?

Both family doctors and Mental Health refer to Family Services.

Where does Mental Health fit in? How many of us would visit a psychiatrist to tell him "I feel tired, anxious and depressed most of the time. I have headaches; I'm always screaming at the kids, our marriage is falling apart. We can't communicate, no one understands me — I don't understand or even like myself?"

We may not even know how we feel — just know life is meaningless. This can happen in any stage of life. Adolescence particularly is a period of storm and stress.

It can be a very discouraging feeling if you think you are wasting a doctor's time. Fortunately attitudes toward 'Mental Health' are changing, but some still feel there is a stigma attached to the need for psychiatric help.

To get help you have to want and seek help. Most of us think of the psychiatrist as someone we see when we are referred by our family doctor and are in desperate need of help.

And by then the struggle

back to sound mental health can be a long hard fight, sometimes a losing battle.

Who can help before this level of emotional disturbance has been reached?

What part can the family physician play?

When a complete medical checkup reveals nothing significant, spilling out your troubles to a trusted friend can be good therapy, if he is a patient listener and you are an uninhibited talker.

Most tranquilizers and anti-depressants are meant

Fans should support our local firms

Dear Mr. Editor: I would like to ask the sports fans of Richmond Hill how they can justify not supporting the sponsors of local teams.

These businessmen, who have laid out many dollars over the years to encourage local sports activities, deserve your patronage.

Like any sensible person I buy where the bargains are best, but at least let's give the local sponsors the chance to show the goods they have and offer us a competitive deal.

JIM MILNE, 221 Browndale Crescent, Richmond Hill, Ont.

to handle only acute temporary conditions such as extreme anxiety, depression or grief.

If it is a chronic condition it should be worked on, not masked.

If the problem goes deep and persists, does your family doctor have the specialized training, personality qualities and the time required to obtain results?

Who has these necessary requisites?

A good family and marriage counsellor is: empathetic, intuitive, accepting and warm; skilled in active listening; has extensive training in counselling; has the skills and the tools to help the person, couple or family function better in the environment, to help him/her discover the self he/she can understand, like and accept.

Then he/she can begin to try to understand, like and be more accepting of others and of situations.

I see the family and marriage counsellor filling the void between the psychiatrist and the family doctor.

Referrals from doctors, Mental Health, Public Health nurses, schools, ministers, lawyers and courts indicate confidence in Family Services as being better qualified to help with emotional problems.

Most gratifying was the doubling over 1973 of self-referrals — more people are seeking help and are becoming aware of where the specialized help is available.

This may in part be due to the 2,358 reached by educational events offered by the Richmond Hill — Thornhill Family Services alone (attending the courses from as far away as Oshawa).

Included were marriage preparation and enrichment courses, Parent 'Effect-

CARS says thank you

Dear Mr. Editor: The committee of the Yonge-Aurora Branch of The Canadian Arthritis Society would like to thank The Liberal for the publicity given our "skate sharpening day".

We would also like to thank the readers of The Liberal for their support, York Fabric Shop of Aurora who donated 10 percent of their fabric sales for that day and supplied us with coffee.

A very special thanks to Vic Parainfo, owner of Vic's Shoe Repair. Results for the day were \$213.29.

ALEX SIM, Chairman, CARS, 44 Mill Street, Aurora

COMING ATTRACTION! Saturday, April 26, 1975

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Licensed by The Province of Ontario

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Draw to be made
MARCH 20th, 1975
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Tickets available at most local variety stores, beauty salons and barber shops

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