

# Telecare responds to many calls

By Dave Chmara

A Telecare information meeting was held last Friday, March 17 with about a dozen interested citizens attending the session at the Terrace Bay Community Church.

Jack Buckley and Bud Martin from the Thunder Bay Telecare service were on hand to make the presentation.

Rev. David Sparks said, "We do have some very lonely people here who don't have anyone to turn to. I think it's our responsi-

bility to provide such a service."

Telecare began in 1972 in Thunder Bay and Martin said, "the phones haven't stopped ringing ever since then."

The Thunder Bay Telecare handles about 4,000 calls every year.

Buckley mentioned the most frequent problems people call to discuss and gave the percentage these categories of calls make up: lonely (20%), emotional (16%), debt or financial (2%), marital or family (12%), and alcohol

(5.2%).

"We handle just about every kind of problem you can think of," said Buckley.

Telecare is a 24 hour crisis hotline in which trained people lend a caring ear to those who call for help.

During the meeting a video was shown which further explained the Telecare program.

One councillor in the video explained they try to help people work through their own problems instead of doing the solving themselves.

Buckley said it is often easier for people with problems to talk to a third party. He said this is often the case in small communities where many people know each other.

Telecare also acts as a resource which can put people in touch with appropriate agencies to help people deal with their difficulties.

In establishing a Telecare program in a community, Martin mentioned what must be done.

The first thing a community must ascertain is if there is a need for such a service in the area.

If there is a need then the community has to make certain there is community interest. A committee has to be formed which will provide support and do the work necessary to establish a Telecare system. Martin said it is important a group of people do the work - such as fundraising, promoting, and providing back-up services - and that not only one person is doing all the work.

There must also be community support by police, service clubs, individuals and the church.

A training program must be set-up for the back-up team members should a caller require more assistance than can be provided over the phone.

The Telecare system must then be promoted and advertised to let people in the community know of the service and the Zenith phone number.

Martin recommended a trial

period of six months at which time the program's successfulness would be evaluated.

The major costs involved in setting up and running Telecare are advertising and the cost for the phone calls themselves.

Martin mentioned in some communities industry, service clubs and business donations often help to offset these costs.

He mentioned the cost for Dryden's Telecare system in 1985 was \$1,400 for one year.

A 24-hour switchboard would also be needed so the office in Thunder Bay could contact a back-up team member in the case a person required immediate assistance. These are sometimes set-up in hospitals or police stations.

After the presentation, interested persons stayed to discuss where the Telecare program should go from here and how they could help.

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## Anne's Notes

Rosspport winter holidayers are slowly returning for the summer season's activities from far-away places.

Juris Zdanovskis has arrived from sunny Florida while the Ned Basher's are back from a holiday in Portugal and the Sundlands chose to spend the winter with relatives in Norway. The Kennys are expected home this week from Brownsville Texas. The Romanec's have arrived from a holiday in Europe.

Shirley Vienot and Jim VandenEnde of the Treasure Trove Giftshop have returned from attending the gift show in Toronto. The Tychoniak family spent the weekend in Thunder Bay.

Robert Beauregard has plowed a skating rink on the ice near the causeway, so the children can participate in skating.

Moose have been spotted crossing the ice from the mainland northwest of the channel to the islands. They are likely in Quest of fresh supplies of food.

## Winnie's Scribbles

The "World Day of Prayer", March 3 was held in "The Anglican Church," with a good attendance. Mrs. Leblanc played the organ and assisted by Mrs. Flear on the flute. Many ladies from different churches assisted in the Readings. A lovely lunch was served after the service.

Thank you to all who helped.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Harness have arrived back from Florida.

Sister Marvel from North Bay is here visiting the sisters and her friends.

Our deepest sympathy to the McColemans and relatives on the passing of Fred and Geraldine McColeman.

Mr. and Mrs. Slater have returned from Mexico.

Mrs. Jeannie Huard was the winner of the Chimo Home Bingo another one will start for April.