



Shirley Middleton (Rowe) of Goodwood is a student in Grade 12 at Stouffville Dist. Secondary School. The 40 year old mother of three re-enrolled last September to upgrade her education and obtain a better job. Shirley proudly displays her report card with

honors' marks in four credits. Her graduation photo (inset) has already been taken and she's now looking forward to receiving her diploma at Commencement Exercises in November. —Jim Thomas.

School life begins at 40

It's back to the books for determined mom

By Jim Thomas
GOODWOOD — "Your perseverance is incredible — good luck," wrote Dorothy Reynolds, a teacher on staff at Stouffville Dist. Secondary School.

"An excellent effort," said Lin Jones.

These and other comments are attached to the report card of student Shirley Middleton (Rowe) of Goodwood.

The results give her reason to smile for "beating the books" at age 40 is no easy chore, particularly when she's been away from it for awhile.

Shirley, mother of three, attended Markham High as a teen but "dropped out" after Grade 10. With her children now grown up (two are in university), Shirley felt the time had come to practise what she's been preaching to her kids — the importance of a good education. Last September, she enrolled in day classes at S.D.S.S.

"If you want something badly enough you go for it," said the vibrant "retread" as she calls herself, "the teachers have been wonderful and the kids have been super."

Shirley admits to a shaky first week. "Once I learned they weren't going to take me out on the football field and shoot me when I gave a wrong answer, everything went well." She even invested in a Wine and White jacket. She wears jeans too.

"I never let myself forget I'm in their world," she said. One boy even whistled as she walked down the hall. "He made my day," she said.

There have been other humorous incidents that Shirley takes in stride — like her children suggesting she'd better have her homework done and re-touching the crow's feet (she calls them smile lines) out of her pre-graduation photo.

Are the kids any different to-day than 25 years ago? she

was asked. "Better behaved now," she claims, remembering how fist-fights in the classroom had to be broken up by the principal. She's also impressed by students calling the male teachers "Sir."

Shirley requires four credits for her Grade 12 graduation diploma. On the basis of her most recent report card, she's hopeful of getting them without writing.

With homework, housework and a part-time job at Chesebrough-Pond's, there are few spare hours in her day. Often, she gets only four hours' sleep. Her ultimate goal is a career in law or computer science.

Shirley says she owes a great deal to many people including her family — Michael, 23, a staff employee at McNeil Laboratories, Stouffville; Terry, 22, Sheridan College, Oakville and Barbara,

20, University of Western Ontario, London; also S.D.S.S. guidance counsellor Bruce Johnson. "He bent over backwards to help," she said, "he's been marvellous."

Shirley hopes others will follow her example. What was scary at first has become exciting.

She admits she's looking forward to receiving her diploma in November. "I'll be the only graduate who started high school in 1955 and finished in 1982."

Muskrat attacks

ASHBURN — A test for rabies in a muskrat that attacked seven-year-old Katherine Aitken of Ashburn, Sunday afternoon, as she approached the lane to her home, has proved negative, a spokesman for Agriculture Canada in Bowmanville, said Tuesday.

Tests were conducted on the head of the animal, which was rushed by courier to Ottawa shortly after being shot and killed by a friend of the Aitken family.

Katherine, a Grade 2 pupil at Sir John A. Macdonald French Immersion School in Pickering, said the muskrat jumped at her from a ditch.

"It kept jumping at me every time I moved, and it was frothing at the mouth," she said.

Then, it finally grabbed her by the right arm "and put a big hole in my brand new sweater."

Doug Ashton, a neighbor, came upon the scene while driving home, and rescued the terrified girl from the crazed rodent. He took her home, and from there she was taken to Ajax-Pickering Hospital and given a tetanus shot.

"Katie", as she is known at home and school, suffered a

slight cut to her wrist. However, she received some protection from the jacket she was wearing over her sweater.

Katie said she had to tell her class, in French, about her escapade when she returned to school the next day.

Wow!

MYRTLE — "Flabbergasted" was the word used by Robert Collins of Myrtle to describe his reaction to a \$15,388.60 windfall won through Lotario. He read his lucky number in the morning paper following the draw, March 6.

Mr. Collins, wife Doreen and family, purchased a home in Myrtle five years ago. He's a maintenance mechanic at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.

He said he wanted to talk it over with his wife first before deciding what he'd do with the money. "It could go towards our mortgage," he said.

Holiday trip - again

CLAREMONT — Steve and Donna Wideman arrived at Toronto, International Airport, Saturday, concluding an enjoyable holiday in Jamaica.

On hand to meet them was son Brad. He was the bearer of good news — his mother and dad had just won a trip for two to The Bahamas. The draw,

sponsored by the Stouffville Lions Club, was held Friday evening at Cedar Beach Pavilion, Musselman's Lake. Ed McAloney, seller of the ticket, called the Wideman home. Son John took the message.

"It won't happen again in a million years," Mrs. Wideman said in talking to The Tribune.

At Uxbridge Council

Protest group left speechless

UXBRIDGE — A group of protestors was left speechless during a visit to a meeting of Uxbridge Township Council, last week, when it found out there was nothing to protest.

"Let me point out first that we haven't given any consideration to having an in-

dustrial waste disposal plant in Uxbridge," Mayor Bill Ballinger told spokesman Barry Olivella, who was to present a petition opposing such an occurrence.

"We're not interested in one," Mayor Ballinger con-

tinued, "nor are we pursuing one."

"Also, there's no proposal for one," added Councillor Sandy Ewen. "It bothers me there's so much concern."

Olivella said he "recognized" that, "but we like to be heard." He said he had gathered 200 signatures protesting location of the alleged plant in the south-west end of the township.

The latter location was suggested by former mayor and now Durham Regional Chairman, Gary Herrema, in a visit to council earlier in the year. At that time, Herrema discussed the possibility of using a worked-out gravel pit in the area as a future site. He did not make any specific proposal, however.

Last week, Ballinger told Olivella, who presented him with a copy of the petition, that council could accept only the original.

Councillor Ewen, however, said the petition didn't matter, as "we haven't a decision to make. There's been no proposal made," he said.

Councillor Gerri Lynn O'Connor agreed. "I don't think we can even accept a petition for something that doesn't exist," she said.

Following a motion by Councillor Don Johnson, council agreed to accept a notarized copy of the petition, or the original.

Movie

CLAREMONT — For most students, the March 'break' is a welcomed relief from books. However, with nothing to do, the period can be boring.

Realizing this, Pickering's Dept. of Parks and Recreation has organized the following activities for children in northern part of the municipality.

On Thurs., March 25, a movie entitled "The Great Muppet Caper" will be shown from 1 to 3 p.m., in Claremont Public School. Admission (Kindergarten to Grade 8) is \$1.00.

On Fri., March 26, there'll be swimming at Dunbarton's indoor pool from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. A fee of \$1.00 per child (Kindergarten to Grade 8) includes transportation. Qualified lifeguards and pool staff will be on duty.

Bus pick-up has been arranged for 10 a.m., at Claremont School, returning around 12:30 p.m.

For additional information call 683-2760 (Ext. 77) or Zenith 35650.

Ruling

PICKERING — A by-law, prohibiting children 14 and under from being in video and pinball parlors, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian, was passed at a meeting of town council, Monday night.

The decision, resulting from a motion by Mayor Jack Anderson, is effective immediately.

Town clerk, Bruce Taylor, said that, while there is only one pinball parlor in Town, there are several places, such as 'donut shops,' with the machines. The ruling applies there, as well, Taylor said.

However, he said, this will not prevent youngsters from going in an buying products from such stores but they must stay away from the machines.

Raises

DURHAM REGION — Durham Board of Education has approved 10.94 per cent increase to the director of education and the superintendent of business, retroactive to Sept. 1, 1981.

Director Ken Munroe will now receive \$68,858 while business superintendent Ross Backus will be paid \$59,914.

According to trustee Pat Mattson, finance committee chairman, the wage hikes are comparable in percentage to those received by other supervisors with the board.

Fence sitter!

UXBRIDGE — The role of the fence-viewer has taken on a new designation in Uxbridge Township.

Last week, while council acknowledged an item regarding the position a person (those responsible for assessing liability in fence line disputes) Councillor Sandy Ewen said, "some women" had given him a new definition. "Fence viewers," he said, "are those people who study fences to see which side the mayor is sitting on."

Oysters

GREENWOOD — The arrival of spring and Greenwood's oyster supper have become synonymous, and both are on schedule again this year.

The dinner is set for Sunday, April 4 in the Christian Education Centre of the United Church with sittings at 4 p.m., 5:15 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

If oysters aren't a favorite dish, ham and scallop potatoes will be served.

Tickets (in advance only) are available by calling Ed Pascoe (683-5427) or Kenn McTaggart (683-5828).



Deann and "Chico" are inseparable friends

Ten year old Deann Sopha, Upton Crescent, Milliken Mills, takes lessons every Saturday at Brock Hill Farm Equestrian Centre, R.R. 1, Claremont. Deann and 'Chico' are inseparable

friends, with several trophies and ribbons to their credit. "It's her whole life," says David Sopha, her father, "she loves it!" —Jim Thomas.