

Good times for One Parent Families

By DENISE McDONALD
 After serving five years as the Markham Chapter president of the One Parent Families Association, Marg Walters has decided it's time to "make way for new blood."
 "I've been a member since 1979 and president since 1981," says Marg. "I have two grandchildren whom I'd love to spend time with and things to do myself. It's time for some new ideas and I think there will be a lot of new people on the executive this year."

According to Marg, the Markham Chapter was established in 1977 to provide single parents with a program of family and adult social and educational activities. "It doesn't matter why people are single for them to become members," says Marg. "They can be divorced, single as a result of death or even just not married. The only eligibility requirement they must meet is to have children."
 Although annual meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month at the Markham District Veteran's hall, Marg says the members don't necessarily have to live in the Markham area. "We have 115 members at present and not all are from Markham. Some joined because they had friends in our chapter," she

said. "They can live anywhere in Metro and surrounding areas, however, most of our meetings and activities are centered around Markham."
 Marg claims they not only cater to the adult members but plan many outings and special events for the children as well. Although the adults must pay any fees related to the events, children's admissions are free, paid for through fund-raisers.

"We've taken the children to Wonderland, Marineland and Pleasure Valley," she says. "We've even taken them horseback riding and held a 'kids and kronies' golf tournament. But their favorite event is our monthly Sunday brunches."
 According to Marg, adult activities include dinner, theatres, house parties, pot luck dinners, card nights and dances. "A couple of times a year we

hold a slave auction, and members may bid on something being offered. That can include donating three hours of babysitting, cooking a candlelit dinner for two or cutting lawns and shovelling snow. It was through a slave auction that my front hall was wallpapered."
 The Markham Chapter is presently organizing a skiing trip to Horseshoe Valley, Orillia this weekend. Seventy members will be attending. According to Marg, if a member marries he/she does not

necessarily have to leave the chapter. Instead an associate membership can be obtained entitling them to attend functions as a couple for a year. "Sometimes our members feel as though they're losing a very special friendship once they marry," she says. "So the year gives them a grace period to make the transition from single life to married."
 "In this group, you can make many lasting friendships at a time when you really need it," she says.

Contest calls on artists

Artists across the country are invited to enter a Canada Day poster contest to win an all-expenses paid trip to Ottawa on July 1.

Secretary of State David Crombie recently announced details of the competition, which is co-sponsored by The Bay and McDonald's restaurants.

The top national entry, selected from provincial/territorial winners, will become the official poster for the nation's 1987 Canada Day celebrations.

The winning artist and his/her family will be guests of the Secretary of State during Canada Day activities on Parliament Hill.

"1987 marks the 40th anniversary of Canadian citizenship and what better way to make people aware of it than through a poster competition on the theme 'What it means to be a Canadian,'" Mr. Crombie said.

The contest is open to all Canadians, who must postmark entries before midnight, Feb. 21, 1987. Posters should be 38 by 50 cm (15 by 20 inches) and done with either crayons, paint or pastels.

Three-dimensional drawings using materials such as cotton balls, wool and tinsel are not acceptable. Photographs should not be used.

Contestants are entitled to submit one entry only. The artist's name, address and telephone number should appear in pencil on the back of the poster.

A short explanatory note on the image or theme should be included.

All entries become the property of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada which reserves the right to make required changes to the winning poster to facilitate printing, and to add appropriate logos.

As Whitechurch-Stouffville Council received word of the competition last week, councillor Margot Marshall urged all area art enthusiasts to take part.

"I just think it's a lot of fun and everyone can get involved. Everyone who is talented that is," she said.

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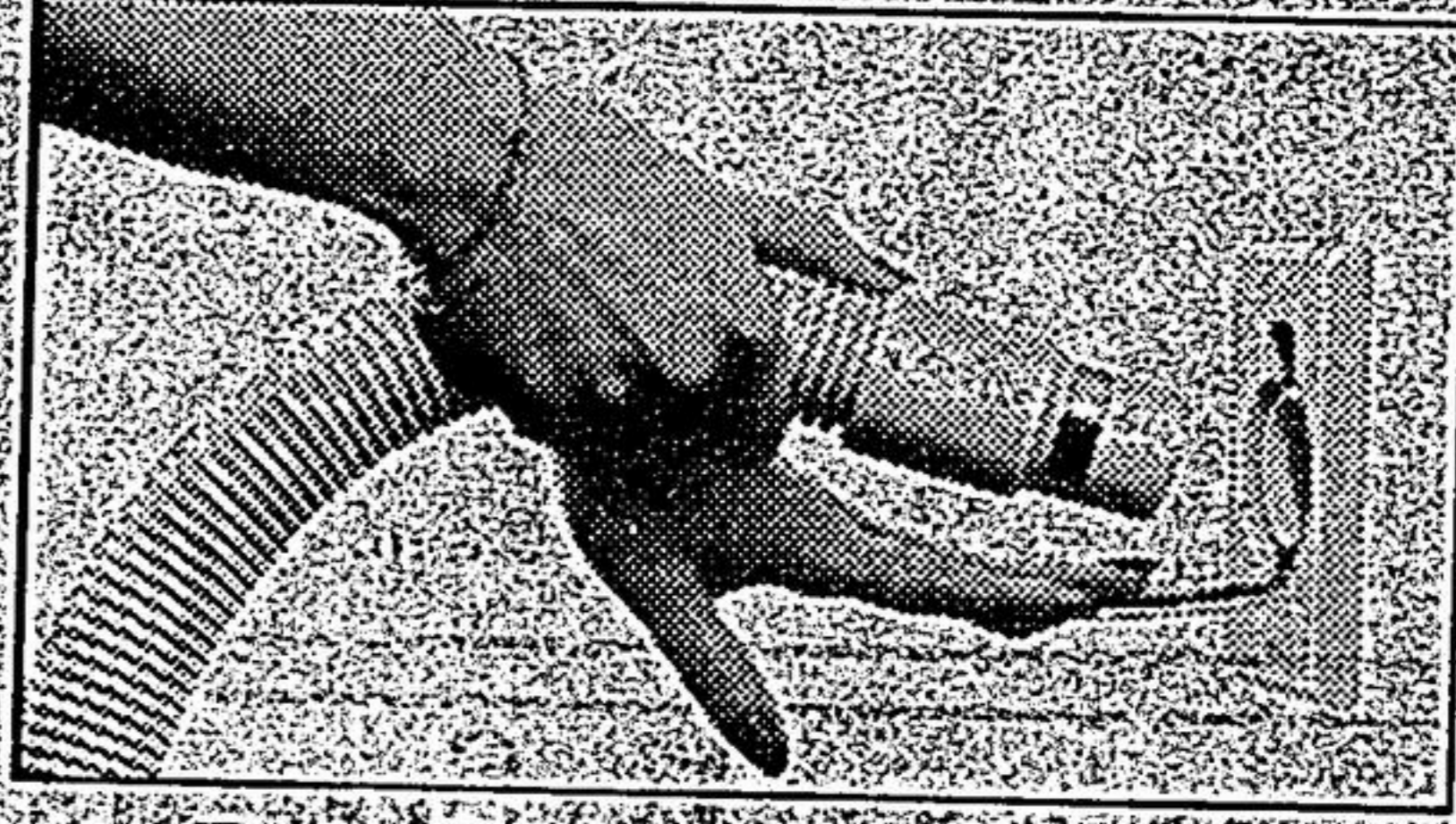
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