

The Stouffville strut

Fashion models were in the spotlight when the Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce held its annual Trade Show, Sept. 10, 11, and 12, at the Town Recreation Centre. Representing The Wedding Room are (left to right) — Lenore Ramer, Sheila McNeil and Maris Anderson.

— Jim Thomas



Take a telecare course

By MARSHA KIDECKEL
It's that time of year again. Monday is not only the last day of summer — it's also the first day of the Telecare training course.

Topics covered in the course include Self-Awareness; Active Listening; Sexuality; Loneliness; Depression; Grief & Dying; Suicide; Family Abuse; and Drug and Alcohol Addiction. The course is open to the general public as well as to those who want to be Telecare volunteers.

Every year, Telecare Richmond Hill, southern York Region's telephone distress centre, goes into the community seeking new volunteers. Telecare phones are open for the lonely, the sick, and the suicidal seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Many volunteers are needed to keep the telephone lines open. Anyone wishing to be a volunteer must first take the 20-week training course.

"The course teaches the volunteers how to handle every type of call be it from someone suffering from loneliness or grief, someone contemplating suicide, or someone who just wants information," says Sandy, one of the Board members. "Our volunteers are trained to handle any type of crisis situation. We do not have untrained volunteers."

York Region needs a telephone distress centre although there are many other types of counselling services and agencies around. Sandy says "Some people have trouble talking to people face to face. They prefer the anonymity of the telephone. We are there to listen. We also are always available to assist in emergencies and we act as a referral when necessary. We advise the abused wife, the alcoholic, the unwed mother of the agencies that are there to help them. We provide free, confidential, caring."

While Telecare Richmond Hill is non-denominational, it was originally Church-based. It was started by a Minister in Australia. Today, Australia and Europe have Lifeline, the United States has Contact, and Canada has Telecare. Lifeline, Contact, and Telecare are all affiliated and all offer, as Sandy put it, "free, confidential, caring."

During the course last year, one highlight was the talk on Alcoholism. An ex-alcoholic and his wife each talked about how it had been to live with alcoholism. First the husband spoke, about the way alcohol had almost destroyed his life and then his wife told how her home, her family, and her health had been ruined by her husband's disease.

Today the couple is happy, loving, and alcohol-free.

The course will be held this year at Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, 10066 Yonge St. in Richmond Hill. Classes are every Monday from 7:30—10 pm. There is a fee of \$25. This covers the cost of running this course and providing handouts.

To enroll in the course, please leave your name by calling 884-9148 (9-5 weekdays) or 884-2773 (evenings and weekends). It is preferable that you call first, but you can also register at the door on the first night of the course, Monday, Sept. 21.

And remember also, if you have a problem or would just like to talk to someone, the Telecare lines are there for you. The numbers are 731-1212 (Markham and area) and 884-1313 (Richmond Hill, Thornhill, Woodbridge, Kleinburg, and Maple). A Telecare volunteer is always ready to listen, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

LIVING & SHOPPING in MARKHAM / UNIONVILLE

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