

Elderly people thrive on security system

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Correspondent

The problem many elderly and disabled persons living alone are faced with is being in an emergency situation and being unable to reach or dial the telephone to call for help.

Harry Rubinoff, president of Homelink Response Systems Inc., believes he has the solution to this problem. Targeted primarily at elderly or disabled subscribers, the Homelink emergency response system promises to "help when seconds count."

The Homelink subscriber wears a lightweight pendant around the neck, which can also be easily adapted for installation on a wheelchair or bed. As soon as the alarm button on the pendant is pressed, a signal is sent to an electronic communications box which is hooked onto the subscriber's telephone line.

The alarm will set off an automatic dialing to the Homelink monitoring centre, which is professionally staffed by operators 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Homelink operator has immediate access on a computer screen to the subscriber's vital statistics, including home address and medical history, as well as the name and phone number of a relative, friend or neighbor who lives close by. The subscriber tells the operator specifically what type of help is required, by means of a sensitive two-way speaker located in the elderly or disabled person's home.

Rubinoff informs that the range of this sensitive speaker is quite great — usually voice contact can be made throughout a normal one-floor apartment, providing all the doors are open," he says. "If the subscriber lives in a larger home, extra speaker units may be purchased to place in other rooms throughout the home for added security."

Once the operator has determined exactly what type of help is needed, he or she immediately places a call to either medical emergency services or local police, or both to come to the person's aid. The operator will also call the designated friend, relative or neighbor to notify them of the emergency, so that they can be with the subscriber as soon as possible.

If there is no voice communication between the Homelink operator and the subscriber after the alarm has sounded, the operator will assume that there is an emergency, and will contact both the police and medical assistance to come immediately.

Rubinoff notes that the system also offers false alarm protection to prevent unwarranted emergency services. He claims, "you can press a button to stop an alarm that is set off accidentally, or you can simply use the speaker to cancel your emergency call."

An optional Lack of Activity Monitor feature is one which is exclusive to the Homelink response system. Rubinoff describes this feature as "a monitor which may be set at six, 12 or 24-hour intervals. If the monitor detects a lack of activity, an alert will sound at the monitoring centre, and they will investigate the situation."

Rubinoff claims that the Homelink emergency response system has "proven reliability" with approximately 40,000 subscribers in Ontario and Europe. He has only recently

launched the expansion into the Canadian market and is now working on sales in the York Region/Toronto area, in addition to London, Ont., and plans to move throughout Canada from here.

Rubinoff notes that while the majority of Homelink subscribers are elderly or disabled persons, the system is suitable for any person who feels uneasy about being alone. He says, "it gives valuable peace of mind in

the case of any type of emergency, whether it be an accident, illness, or a break-in." The Homelink Emergency Response system sells for \$700, including delivery, installation and training on how to use the

unit. There is also a monthly \$25 fee for maintenance and service. If you would like more information or a demonstration on the Homelink Response system, you may call Harry or Helen Rubinoff at 764-8187.

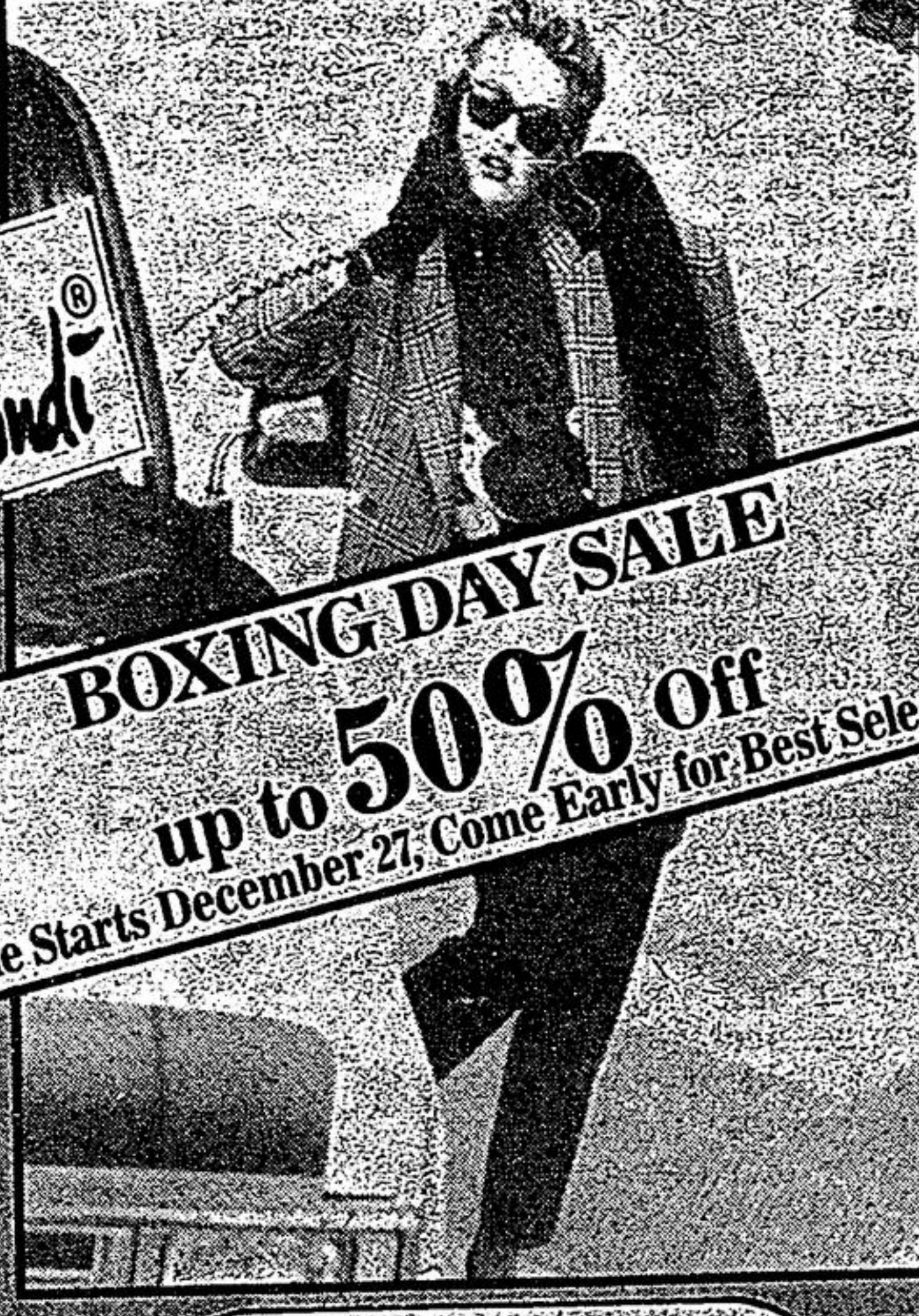
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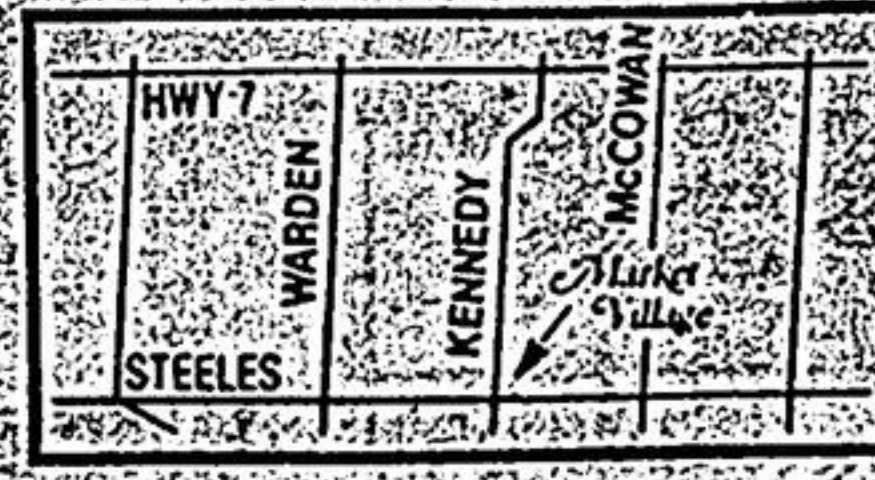
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