

The name of the game is community relations

## Monday: Helping the kids downtown

By BOB FORSYTH

WHEN PROFESSOR JEAN SIMPSON approached Winters College Council some months ago and mentioned that Shoreham Drive Public School in the Edgely development needed a few additional bodies for their school program, there was an immediate expression of interest. The council had previously agreed that it would make attempts throughout the remainder of its term to become socially active.

But, as it turned out, administrative trivia began to pile up in the council offices. No one had enough time to do any work with Simpson's idea. Until one morning five York students made their way over to Shoreham Drive to meet the school principal, Harold Henry. Henry may not be a salesman, but those five students bought Shoreham Drive's concept of education lock, stock, and barrel.

That first visit to Shoreham Drive was eight weeks ago. Now, you can find York students at the school three or four days of the week. They run a drop-in centre at the school on Thursday, they assist with a community program on Tuesday and Thursday nights, a few serve as teacher's assistants, and they are continually at the school for meetings to discuss their activities.

SHOREHAM DRIVE ACTIVITIES weren't enough. Students began to operate a Big Brother program, and to consider offering their services to other schools in the area. So began the Monday organization.

Monday started out with high hopes of becoming the only viable alternative to student councils on campus. It had almost a reactionary beginning. Its organizers felt that there had to be more to university life than just dances and coffee houses. They reacted against some of the incredible crap being put down by campus organizations of all types.

They took the phrase "The community university of and for the people" as their beginning. In the minds of some organizers, this phrase is still very much alive. But Monday has shifted its emphasis. It has evolved into a much needed service organization.

Monday at present is caught up in growing pains. Organizers have headaches, members are confused. At the same time, however, great progress is being made. Monday has become well known and received at Shoreham Drive School, the number of Big Brothers is increasing, and requests for help from other community areas are beginning to pile up.

What Monday needs most now is people. However, one thing should be clearly understood: Monday is not a social club, nor does it want people to simply fulfil a function. It wants people who are concerned with and interested in the Toronto community, people who are willing to commit themselves to several hours of community work per week.

TO BE SURE, a good time will be had by all who join Monday. But without commitment and concern, Monday will amount to nothing more than another not-so-laughable student attempt to "do good and spread joy among the masses." The organization has good people now, and it wants more of them.

Four projects now underway are being carried out in the Edgely Community. Although Monday is involved in more than just these four projects, they are the only ones that have been initiated purely by the group.

The Edgely community is an Ontario Housing Development area situated immediately adjacent to York. It is comprised of townhouses and condominiums, two schools, and a small shopping plaza. This is part of the package designed by architect Irvin Grossman. In the original plans, Grossman had included a community centre and recreational facilities. Ontario Housing, however, being what it is, feel that the construction of these facilities must remain in the vague and distant future.

Without recreational facilities, Edgely has no noticeable social environment. It is as environmentally sterile as the rest of Downsview. THE COMMUNITY WAS designed with two schools, a public and a junior, both centrally located to allow maximum use by the residents. And, particularly in the case of Shoreham Drive, the schools are used at a maximum level. Shoreham Drive is being overtaxed by community use, and is serving as a somewhat inadequate community centre. Jane Junior High School is rapidly following suit.

When Monday became involved in the Edgely area, the obvious place to begin was in the school system. The first program initiated was at



Excalibur - Tim Clark

York students are helping with many new concepts in education at the Shoreham Drive Public School.

Shoreham Drive Public School.

Fairies dance and spirits invade, lights flash and the audience sways to the Blue Danube Waltz. South house at Shoreham is in class. Little hands are goosed up with paper maché as 60 students fashion masks in North House. Not exactly a typical school afternoon, but then Shoreham Drive is not exactly a typical school.

It is, in essence, North York's experimental school. Built on the open design concept, it was designed by its principal in consultation with its future teachers and the architect. Henry, the principal, worked under the single axiom of learning being nothing more than a process of inquiry. The building revolves around a central resource centre (library), this room being, as it were, one source of the learning inquiry.

A SECOND SOURCE of inquiry is the staff at the school. All were handpicked by Henry, and were judged on their ability to relate to children and on their empathy towards children. From a pre-construction overly sophisticated teaching design, these teachers have created a beautiful inquiry program.

There are no grades or numerical records kept in the school. How does one evaluate the process of inquiry? As Henry says, "You can't measure intellectual development but, through behavior, you can measure intellectual attitudes and see growth or non-growth in any direction."

Monday presents a wide array of activities to the children, who range in age from 9 to 12, on Thursday afternoon. It carries out drama, music, and pottery classes, as well as presenting arts and crafts, table games, a varied gymnastic program, film projects, and dances. It has plans to bring all 200 children up to York for a theatrical production. Potential activities are unlimited; all that Monday needs is a few fresh minds to assist in activity planning.

Shoreham Drive Public School attempts to fulfil its community role Tuesday and Thursday nights. From 7 to 10 o'clock the school is open for adult activities. Those who attend have designed their own program, which includes films, pottery, art work, table games, and just generally having a good time over a cup of coffee.

Gail Green, the supervisor and co-ordinator of the community program, asked Monday to assist in the staffing of this program, which admits teenagers from the surrounding area on Tuesday nights. It is with these younger people that Monday can offer the most worthwhile services. What with the school facilities being used by other age groups at the same time, however, there is little area left for specific teenage activities.

FOR THIS REASON, Monday has begun negotiations with Jane Junior High School to establish a form of drop-in centre in the school building. Plans are developing reasonably well, but due to the restrictions that the school must put on the clientele of this centre, such a drop-in centre does not in any way fulfil the needs of the teenage community members.

A meeting was held last week with several of the high school kids in the area to discuss the idea of the drop-in. All were very receptive to the idea, and had many constructive suggestions to offer as to programs for the centre. It was generally agreed at the same time, in accordance with Monday's feelings, that independent facilities had to be found.

A further meeting with these high school students is to be held this week. In the meantime, efforts are being made to contact developers owning facilities in the area in an attempt to find a good location for the permanent drop-in.

The facilities at Jane Junior are, of course, not to be neglected. Monday members will have an opportunity to teach at the school on a part time, voluntary basis. These persons will be assisting with the regular teaching program in areas such as dance, painting, film, and the social sciences.

As well, the principal of the school is endeavoring to establish a series of Friday night sports activities and dances. Monday is assisting in this project and members will serve as supervisors and co-ordinators of the Friday night program.

MONDAY CONSIDERS ITS Big Brother program to be the most worthwhile project it is undertaking. In this program, a York student is matched with an Edgely child of public school age. The children participating in the program are chosen by Shoreham Drive Public School, and are given parental consent to join the program.

Each York student is assigned one "little brother." There is a screening process set up for the interested York student, and, after going through this process, the student is given the telephone number of the child assigned to him. He then makes contact with the family, makes himself known to them, and begins his program with the child.

The student exposes the child to activities of the child's choice, the intent being to allow the child to have a wider range of experiences than he would normally be exposed to. There is no attempt at psychological counselling in this program. The York student is merely a friend to the child and is the child's vehicle of experience.

At the present time, Monday needs 36 big brothers. Nine students have signed up for the program, which involves a weekly commitment up until the end of March. Once these students have been screened, the program will be underway.

In addition to the four programs designed by Monday itself, the organization has become involved in projects developed by other Toronto community groups. Lacking human resources, Monday has been unable to fulfil any commitments to these groups.

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S HOUSE, a settlement house in the Kensington Market area, has requested assistance in their programs. The help they need is mostly in the evenings, when they run a teenage drop-in centre and dance. Up to 200 teens attend these functions, and more adequate supervision is needed if they are to continue.

As well, there are some SOS projects that require additional volunteers. Other service organizations run drop-in centres, and these groups could use additional human resources. With new personnel, Monday hopes to contribute to these community service projects.

Without more volunteers, the organization is in trouble. Monday needs both quality and quantity.

Monday meets every Monday night at seven in the Parlor of Winters College (behind 017). It has no political connections with any student government, and membership is open to anyone in the York community. Monday has room for whatever you can offer. Monday is the right thing; help do it the right way.