

Marriage contracts suggested

EDMONTON (CP) — Alberta Attorney-General Jim Foster recently suggested that more couples consider drawing up marriage contracts to govern their financial relationship.

Edmonton lawyer Jean McBean, who has recently drafted several such contracts, agrees they are useful but warns against assuming they can cover all financial aspects of marriage.

She says marriage contracts cannot provide for the disposition of property in the event of a breakup. Any agreement made in anticipation of separation will not be enforced by the law.

However, the couple can decide what remains separate property, what is joint property, how costs are apportioned and assets divided.

A marriage contract cannot take precedence over marriage law, Ms. McBean explains. The couple cannot opt out of obligations implicit within marriage, such as the obligation to have sexual intercourse with the spouse only or the husband's responsibility to maintain and care for his wife and children. A wife cannot give up her maintenance rights nor can the husband deny them to her.

Ms. McBean says some clauses included in marriage contracts are virtually unenforceable—agreements about who takes the garbage out, washes the dishes or drives the children to school.

However, even if such clauses cannot be enforced, Ms. McBean says they should be included because they force the couple to examine their goals and expectations within the marriage.

Agreements on whether the wife will work after marriage are not enforceable, says Ms. McBean, but they should be included in any contract.

A contractual agreement not to have children is not legal. If one partner wants to have children, refusal by the spouse is considered grounds for divorce despite the contract.

The couple can agree in the contract about payment of individual debts incurred before marriage.

Ms. McBean admits that most things people want to include in marriage contracts are either contrary to the law or virtually unenforceable. But she maintains the very exercise of writing the contract is its chief value.

"Persons who will not commit themselves to paper are not likely to commit themselves to you," she says.

COMING EVENTS

There will be a dance Saturday at the Catholic Community Centre, corner of Austin and South Kelly Roads, beginning at 9 p.m. Music will be supplied by the Keller Family and a chili supper will be served. For tickets phone 962-9605, 962-7081, 962-7411 or 962-7664.

In conjunction with Cerebral Palsy Week, May 24-31, the Ladies' Auxiliary to the local Cerebral Palsy Association will sponsor a booth at the Pine Centre Mall Friday and Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Caledonia Ramblers will meet today at 7:30 p.m. in the Civic Centre. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Members of the Ladies' Auxiliary to Branch 43 of the Royal Canadian Legion planning to attend the annual dinner meeting at the Legion June 1 are reminded they must sign the list posted in the lobby of the Legion by Friday to ensure their reservation.

CHILD HEALTH

Child health consultations with a public health nurse from the Northern Interior Health Unit will be available Thursday at the following locations:

Highglan 1:30 p.m. at the Church of Latter Day Saints, corner of Fifth and Voyageur Avenues;

Hart Shopping Centre 9:30-11:30 a.m. in the office of the Department of Human Resources;

Shady Valley 1-3 p.m. at the Shady Valley Elementary School;

Wildwood 3-4:30 p.m. at Wildwood Elementary School;

Ferndale 10:30 a.m. at the home of Pansy Crawford.

There will also be a family planning clinic Thursday 3-6 p.m. at the Northern Interior Health Unit, 1461 Sixth Avenue.



Janet Tippins examines one of the plants hanging in a classroom at the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre in Toronto.

HANDICAPPED PROGRAM

Plants help people

TORONTO (CP) — Before psychiatry became a science, work in the garden was prescribed as a curative for ills of the mind and nervous system.

Helping Plants Help People is the motto of the National Council of Therapy and Rehabilitation through Horticulture, whose members discovered that horticulture is not a new therapeutic tool.

At one time, prisons not only had their own farms to grow food but their own greenhouses as well.

Ray Halward, a member of the American organization Therapy Through Horticulture and a propagator with the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, Ont., spends a lot of

time travelling to institutions in Ontario, setting up therapeutic horticultural programs for the elderly and physically and mentally handicapped.

He said growing plants and flowers can have a tremendous impact on people.

"It sets up a feeling of contentment and achievement in people that nothing else can replace. We can't separate ourselves from plants because we can't live without them."

He added that it takes only a little time, but lots of love, to grow things.

At the Ontario Crippled Children's Centre in Toronto, classrooms are overflowing the

greenery as a result of gardening therapy for handicapped children.

"Participating in the gardening makes the children more willing to do their three Rs afterwards," said Barbara Royds, director of community relations for the centre.

The children are encouraged to take home their little green treasures as gifts for their families and friends, "because we want them to learn to give as well as to receive."

Mary Snetsinger, a teacher at the centre, said: "We're trying to broaden their horizons, to bring the outdoors inside. We want to teach them the things they can do, because there are so many things they can't do."

Eileen Carson, director of occupational therapy at Toronto's Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital, says horticulture therapy is used extensively in the hospital's life-skills program, which teaches patients how to survive outside an institution.

Last summer the patients had a thriving vegetable garden going, and learned to cook the vegetables they grew.

"One elderly alcoholic, who was an outpatient, came every day to hoe and weed the garden," said Mrs. Carson. "In our life-skills program are people of all ages, from an adolescent boy to a middle-aged housewife to an elderly alcoholic."

In the spring of 1975, Mr. Justice Donald Keith ruled that Mr. Toi could no longer have access to his daughter, Jennifer, who now is 3.

At that time she was living in her mother's custody in Ottawa and had been travelling back and forth to Clarkson where Mr. Toi, an accountancy student, lives with his parents.

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SUPERMARKET DISPLAYS

Price increases fought

LONDON, Ont. (CP) — A program designed to get consumers involved in the fight against rising prices was started here by the federal anti-inflation board today.

The pilot program is to be carried on in London, Winnipeg and Quebec City for two months. The Winnipeg operation is to start May 31, while the Quebec City program is scheduled to begin June 7.

Jack Biddell, a member of the anti-inflation board, said the board plans to set up displays in supermarkets, banks and government offices. They will contain pamphlets and special forms on which consumers can outline specific complaints against businesses that have raised prices.

Mr. Biddell said consumers are urged to discuss the matter with the management of the business before contacting the board, but if that produces no results, they should then fill in

the form and send it to Ottawa.

However, he stressed that the board will reply to only a limited number of complaints.

"There's no point in setting up an army of people to reply to everyone," he said.

He said the board will compile summaries of the complaints, analyse them and make them public every two weeks or so.

But he admitted the board has no real clout to force small businesses that do not fall under the purview of the Anti-Inflation Act to roll back unwarranted price increases.

The only power the board had in such cases was the threat of publicity—the same club wielded by Beryl Plumptre and the now-defunct food prices review board.

"If companies are not following the guidelines, we'll step in and name names," Mr. Biddell said.

He said the anti-inflation board has been stuck with a bad image lately, because it appears to be rolling back only wages and salaries.

That is a false image, he said, because the board has been keeping a close watch on major businesses and their

prices. The large companies have been policing themselves, he added.

"Since November, we have had virtually a self-imposed price freeze," he said. "There has been no opportunity for the board to show price roll-backs." He said he hopes the new program will get consumers directly involved in the fight against inflation and help the board monitor price trends in areas where it is not directly involved.

Dorothy Latta, president of the local branch of the Consumers' Association of Canada, said the association neither condemns nor condones the program, although it is helping set up the distribution machinery.

Mrs. Latta said she hopes the program will encourage individual consumers to accept more responsibility because the tendency is to pass the buck in such matters.

Home and Family

Bev Christensen Citizen Family Editor

WIFE INTERCEPTED LETTER

Don't put anything in writing

Dear Ann Landers: I've had it, but maybe I can spare some other numbskull from making the same foolish mistake. It was such a simple thing that did me in. Insufficient postage.

My business takes me all over the world. I've met some charming people in England, France and Germany. One person in particular, caught my fancy. She lives in Munich. We had a few interesting times together and I became infatuated. She wrote marvelous letters. I wrote a few myself. Of course, I always used office stationery.

Last week I called my wife from Paris and asked her to pick up my office mail so I could read it over the weekend. I was arriving home on Saturday.

In the stack of letters she found one to the woman in Munich — returned for insufficient postage. Of course, she slit the envelope and read my letter, which I thought was pretty tacky. Nevertheless, I caught plenty of hell.

So please, Ann, share my stupidity with your readers and warn them to check the postage. If they aren't sure, stick on extra 30 cents. It's worth it. — Draydel Kaup.

Dear Draydel: I think I can improve on your advice. Never put anything in writing.

Ann Landers



and we are really in love. This man wants to marry me and be a father to my children. (The two he lost were all he had. They were born within weeks of my oldest two. It's as if we were destined to meet.)

The problem: After we marry, I want to go to the courthouse and have my children's last name changed so it will be the same as ours. Sid's parents are against it. He was their only son and they want the family name continued. (P.S. I'm ashamed to tell you this, but Sid was shot by a cop in a currency exchange hold-up.) Please answer soon. — Hassled In Yuma.

Dear Yuma: Glad you added the P.S. It influenced my decision considerably.

Change their names. Your wishes should take precedence over your deceased husband's parents.

Dear Ann Landers: I am a 15-year-old girl who has something to say. I just wish the kids who read your column would open their eyes and see their teachers are people.

Up until now I never thought of teachers as human beings but something happened a few weeks ago that changed my whole outlook. I got into a little trouble and three teachers came forward to help me. It really blew my mind.

So please print my letter, Ann, and tell the students all over that it's more than a job with lots of them. They care. — New View.

Dear View: Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to give a well-deserved boost to dedicated teachers — and there are thousands.

According to a psychiatrist in California, an unprecedented number of

teachers are showing signs of "battle fatigue," the same stress that soldiers suffer from in time of war. More statistics:

There were 70,000 assaults on teachers by students in 1975. These assaults ranged from a slap in the face to being stabbed with an icepick and shot in the classroom with a Saturday night special. Dreadful commentary, isn't it?

Dear Ann Landers: It happened again this morning and I'm fuming. A friend phoned and said, "So you finally ran out of wind! I've been trying to get your line for an hour."

I found myself apologizing and making excuses. Then I could have kicked myself. Whose business is it if I want to enjoy a long chat? How about a sharp, needle-type answer to people who do this to me? — Long Talker.

Dear L.T.: Why do you feel you must respond? Anything you might say would put you on the defensive. Silence can be infinitely more devastating than words. Try it

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