



KENNY MARSHALL harnesses Sam and Karu, the Siberian Husky team which won him a second place finish against older, larger and more experienced dog sledders at the carnival at Puslinch Lake recently. The young Acton driver has four more Husky pups at home he hopes to have in training next year. (Staff Photo)

Sparse crowd attends open Urban Board meet

The new look in the administration of education, through county boards, was detailed in a sparsely attended meeting called by the North Halton Urban Board last Wednesday, in the Martin St. Senior Public School in Milton. M.P.P. Jim Snow emphasized to the audience of 50 that the prime objective of amalgamating the province's 1400 school boards into county boards, was to insure equality of educational opportunity. He did not envision any particular cost-saving aspects to the program.

Other significant benefits cited by Mr. Snow included the integration of elementary, secondary and tertiary education across the province, the elimination of overlapping transportation routes, the spread of costs over a larger tax base, the encouragement of centralized purchasing and the orderly and maximum use of existing facilities. He visualized the problems in this area as minimal.

James Thompson, assistant superintendent of supervision of the Department of Education detailed the composition of the new 20 man board that will be elected in Halton. The new board, he told the audience, will have no responsibility for separate schools but two separate school representatives will be elected

to the Board based on the relationship of separate school and public school supporters' assessments.

Mr. Thompson noted approximately 89 per cent of Halton ratepayers were public school supporters and 11 per cent were separate school supporters. This would result in two separate school representatives on the board.

The county council will be responsible for the establishment of the 18 wards which will elect representatives to the Board. They would be established "as nearly as practical on the basis of residential and farm assessment." Unsatisfied municipalities will be able to appeal the boundaries to a county judge. He suggested it was possible two or more municipalities would be grouped together for the election of a single representative.

Mr. Thompson stressed the board members would be elected not appointed. The timing of the election, whether in the fall or later, was not yet established. He cited a number of difficulties in having an election in September since municipal tax rolls and voters' lists could not be prepared in time. In those municipalities that normally have elections in December, 65 per cent vote on the first Monday of that month. Where two or more municipalities are grouped to elect a single representative, the vote will be held on the date chosen by the municipality having the largest assessment if the two cannot co-operate on a common date.

The establishment of the new board will dissolve all previous boards. All assets, liabilities and contracts will be transferred to the new board. Mr. Thompson warned against the temptation to boards to end the year with a deficit. If it happens the deficit will be charged back to the municipality incurring it, he stressed, through arbitration. Similarly surpluses will be turned back to the benefit of the appropriate municipality.

Costs of operation of the new board will be based on the provincial equalized assessment. "When you share costs you begin to realize the mess assessments are in across the counties," the speaker noted, detailing the need to apply provincial equalization factors in achieving a common pattern.

On debentures, the speaker pointed out the board would issue its own debentures without municipal council approval that is currently required by school boards. The board will apply directly to the Ontario Municipal Board and it was noted some standards would be required for this. Presently a municipality is not allowed to exceed 25 per cent of its total assessment. The board will be responsible

for the existing debentures as well, issuing a cheque to the municipality holding the debenture obligation for the annual payments.

Refuting a commonly-held idea the new board would issue its own tax bills, the Department representative stressed the legislation would require only that the cost of education be shown as a separate item. It could be on a single piece of paper or it could be two pieces of paper, but it would be issued by the municipal clerk or treasurer. The municipality would also receive the tax payments and remit them to the Board as requested, but not later than December 15 in any year.

Mr. Thompson recalled being asked what happened if a person paid the general tax and not the school tax. His answer had been they would have tax arrears, collectible in the usual way. Municipalities will be required to turn over 100 per cent of the education levy, he stressed.

Answering questions after presenting his outline, Mr. Thompson acknowledged that the operation of schools for the retarded was currently being studied to determine whether they should be under the new board. There were, however, a number of particular problems in relation to ownership of facilities that would have to be resolved.

Trustees' salaries would be as permitted under the present legislation where the maximum allowed is \$3,600 annually. Teachers' salaries would not be adjusted at the first of January since all teachers sign contracts to the end of June. The new board

would merely assume these contracts.

The speaker sought to dispel fears expressed that the trustees would become more remote from the teachers and ratepayers. He noted a supervisory staff would naturally be required.

To a suggestion that trustees should have a Bachelor of Commerce degree, the speaker noted the only requirements for a trustee were a Canadian, aged 21 or over, resident in the section and with his taxes paid.

The speaker was thanked by Mayor Leif Daby of Acton, Urban Board Chairman Ron Harris, Deputy Mayor of Milton, conducted the meeting.

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INTEREST IN THE craftsmanship of Brian Rankin, fashioning a bowl, and Joey Marshall making a book rack at the Robert Little open house was shared by Vic Morris, left, Mrs. Vic Morris and Jill, Mrs. A. Gorjup, Donna and Paul. Displays and demonstrations delighted the hundreds attending. Object of the open night was to demonstrate modern education techniques. (Staff Photo)

Six attend seminar learn "leadership"

A leadership seminar was held on March 15, 16 and 17 at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Oakville. Delegates from the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded who attended with William Ferguson, president, were Mrs. Edith Hartland and Mrs. F. New from Acton and Mrs. Bruce Codrington and Mrs. Diane Wood from Milton, as well as Mrs. Joan Mitchell, a teacher from the Sunshine School.

It is interesting to note that organizations in the area are making plans to assist the group. Two of the many are the Catholic Women's League of Holy Rosary Church, Milton which is sponsoring the Harmony Symphony Orchestra concert at the Ontario School for the Deaf on Sunday, March 31 at 3 p.m. and the Milton Fire Department and local and Ontario Provincial Police, who have set the date for their annual broomball game at the Milton Arena, on April 21 at 2 p.m.



CHRISTINE FORBES works at her first home economics project, a gingham apron with cross stitch embroidery. Teacher is Mrs. Kay Hannah. Several girls at the Robert Little school were working in the home economics room during the Education Week open house.

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