

Raises more than Guelph gets

When councillors of Halton Hills voted the mayor \$11,000 and each member of council \$5,400 per annum in salaries over the next three years there was little shock. Peel and Halton regional councils had already sent shock waves rippling through the electorate with their salaries of \$10,000 and \$8,500 per year, respectively. A mere \$5,400 is anti-climatic.

But it is a hefty hike in pay for most of the men who sit on the new town's council. Pay in Acton and Esqueving was \$2,000 in 1973, and Georgetown councillors received \$2,500. So the new figure is over double what they would have received if the three municipalities had been left to solve their own problems.

To be fair, the workload for the new council is tremendous and they have problems to solve they never

dreamed about when they sheltered in the obvious comfort of three smaller communities. However, we wonder if they haven't again excelled themselves at the expense of the electorate.

City of Guelph aldermen were recently granted a raise to \$4,000 a year and the mayor went up to \$12,500 in addition to two small stipends for serving on other committees. The Guelph raise was introduced after an outside firm of consultants had investigated the work load and decided \$4,000 was a fair figure.

Needless to say Guelph is a much larger municipality than Halton Hills. Since it still operates under the other system of government the councillors have more responsibility. Responsibilities in the new regional government system are supposed to be reduced

with major decisions made at the regional level.

We wonder where it will all end. Just last week aldermen in Grimsby voted in favor of a 33 1/3 percent increase to \$4,800 per year, taking a cue from neighboring councils, no doubt.

We also doubt very much if aldermen in Guelph will long be satisfied with \$4,000 when their colleagues in smaller communities are collecting another \$1400 for less work.

Quite likely ratepayers would not be so concerned if they had seen the raises come gradually instead of in one large lump sum. But the precedent has been set and days when men like former Mayor Joe Gibbons of Georgetown would accept no salary, to shame the more ambitious, are gone forever.

The colossus continues to grow

The size of the "colossus" that can evolve after the introduction of regional government is now shaking the elected officials too.

Responsibilities being transferred from the local to regional level meant a natural shift in personnel in departments affected. The problem is, however, that the vacancy created in the move from local to regional is now often being refilled locally. And that sounds like duplication.

The public works department is expected to inherit some of the staff members from the town and townships but the extent is not yet known. Water and sewage facilities are two of the areas of responsibility that move from local to regional control.

Soon the regional solicitor who has been hired will be on the job and undoubtedly he will begin to plan the staffing of his department. How many assistants and secretaries will be required is open to question.

Naturally the administrative staff will also be growing to handle the expanding organization.

funds will only cushion the first year's expenditures.

None of the councils in Halton have prepared a budget to cover the area they now serve. No one seems exactly clear on the extent of regional spending vs. local spending which can leave the taxpayer squarely in the middle and having to reach very deep into his pocket.

Undoubtedly it is a time of turmoil and travail for those officials elected to serve locally and regionally. When they begin to wrestle with the first budgets the agony may be severe as they hoped with all good intentions to avoid the costly patterns that had been ingrained in regional governments established in other areas.

Halton region is relatively compact and if regional government is to work any place it should work here. The secret of public acceptance will be in direct proportion to its financial impact on the taxpayer. Those first budgets will be very important and authorization of large expenditures without relation to the final budget is bound to lead to disaster.

Then too there seems to be some illusion that it's time to do all those things long delayed by shortages of dollars. Budget setting sessions this year are bound to be periods of severe agony unless there is a mysterious new source of funds we're not yet aware of.

Department heads for most of the regional departments are gathering staff. The planning department staffing alone is estimated at \$375,000. It was also recently revealed that Chairman Allan Masson had approved the purchase of about \$75,000 worth of office furniture and a car for his use.

The frightening aspect for the ratepayer is the unknown. Has anyone anywhere in this growing complex projected the direction and the extent to which this expansion can be paid for by the taxpayer without severe distortions in past mill rates?

We hear continuing references to Queens Park assistance in meeting start-up costs but if the overhead is being built in, in the form of staff salaries, any start-up

Bumper "touches" are accidents

If you have ever "just touched" the bumper of another car with your car's bumper after a sudden stop, then decided that there had been no damage done and driven merrily on your way, you had better beware and not do it again.

The justices' discussion of the case, as reported in the Financial Post is fairly complicated. But the implications of their decision apply to every driver.

Even if the other driver isn't around and you think there are no witnesses, if you touch another driver's bumper or lightly brush

someone else's bumper while pulling out of a parking lot, stop and get out of your car. Then you can inspect the damage and call the police.

Believe it or not, you've just had an accident.

—The Huron Expositor. (Seaforth).

OUR READERS WRITE:

Dear Sir:
Post Office Boxes are a disgrace to our town, is there no Janitor to keep the place clean?
Your paper at one time was asking for

Jan. 26, 1974
suggestions as a Centennial project. How about washing off the Mail Boxes at the post office? They are so dirty, one hates to touch them to get one's mail
Sincerely
Mrs. E. Zeissig
Acton, Ont.



Dollop of whipped cream snow for sundae driver



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

You'd think the Smileys could have one tiny grandchild with no more than the usual anxiety and expectancy.

Not a chance. They had to turn it into a three-ring circus.

Just about the time the wee lad was due to arrive, I provided the first ring. I racked up my car. Not seriously. Just enough so it couldn't be driven. It was during the holidays, and between these and relentless storms, day after day, the repairs took twice as long as they would have normally.

No transport. But we had to be there when his nibs arrived. It's a hundred miles away. Result was a nightmare of taxis and buses.

There's nothing more dismal than riding a bus in mid-winter. It's either a super-modern one, with the heat turned up so that you are gasping for breath and sweating like a wrestler, or it's an old-timer, with no heat and a draft that would freeze the brains of a brass monkey coming in around the window.

There's nothing more frustrating than waiting for a cab. It's no problem downtown in the city. You can flag one down on the street. But when you are in a remote suburb, you'd be better off with a dog team. We waited 55 minutes for a cab one night, after five phone calls, on each of which I was assured "He's on the way," a pure and downright lie.

My daughter, true to family form, provided ring two of the circus. I'm only glad I wasn't there, or you'd be reading my obituary instead of a column this week.

She began getting signs that the little stranger was developing claustrophobia and wanted to see the light of day. Nothing violent, but enough to send my wife into action, with all guns.

"Hang on. We'll be right up." Up meant

up to the university apartment where she and her husband are living. It's right out in the country and a brute to get at, unless you have a car.

My wife commandeered my brother-in-law, and he drove her there. Naturally, the young couple doesn't have a car.

Potential Granny dashed into the building, and was just starting up on the elevator, when she heard a disembodied voice asking, "Is there anyone there?"

She was more than a little startled. It was the voice of her son-in-law, and it seemed to be coming out of the walls.

It was. He and my daughter, the pregnant kid, were stuck in the adjoining elevator, between floors. They weren't stuck because she was pregnant, but because the elevator had ceased to descend. They'd been on their way down.

Well, how does that grab you, as melodrama? It's like something you'd see on one of those medical series on TV.

If I'd been there, I'd have fainted dead away and been carted off. My wife is made of sterner stuff. She can get hysterical about a cat crapping on a carpet. But when it comes down to real trouble, she's right on.

And my brother-in-law is a great man in a crisis. He posted my wife where she could talk to the two kids trapped in the elevator. Then he rounded up the troops: security guards, superintendents, and electrician.

They tried everything. A half hour passed. Nothing. An hour. Nothing worked. They called the elevator company. It was New Year's Day. A recorded message. Tension grew. It was like a wake. Pregnant woman trapped in stalled elevator.

After nearly an hour and a half, my son-in-law, one of the trappées, had an idea.

There was a small space at the bottom of their elevator car, but Kim, with her bulging belly, couldn't get through it. There was a little more room at the top.

If they could get through, from one elevator car to the other, maybe . . .

The rescuers found a panel between the elevator cars. It was removed. The electrician was skinny. He was hoisted up and crawled through the hole. A ladder was hoisted and passed to him. Silence.

After a few minutes of this, the rescuers started pounding the wall and shouting. No answer. Panic. They were just about to call the fire department when the kids and the electrician walked down the stairs, into the lobby.

Using the ladder, they had climbed out of the elevator and crawled through that just-big-enough hole, onto the second floor.

Needless to say, joy reigned supreme. Laughing and hugging and kissing.

Nobody had gone haywire in a nasty situation. The kids had not panicked. In fact, Kim sat on the floor and almost went to sleep. My wife kept her head, through an hour and a half of mental anguish. My brother-in-law came out feeling like Horatius at the bridge.

Well, all turned out fine. But the third ring of the circus was supplied to my wife. First day the baby was home, she was going up to see him, and her own child.

A young woman had thrown herself in front of a subway train, and it took my wife three hours to get there.

Why can't we have a grandchild without all this fooleraw? Oh, well. At least, the first time he crosses the border into the States, when he's about 16, and one of those snarly U.S. immigration officers says, "Where were you born?", he won't have to answer, "Duh, in an elevator."

Back Issues of The Free Press

20 years ago

50 years ago

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 24, 1954

John E. Moles, popular district farmer, was elected president of Acton Fall Fair. Mr. Moles, whose scientific farming methods have attracted wide interest in this area, succeeds Mac Sprowl. Other officers are R. Everdell, vice-president; C. S. Denny, second vice-president; Mrs. C. W. Swackhamer, secretary-treasurer.

See How They Run, a farce presented by the Guelph Little Theatre, was directed by Kathleen Franklin who just recently moved to Acton. She brought her theatrical experience with her from England. Mr. Franklin is associated with Micro Plastics. They have one son Neil. The electrician for the production is Peter Dunham, an employee of Beardmore and Co., whose home is in Guelph.

George Cleave of Esqueving was the unanimous choice of chairman for the North Halton District High School board at their inaugural meeting in Georgetown. W. J. Coon of Acton is vice chairman. Board members are N. H. Pickett, John Hall, Milton; W. J. Coon, G. A. Dills, Claude Cook, Acton; Dr. J. B. Milne, E. Forgrave, Fred Masterman, Georgetown; Ross Carbert, Nassagaweya; George Cleave, Arthur Beaumont, Esqueving.

George Day was elected president of the Rockwood United Church men's club.

A resident of Acton over 60 years, William Landsborough died Jan. 19.

Parents whose children have been attending the various classes at the Y.M.C.A. enjoyed a roast beef dinner as part of the program at Parents' Night. The choir of the Christian Reformed church also sang under the direction of Mr. Schenk. He was a well-known conductor in Holland and was in prison camps during the war in Germany and Holland.

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 31, 1924

Acton's reeve George Barber has been elected warden of Halton county for 1924. Walker Lodge remembered the venerable founder of the lodge, H. W. Bro. Hugh Walker of Guelph, the other day with a beautiful floral offering commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishing of the lodge. Walker Lodge is in flourishing condition and never had better prospects than it has today.

The affairs of Acton Jubilee celebration committee having been finally settled, the books and vouchers were placed in the hands of auditors. The result is surely gratifying. The Jubilee Celebration was a sane, enjoyable, three-day affair. There is a surplus of \$316.26.

Primary graduates at the Methodist church, who proved they could recite perfectly the names of the books of the Bible, the ten commandments, the beatitudes and the 23rd psalm were Kathleen Cook, Helen Ostrander, Velma Blair and Audrey McCombe.

The price of gasoline has jumped two cents per gallon. It won't matter much here, as the snow banks hold sway.

The machinery of the defunct Battery Company is being removed from Rockwood skating rink building. That was an unfortunate enterprise for numbers of good people of this vicinity.

Rockwood trustees, Messrs. Wm. Harris, Robert Thatcher and Fred Smith, waited upon the Agricultural Society and suggested offering Exhibition Park as a camping place for the accommodation of motor travellers on the new highway.

Daily and weekly newspapers throughout Canada are paying their compliments to postmaster Matthews upon his completion of 68 years in charge of the office here.

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, January 26, 1899

Acton mourns today the death of one of her most worthy sons in the person of Mr. W. P. Brown, who about 10 years ago moved to Toronto to take an important position with the T. Eaton Co. in connection with the mail order department. He was taken ill with pneumonia which developed into spinal meningitis. Early in the course of the disease his brain was affected. His home life was hallowed and pathetic. To few families indeed does such an amount of illness and suffering come. The eldest daughter Mabel is an invalid and a few years ago lovely Jessie faded away. He was the son of the late Alexander Brown, a pioneer of Acton, who settled on the farm now owned by N. F. Lindsay. His parents were of sturdy U. E. Loyalist stock. Mr. Brown has left two mainly sons, Allie, engaged in his course as druggist, and Willie at school.

The Ladies' Aid held a social with the proceeds devoted to the Methodist church electric light fund.

The Board of Health met Monday and the municipality was held to be in a satisfactory sanitary condition.

Walker Lodge was visited by D.D.G.M. Freed and the brethren gathered at Clark's Hotel where an oyster supper was partaken of.

The gripe still holds sway and many citizens are under its ban.

To cure a cold in one day take Laxative Bromo Quinine tablets. All druggists refund the money if fails to cure. 25 cents.

Milburn's Sterling Headache powders cure the worst headache in from five to twenty minutes and leave no bad after-effects. One powder 5 cents.

Buckley's Arnica Salve will kill the pain and promptly heal horrible burns, scalds, cuts or bruises.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS
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