

Counties could have done region's job but wouldn't

There would never have been any need for regional government if the participants in the old county system had done a better job according to G. Douglas Pritchard, Halton Hills' clerk-administrator.

"Under existing legislation the counties could have done everything the Province is making the regions do today," Pritchard says.

He explained the county members could have co-operated in some kind of regional type system but wouldn't and so forced Queen's Park to come up with regional government. Pritchard added the big problem was there were a lot of small, lower tier, governments in each county that just wouldn't concern themselves with what their neighbors were doing.

Pritchard is in a unique position to assess regional government since Halton is the second region where he has worked.

After spending 11 years working for the Township of Etobicoke he went to the Township of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The new town, a part of the new region of Niagara, was a merger of the former Town of Niagara and the Township of Niagara.

In October 1971 he came to Georgetown as the clerk-administrator and then assumed the same position with Halton Hills at the start of 1974.

Pritchard thinks Halton is doing better after one year than Niagara was after its first year.

"Halton is more successful but that's because it had better legislation to work with than Niagara did. Between 1970 and 1974 the Province ironed out some of the problems and it has helped Halton a lot," he said.

He pointed out one problem they had in Niagara that doesn't exist in Halton was split jurisdiction over water and sewers. Pritchard explained that in Niagara the upper tier took care of the trunk lines while the lower tier was in charge of the distribution lines. In Halton the region has control of water and sewers.

"Another problem at Niagara was that you didn't have to sit on area council to be at the region. In Halton you run for area council or run for area council and region-



DOUGLAS PRITCHARD
Clerk-administrator, Halton Hills

and there were a lot of people that were only on regional council. The Mayor automatically sat on both councils but it was pretty hard for him to do a good liaison job. There was a communication breakdown between the two tiers of local government there," Pritchard remarked. He said that while he was surprised

when regionalism followed him to Halton if "still seemed a logical and proper evolution of county government the same as it was logical in Niagara."

"I don't want to sound like a public relations man for the Province but local government was too complex and vast before the regions came along. In the long run it will make local government more meaningful and responsive to people's needs," Pritchard noted.

Commenting on a proposal that some people advocated which would have put Halton and Peel together he pointed out that in Niagara it was a merger of two counties, Lincoln and Welland and they reduced 26 local governments to 12.

"It could have been done here, too, and might still be done someday. A combined Peel and Halton regions would still only have seven municipalities," he pointed out.

Some of the immediate benefits of regional government that Pritchard sees are: bringing cultural aspects of urban life to the rural areas, regions can issue debentures, many elected officials recognize needs of both rural and urban areas, the end of problems of annexation for urban.

"One of the biggest advantages of regional government is it forces cities to participate in the entire local government climate instead of them just looking after themselves," he added.

Pritchard doesn't view the region as another form of government but simply as "the upper tier of local government."

"Local government is the level of government that is most intimate and face to face for the people. The things that are done at the local level affect your day to day life a lot more than anything the federal or provincial governments do. It is important that local government works. Local government in Halton is a combination of regional and area government," he explained.

He says the more people learn about regional government the more they will appreciate it. Pritchard said he thinks many people overlook the long range goals which are being realized by regional government and everyone must remember that regional government is a learning

experience for everyone at both levels and it takes time to get used to it.

Pritchard says the biggest advantage to local government is the accessibility and accountability of the politicians to the people.

"Bill 151 isn't perfect and it will have to be changed somewhat, but it does centralize things and so facilitates accessibility and accountability. By wiping out ad hoc groups it makes it clear to everyone that they must go to the councillors to get things done. I think this is good," Pritchard said.

Another reason he sees for Halton's success as compared to Niagara is that by having people at the region who sit at the area council it eliminates a lot of parochialism. "You have them wearing two hats at once so they see the problems at both tiers and work towards common solutions," Pritchard stated.

"The thing is regional government in Halton makes both levels serve the man on the street. Bigness doesn't mean it's better but in this case it means things are better organized and operate more smoothly," he summarized.

Pritchard says he thinks the fear some people have of regional government forcing them to lose their identity is mostly imagined.

"It's more imagined than real. Many lose some identity with their home town just because they live there and work elsewhere. The identity is already fragmented. People who live in Acton or Georgetown will always identify with their town and the two towns won't disappear just because of Halton Hills. You still have your own postal designation, advisory and rate-payer groups, and your own councillors. You just can't lose the town's identity because of regional government," he claimed.

Pritchard doesn't foresee a time when the lower tier will disappear. He thinks it would be "foolhardy" to leave everything to the region.

"You would need so much staff if there was only the region nothing would get done. You need area government to take care of all the day to day problems that crop up," he explained.



DOWN BUT NOT OUT is Dianne Chadder of Eden Mills as sister Renee tries to keep her head off the ground. It was a skating accident for fun at the local ball park when the grades five to eight boys and girls enjoyed ice surface at the nearby rink. Irene De Groof and Rachelle Tarrant are also seen having a romp. The Eramosa recreation committee is responsible for the ice preparation.

Square dancing first-time

The Eden Mills community centre was hopping last Friday night when the first session of square dancing instruction was held under the auspices of the Eramosa recreation committee.

Stu Reed of Acton is the able instructor on the course. He and his wife, Nan, kept 34 dancers on their toes for the entire evening from 8 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. teaching beginning steps and various sets.

Several couples attending the classes came from outside the vicinity of Eramosa, with some coming from Acton and Guelph. Enthusiasm of the group and abilities of the instructors took the dancers to the point

where, if new members are interested in joining the Friday classes they should register soon, "because they'll never catch up to the rest of us," said energetic participants.

Square dancing classes as sponsored by the Eramosa recreation committee have never been tried before.

Registration for classes was held at Rockwood Centennial public school on Jan. 8. Students are allowed to join classes until specified

numbers for each is complete. To date, upholstery and yoga have sufficient students. There are openings for knitting and crochet and pottery held Wednesday evenings at the Rockwood school. The macramé and tie dye class at the Eden Mills centre on Thursday also has openings along with square dancing on Friday evenings.

The contact for information on courses is Sally Hamilton of Eden Mills, co-chairman of the planning committee.

Eden Mills Guide and Brownie news

By Diana Wallace
2nd Brownie Pack

On Monday, Jan. 20 the meeting started off with a geography game. Brownies had their geography abilities put to the test.

Sixes were re-arranged and new leaders, Lisa Webb, Elizabeth Moore and Iona Chesworth were appointed. Audrey Van-Driel, the senior Brownie, is now leader of the pack. She was chosen for her reliability and real brownie enthusiasm.

The needlework badge has been started for the golden hand brownies. They valiantly struggled with embroidery stitches such as cross stitch, blanket stitch and the lazy daisy.

Afterwards Elizabeth Moore told about the brownies of Mexico. She showed her collection of beautiful Mexican handicrafts.

Five brownies from the 1st and 2nd Brownie packs, Margarita Bell, Michelle Wallace, Anne Masson, Ann Schwartzburg and Kathy Van Rhijn flew up to Guides on Tuesday, Jan. 14. Nearly all brownies and guides, mothers of the girls involved and leaders were there, including Mrs. Balmer, Mrs. Petrie and Mrs. Stevenson.

Enrolment
Captain Ann Chesworth asked Mrs. Balmer to enrol four new guides. They were Janet Diamond, Pam Olinoski, Della Hennessy and Mrs. Remy Heard. Each lit a candle as part of the enrolment, adding a touch of magic to the ceremony.

Refreshments were served by Mrs. Donna Clifford and Mrs. Dot Chadder, after which games were played. The guides entertained with a skit which they had put on at camp much to the delight of two little boys who sat at the back of the audience with their mothers. The brownie packs contributed an action song to the program.

Badges
Last Tuesday we started on our emergency helper badge. We spoke about household fires, especially kitchen accidents and escaping from a house. This is the beginning and, as weeks go along, we intend to visit the fire hall and have a visit from a St. John Ambulance teacher who will talk on first aid.

The Guide Company now has 31 members which makes us very proud. Badges were given out to the following girls, cook and outdoor adventure, Marie Parker, Joyce Parker, Corina Pries, Marjorie Ramsey, Sandi Gilbertson, Trudy Clifford, Renee Tarrant, Janet Tolton, Jeanette Wuebbolt and Delia Chesworth; creative craft, Trudy Clifford; cook, Sylvia Schelkle; skier, Sharon Vos; flower arranger, Janet Diamond; baker, Tammy Clifford. Camping emblems, given when four camping badges have been accumulated were given to Marie Parker, Corina Pries and Joyce Parker.

On Saturday, Jan. 25, leaders Mrs. Ann Chesworth and Mrs. Diana Wallace, together with five guides, Marie Parker, Trudy Clifford, Corine Pries, Janet Tolton and Sandi Gilbertson attended an all-day training session in Guelph.

They enjoyed learning new songs, dances, music and drama.

Collaborators on a poster advertising Limehouse library, Jane Trueman and Lori Clements accept their prizes from librarian Betsy Cornwell.



New fund dimension added

The Ability Fund of the new March of Dimes takes another step forward. As marching mothers in Rockwood conduct their door-to-door canvass for funds in the village this year, they will also be taking a census of the disabled.

"If you rarely see a handicapped person in your community, it doesn't mean they don't exist," says Doug Harley, assistant executive director of the March of Dimes. "It probably indicates that the transportation facilities are inadequate and expensive, that architectural barriers prevent access to public buildings and shopping centres, or that the han-

dicapped have no relatives or friends to help them get around."

Equal opportunities

One of the major aims of the new March of Dimes is to provide equal opportunity for disabled adults and to make it possible for them to live in a community with dignity. Mr. Harley advocated more volunteer involvement and additional dollar support in order to accomplish the feat. He points out that, once the funds are raised, "We can then direct ourselves to better serving the handicapped."

He feels that experience has taught that a combined fund-raising and public

awareness campaign should bring attention to many handicapped persons in need of help, as well as providing an insight into the most pressing needs facing them.

Rockwood chairman In Rockwood, Julie Brace will be the chairman sparking the campaign. Julie expects to see her teams go into motion in three weeks' time.

She hopes that people in the community who know of disabled people needing assistance will contact her as the funds raised in each community will be used to provide direct help for those in the vicinity. Assistance includes such things as the provision of wheelchairs, prosthetic appliances and other aids to daily living, and in establishing recreational and social programs through local committees made up of both disabled and non-disabled members.

"When the volunteer canvasser calls on you," says Mrs. Brace, "please give generously to help those adults who are physically disabled in our community." At the same time, tell her about any handicapped people you may know.

Organizers of the campaign feel that, by such contributions, everyone will be helping those with such disabilities realize their fullest potential.

Environment important

Over 170 area farmers attending the Wellington-Waterloo swine conference at the Waterloo Motor Inn on Jan. 17 learned interesting facts on swine production.

Pork producers were told that the environment of swine is very important. Dr. Roger

Haeker, a staff member of the Animal and Poultry Science Department of the University of Guelph, proved his point by using data of research that he conducted at the university.

He is researching the effects that light and temperature have on breeding stock and showed that heat stress has been found to decrease fertility drastically. Total darkness has been shown to reduce the length of time that a gilt or sow will remain receptive to breeding.

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