

CRAIG JOHNSON WAS shivering, just a little bit, after passing his beginner's test at the Acton First Cub Pack's one day examination in the Lions' Club Pool Monday. Cubs were tested for beginners and junior skills. Once Cubs pass the junior level, they are awarded a badge.

## Report from Queen's Park

by JULIAN REED  
M.P.P. (Barton-Burlington)

The opening session of the 30th Ontario Legislature is now over, and the Members are returning to their home ridings for the recess. It is anticipated that the Legislature will reconvene at the end of February or beginning of March in 1976. During the session, some very important legislation has been passed, much of which has been amended considerably by the strong combined opposition.

Important bills have established rent control for the province, regulated Sunday retail shopping and made Ontario the first jurisdiction in North America to make wearing of auto seat belts compulsory beginning January 1. There has also been considerable discussion of the federal anti-inflation guidelines, and on the province's own program of spending restraint.

It is expected that the new Provincial Budget will be introduced soon after the Legislature meets again in the Spring, and the Government has in fact already given some advance information on the direction this Budget will take.

The Minister of Community and Social Services has announced that Ontario's Children's Aid Societies, municipal social services departments, and homes for the aged will be allowed only

a 5.5 per cent budget increase next year, and these increases will be based on this year's approved budget estimates, not the actual budgets. The Ministry does not intend to approve any new capital construction or debt retirement, nor will there be funds for new or special programmes unless agency costs are reduced, except for programmes for the mentally retarded.

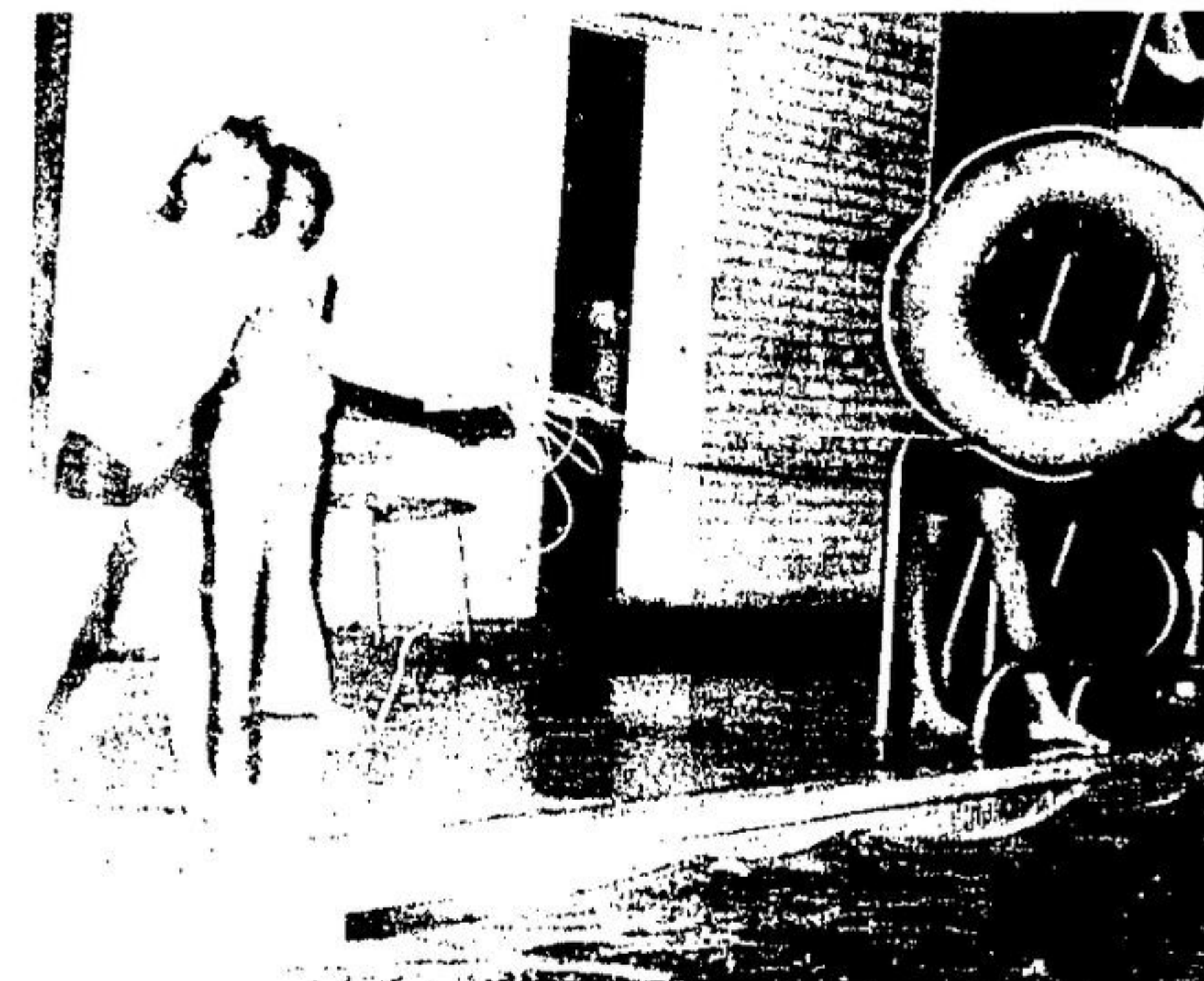
Ceilings on school spending have been abolished by the Ontario Government, according to an announcement made last week. This means that local school boards are free to increase their total operating budgets by a greater percentage through increases in local property taxes. The province is increasing grants to local school boards by 9.66 per cent and the established grant ceilings for elementary students will be increased by about 16.6 per cent.

The Labor Minister has announced an increase in the minimum wage in Ontario, which will rise to \$2.65 an hour in general and \$2.90 in the construction industry beginning March 15. The current minimum is \$2.40 an hour in general and \$2.65 in the construction industry.

Apparently the major reason for the increase is to protect minimum wage earners against increases in living costs. The new rate will give these workers greater



AFTER PASSING THEIR junior and beginner swim tests cubs of Acton's First Pack get a free swim Monday. Cub officials Bob McKee and Frank and Hilda Goulding tally the score sheets poolside. Approximately 30 cubs took part in this year's one day test for the group Monday. Awards for skills will be given out during a regular cub meeting.



NINE-YEAR-OLD CUB Stephen Dodson demonstrates the skill which earned him a special award during the one day Cub swim tests at the pool Monday. Cub standards cover only beginner and junior levels, but Stephen reached the intermediate scale of the Scouts.

## Investigations by Guelph detachment

Dec. 14 to Dec. 21, 98 occurrences of a general nature were reported and investigated by Guelph O.P.P.

There were four break and enters, five thefts, and seven violations of the Liquor laws, including three impaired drivers.

A break and enter at Martin Sand and Gravel in Puslinch Twp. on December 5 resulted in a theft of tools and welding equipment. The stolen property was taken from a tool shed and owned by Seegmiller Construction of Kitchener. Stolen property was valued at \$400.

A break and enter at a cottage at Belwood Lake on December 15 resulted in a theft of a portable T.V., a lamp and dishes. Total value of stolen property was \$215.

Ontario will be \$38.90 a month for single (up \$2.85) and \$88.64 a month for a couple (up \$6.28).

There has been considerable criticism of the Government's intended cut of \$50 million in the province's hospital budget. The president of the Ontario Hospital Association has stated that literally thousands of hospital workers, most of them nurses, will be laid off during the next three months as a result. Meanwhile the Minister of Health has indicated that some 3,000 beds will be eliminated, and some 5,000 jobs, because of the announced budget reductions. He said he did not actually know where the reductions in staff and beds will be made, but ministry officials have general guidelines to follow.

The Provincial Treasurer has announced the Ontario guaranteed annual income will rise January 1 to \$265 a month for single pensioners and \$530 a month for couples. Most of that money will come from the federal government under increases which in January will bring the maximum Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement payments to \$226.12 for a single person and \$431.36 for a couple. The maximum payment from



CUB STEPHEN Dodson rates as intermediate swimmer in Scouts' books.

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Management and Staff of A-B SUPERMARKET wish everyone a Happy and Prosperous NEW YEAR

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