

Free Press Editorial Page

Gloom, doom and money

Acton people have been hit hard the past couple of weeks with announcements of increase after increase in costs and taxes. School board, hydro, region and local council all promise we'll be paying more for the services they provide for us.

All these things were considered necessary—the new high school, road repair, sewage plant extension, new well, tennis court and so on. There are increases in pay and expenses of all sorts.

School board increases are big and the sum must be paid, yet most of it goes for salaries. Regional costs for sewer and water must be paid. The Hydro commission has merely imposed rates set by Ontario Hydro, and there's no surplus here.

Local council, faced with all these increases already, hope to keep their share of the jump to seven or eight per cent.

Councillors are concerned about the rising costs, just as we are. As

councillor Dudy explains, "We see the need and demand for certain things. We have to face up to it and approve or disapprove. We can't put off everything."

Still the increases add up to a whopping sum. We have to trust our elected members and hope they are doing all they can to avoid unnecessary expense.

It is apparent what Acton considers an adequate sewage disposal plant is not what the region officials consider good enough. We know how the costs of installing laterals have jumped hugely since regional government.

For ordinary taxpayers, it's difficult to pinpoint how costs can be cut. Comparing costs of regional government and former ways is one thing the Actonians for Action committee is undertaking.

With an unusually bad winter and cold spring, cost of food and growing unemployment, the tax scene adds another dollop of gloom to the economic scene around here.

Vandals must pay

It's worrying to read about the instances of vandalism at the swimming pool. Ever since the pool was opened, there have been problems with young people wrecking walls, ceiling and equipment in the washrooms and sauna.

No doubt there are just a few people responsible for the sickening list of damage. Many, many people enjoy the pool and act responsibly.

Vandalism is apparently becoming more common. In Georgetown, for instance, cars are frequently damaged by stones, tires slashed, signs defaced and public property destroyed.

Some of these things happen

here, too. Our population is growing. There are more young people who do not have the feeling they are surrounded by a community which knows who they are.

Father V. J. Morgan's Canadian flag was taken from its flagpole just a few days after his death. The park, arena, and main streets have felt the touch of fools.

Things could become worse here. The people responsible must be apprehended and they must pay for the damage they have caused.

Parents sometimes know what their own children have done, they must deal firmly with them.

And people must inform the police of any suspicions. The police cannot be expected to solve the problem themselves.

Postal horror story

The Canadian Community Newspapers Association has a new contest going, called Postal Horror Story Contest. The association invites its member papers (that's us) to "tell Canada your personal saga, about how the mails beat you every week—but not to the subscriber's door. Give us the quotes, the dates. Somebody up there really thinks the situation is improving."

The horror stories will be published in the C.C.N.A.'s

publication and then compiled to be sent to the Postmaster General in Ottawa.

Can any Free Press subscribers contribute to the horror story anthology?

(A personal first class letter, mailed March 21 from the Free Press to west Toronto, arrived April 4—a full two weeks en route).

However, it's newspaper delivery stories we want now.

The prize in the contest? Well, it's a stamped, self-addressed envelope!

Potato chips go metric

Potato chips in local stores are in metric sized bags now.

More and more products went metric last year—for instance ice cream, pet foods, sugar and snack foods. Milk packaging was converted in Quebec and British Columbia. The last of the changes

in weather forecasting was completed and planning for metric conversion in the beverage industry was finished.

Next year we get changes in clothing, sports and tobacco industries.



Giant-size muffets



Sugar and Spice

by bill smiley

Don't expect the usual collection of optimistic opinion, cheery chat, and happy household hints normally found in this space. I'm feeling really mean this week.

If St. Francis of Assisi himself showed up, I'd probably snarl, "Stop feeding those bloody birds! All they'll do is dump all over us."

My normally sunny nature is soured by a sore back. It started out as just a little pain, like a breadknife going into my kidneys. You know. The sort of thing that makes you emit a startled "aah!" when you straighten up after brushing your teeth and spitting in the sink. Lots of guys have that. It goes with the territory.

Then my two grandboys came for the weekend. They weigh about 50 pounds between them. There's a certain amount of jealousy. Nobody can play the same tunes on their fat necks that Granddad can, by simultaneously sucking and blowing. As a result, no sooner do I get one kid grinning and giggling, and plunk him down, than the other is standing there, arms extended.

As any grandfather knows (grannies are smarter and threaten to wash their faces and the kids run), it is literally impossible to ignore the upstretched arms of a tyke.

Consequently I reckon, roughly, that I lifted about a ton and a half of grandbabies off the floor over the weekend. Another 40-odd times I leaned far over and separated them when mayhem seemed imminent.

As any old codger with a slipped disc or crumbling vertebrae can tell you, this is known as the poor way, one of the worst, of curing a sore back. The other poor way, the absolutely worst, I won't tell you, as this is a family journal.

To top it all, I have a week's vacation coming up. I have a fairly grim certainty that I'm going to be spending it, and a couple after it, flat on my back.

Put you to bed. That's what doctors do when you go to them with a sore back. First they poke you hard a few times in the sore back and ask, "Does that hurt?" Of course it does. Then they feel your belly,

which is not the greatest erotic experience in the world. They tell you take a deep breath. They tell you to cough. They seem fairly sure you have a hernia. In the back?

"Can you move your legs?" they ask, ignoring the fact that you walked from your car into their outer waiting room, and from there into the torture chamber.

"Does it hurt to sit for long periods?" Damn right. You've just sat in the waiting room for an hour and a half after your appointment time, and almost fainted when you stood up.

Then, non-plussed as usual, they take off their glasses and nod solemnly. "Yes, it seems sore all right. We'd better get a picture of that." Translation: I haven't a clue, but maybe it will go away by the time you get it X-rayed and the prints get back to me. About 48 hours.

They give you some painkillers "in case you have some pain." At this point tears as big as tea-bags are spurring out of your eyes from pain. You emit something between a groan and a squeal of pure pain as you clamber down from that jeezily high bed in their office.

Pain? Migawd, my wife came up this morning to see why I hadn't come down for breakfast. I was lying on the bedroom floor, weeping. I'd just tried to put my socks on.

Twice today, a police car pulled up as I was trying to get out of my car. They'd seen the door open and one leg emerge. Two minutes later another leg hove into view. After three more minutes, a crouched, swaying torso followed. They thought I was plastered. I was merely trying to straighten up without screaming.

All right? We know where we stand? Don't expect any sweetness and light in this column.

Now. Let's deal with that young rip, Margaret Trudeau. My wife is on her side.

Newspaper columnists have been generally kind. I asked a young person the other day for an opinion on Margaret's shenanigans, and got the predictable answer, "Sheez oney dooner own thing. Snuthin' wrongth that!"

I heartily disagree. There's such a thing as responsibility, though the word makes people cringe these days. If you can't stand the heat, fine, get out of the kitchen. But don't run into the public square and whine that you're just trying to find yourself as a person. That's juvenile. I have never been a fan of her husband, but I admired his domestic loyalty on this undoubtedly painful occasion.

Speaking of the Trudeau's, I'd love to disinter a column I wrote a few months back, when the Liberals were on the ropes, and the political vultures were swarming to pick the bones of the P.M. But that would be saying "I told you so," one of the nastiest sentences in the English language. A prophet is indeed without honor in his own country. Sometimes in his own kitchen.

Good for Harry Boyle, head of CRTC. He has made it clear that our national broadcasting company, whatever its faults, is not merely a tool for keeping the Liberal government in office, contrary to the opinions of some Cabinet ministers.

About sweet teeth. I've never heard such absolute crap as the banning of saccharine because some mice got some cancer when they were stuffed with the stuff. Far better, I presume, to die of cigarettes or booze than to expire from drinking two or three hundred cans of saccharine-sweetened drinks a day. I guess diabetics and fatties don't swing much weight at the polls.

There. I've vented some of my venom, and my back feels better already. Instead of feeling like Prometheus, with that vulture tearing out his liver, I merely have the more moderate pain of a dog excreting razor blades.

The Free Press Back Issues

10 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press April 5, 1967 "Hymn to Canada", the song written by Herman Freuler especially for Canada's centennial year, has been published in sheet music form by the Toronto branch of BMI Canada Limited, a large music firm. It is now on sale, at 60 cents a copy at Watson's Music Store. The song had its premiere at the Robert Little school operetta when Diane Frank and Bob Krul sang it to a delighted audience.

Acton public school board will lose eight teachers—three from M. Z. Bennett school and five from Robert Little school this year, it was disclosed at the board's regular meeting Tuesday night. Miss K. Heller, Mrs. J. Anderson and Miss D. Lerch have resigned from the M. Z. Bennett staff. They teach kindergarten, grades one and four respectively.

Mary Beth Elliott, kindergarten; Verity McIntosh grades one and two; Carol Pugsley, grades three and four; Mrs. Marlene Titon, art; and Marian Gallagher have resigned from the Robert Little school staff.

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, April 4, 1957 Firemen responded to a chimney fire this morning at 11 a.m. at the home of Herbert Collett, R.H. 2, on No. 7 highway east of Acton.

It was reported by Principal McKenzie of Acton Public School this week that the tape recorder taken from the public school in a recent break-in, has been recovered from a pawn shop in Toronto. The article is being held by police and hope is raised that more stolen articles may be recovered.

William Middleton, secretary of the Acton public school board, released the names of the new teachers engaged for next fall. Betty Mae Fosbury, who as a student teacher taught at the school here for one week, has been engaged. Other teachers are: Ora Carson, presently teaching at Norval; Keith Black, student teacher graduate; Alice Sledge of Toronto, and William Orr, presently teaching at Milverton.

100 years ago

Taken from the issue of The Free Press of Thursday, April 2, 1877

An inquest was held Friday evening on the body of Wm. Peter, labourer, who died while unloading wood for Toronto, Gray and Bruce Railway. A verdict was brought in to the effect that he died from trying to work while suffering from lack of proper nutrition.

Angus McDonald celebrated his 100th birthday at his son-in-law's house, near Acton.

Mr. Laidlaw and several of the directors of the Credit Valley Railroad had an interview with the Finance Committee of Toronto, relative to the additional bonus required by the line. The bill before the legislature having passed third reading, a by-law granting an additional bonus will shortly be submitted to the ratepayers.

Stratford Town Council has agreed to lower the license fee for hotels, etc. from \$200 (as fixed last year) to \$125.

A curling match was played at Brampton on Saturday between Brampton and Milton, three rinks each, resulting in favour of the home team by 27 shots. This is their first victory.

Notes 'n stuff

If you are one of the people wondering about the sale of light bulbs over the phone, don't miss the Letter to the Editor on the subject in today's paper. A couple of people had asked us what we knew about the scheme; now we are glad to have a reply for them.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Challenge to all of us

Dear Editor: I fail to see how a letter in a local paper would help to improve the dilemma which faces this fine land that we should all be proud of. We should be thankful to God for having placed it in our care to direct according to his blessed will. To me all that has been said on the subject of abortion has proved nothing. It is a time that I believe calls for the greatest effort of all combined and a time for sincere church unity in all who want to forget the past and become good neighbors in Christ through his grace in the heart and mind.

This is the challenge to all of us and one that will prove our desire for well-being to improve our world and the sooner we face up to it the better as this calls for action. I could write a book on the subject but what would be the use if it had no meaning. This is what has reduced this world of ours as well as Canada to its present state. It did not get there on its own and all of us know that there will be a lot to answer for and more if we stand idly by. So to conclude let the salvation of all be our choice while there is hope left. Yours sincerely George Graham.

Sale of light bulbs

Open Letter to The Editor. Dear Sirs: Recently the Ontario Handicapped Company has been active selling light bulbs to area residents. This company is clearly a private enterprise and not a charity. The North Halton Association for the

Mentally Retarded, which operates A.R.C. Industries, Tinker Bell Nursery, Countryside Residence, and the Halton Development Centre, does not benefit from the sale of these light bulbs.

Yours truly, Eric J. Taylor Executive Director.

When someone climbs the ladder of success, I hope they remember the ones who held it for them.

THE ACTON FREE PRESS
PHONE 853-2010
Business and Editorial Office

1976 award winner

Founded in 1875 and published every Wednesday at 50 Wilrow St., Acton, Ontario. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation, the Canadian Community Newspapers Association and the Ontario Weekly Newspapers Association. Advertising rates on request. Subscriptions payable in advance, \$7.50 in Canada, \$25.00 in all countries other than Canada; single copies 15 cents; carrier delivery in Acton 15 cents per week. Second class mail Registration Number 0516. Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. In the event of a typographical error advertising goods or services at a wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell, and may be withdrawn at any time. Dine Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd. David R. Dine, Publisher

Key File Editor
B. Cook Advertising Manager
Copyright 1977



LINED UP FOR their photograph are the boys and girls of room 6, Acton public school, on May 12, 1925. With them is their teacher Miss Daisy Folster. Some of the pupils are not known; can anyone identify them? Front row left to right Jim Noble, Bill Waterhouse, Sandy Malcolm, Leonard Watson, Bert Smethurst, Mel Locker, — Precious, Aubrey Gervais, Bert Gibbons; second row Carney Burnes, John Mellon, Allan Marshall, Marjorie Garden, Oral

Chalmers, Jack Reed, Donald Mann, — Lambert, Henry Cripps; third row Marjorie Hall, Abbie Price, Helen Ostrander, Lillian Perry, Clarice Norton, — Cripps, Doris MacDonald, Bert Hinton, —, —, Arthur Gamble; back row Isobel Smith, Lorna McCoomb, Lucy Goldham, — Cripps, Eleanor Clifford, — Waterhouse, John Donaldson, Gordon Cooper, Newton Hurst, Bill Wilson and teacher Miss Folster. The picture belongs to Bert Hinton.