

# New chairman grasps helm with confidence

By Rod Lamb  
Intuition based on experience is the quality Halton Regional Chairman Jack Raftis uses to find which way the political wind is blowing. Raftis, who has been called a fox by Mayor Don Gordon for his uncanny ability to push the things which can be approved and to drop those which generate opposition, said he always listens when councillors are debating.

"Is he speaking with conviction or is he speaking for political purposes?" Raftis said a person, who speaks with conviction will speak with emotion, will be well organized in the presentation of the facts, will probably have spoken to him and the staff beforehand and will be committed to what he is saying.

A person who doesn't exhibit these characteristics is usually speaking for political purposes and can be defeated.

Raftis said his training as an engineer has enabled him to cut through the rhetoric to the facts.

"That's what an engineer is trained to do," he said, "to operate on the facts."

Raftis has an ability to shift the wheat from the chaff. At the first meeting of the Halton Health and Social Services Committee Tuesday, Dec. 19, he cut through the jargon and reams of information presented by a group of consultants, to the true costs of what they were saying.

The ability was earned through 25 years in the business world, 15 in the arena of municipal politics.

Starting with Canadian General Electric after he graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in business and engineering in 1953, Raftis has been with the company ever since, rising to be manager of the northern Ontario division and then the western division, the

position he continues to hold. His philosophy of leadership is based on allowing people to follow their own heads in that they achieve on their own merits.

If they don't, or are unwilling, Mr. Raftis said the only solution is "to scare the hell out of them."

Perhaps no other person in Halton is as well qualified to be its chairman.

As he himself said, "I have served my apprenticeship."

Raftis was chairman of the committee on regional government when it was proposed for Sudbury.

Deputy-mayor of the city at that time (1972), he investigated other municipalities which had been incorporated as regional municipalities.

When he moved to Burlington and was elected to office, he ran as regional councillor because of his experience.

His engineering abilities were recognized when he was

appointed chairman of the public works committee, a position he held for five years.

During that time (1974-78) the region built and let contracts for several major water and sewage projects.

Now that he has the reigns of power in his hands, Raftis said he is going to make the development of industrial and commercial assessment his main priority.

"People want jobs," he said.

"Where are they going to find them if someone doesn't go out and bring them here?"

The chairman said he will spend most of next year with Bill Marshall, Halton's development officer.

Created by former chairman Ric Morrow, the department is the key to the future in the eyes of Raftis.

A strong regional person, Raftis said it is important for people and the communities they live in, to retain their identity.

"Everything should be filtered through the local representatives," he said.

Thus, it is important to have the four mayors on the administration committee because it is through them regional government will be administered.

Raftis is an English name. Coming from a farming family which homesteaded at Arthur, north of Guelph, Halton's new chairman is tough.

He said the hardest thing is to shoulder the blame in order to allow another councillor to walk away with pride.

Although it is difficult, the responsibility doesn't bother Raftis.

"When I walk out of the meeting," he said, "I forget it."

"I don't have any problem sleeping."

## Golden Agers meet for Christmas

The Christmas meeting of Acton Golden Age Club was celebrated on Wednesday Dec. 20 with a pot luck supper.

After supper the tables were cleared, followed by a program consisting of carol singing conducted by Mrs. Merklely accompanied by Mrs. Mann and readings by some of the members. Acton Citizens' Band also entertained by singing and playing carols. A choir of the group's own ladies sang "The Battle of the Aging".

Mr. Fuller had several violin numbers, also Mr. Sprowl and Mr. Davidson on the mouth organ. The meeting closed by singing Auld Lang Syne and the "More We Get Together".



Halton Chairman Jack Raftis stands only five-foot-eight but his new position puts him head and shoulders above the rest of regional council when it comes to leadership. Development of industry and commercial assessment within the region will be his main objectives.

## If it flies, Morrow gets it

Let the prize fit the person could be the motto of Halton Hills Councillor Mike Armstrong.

Armstrong bid farewell to retiring chairman Ric Morrow at Halton's inaugural ceremony Wednesday, Dec. 13.

In recognition of the fact Morrow is an Air Canada pilot, Armstrong gave him a plastic model of a jet fighter.

The aircraft was one of the presents Morrow received from Armstrong who said goodbye to him on behalf of the region.

Armstrong succeeded Morrow when the latter was elected chairman two years ago.

The two live in Georgetown.

The plane was in keeping with Morrow's farewell speech.

He compared the regional experiment in Halton to an aircraft taking off.

Once in the air, some of the passengers wanted to get off and go back to "the days of horse and buggy."

However, the majority pressed on. Although they encountered thunderstorms, the efforts of crew and passengers succeeded in securing a safe passage.

With five years of regional government behind them, Morrow said the plane has sunnier skies ahead.

Morrow was given a standing ovation by the multitude of people who attended.

He was also given a

package of golf balls. Now that he no longer has to commit his time to being chairman, he has more time for leisure.

Having decided to step down, he won't have to worry about whether the exterior of the region's new headquarters will rust.

The quip was made by someone familiar with the building.

One of council's accomplishments during Morrow's term was the decision to build the new regional building.

It and the decision to select Site F for landfill as well as passing the official plan, forming a business development office and approving uniform water rates rank as Morrow's other accomplishments.

## \$2,100 in damages from traffic accidents

More than \$2,100 in property damage resulted from motor vehicle accidents the week before Christmas.

Most of the damage on one vehicle—\$800—is on the car driven by Lisa McDonald, 178 Longfield Rd., estimate Halton Regional Police.

Police estimate damage to the other car in the mishap to be \$200. It was driven by Jean

Hammond, 125 Longfield Rd. The accident occurred Friday afternoon.

Police say one car was going east on Meadvale Road, while the other was westbound. One of the vehicles crossed into the oncoming lane.

The least property damage is \$25 on a pick-up truck with Maureen Ingles, 235 Mason Blvd. That estimate was also

the police estimate. The Ingles vehicle and one driven by Jean Jackson, 178 Tyler Ave., were both eastbound on Mill Street East Friday morning when one turned left to go north on Wallace Avenue, and the other struck from the rear. Police put the amount of damage on the Jackson auto at \$500.

Also Friday afternoon, two westbound autos on Mill Street were involved in a \$600 collision. Damage to the auto driven by Kenneth Kammings, 189 Jeffrey Ave., is estimated by police to be \$400. About half that amount of damage is placed by police on the auto driven by Audrey Bonnell, R. R. 2 Rockwood.

## 87% Sheridan grads employed

Eighty-seven per cent of the students who graduated from Sheridan College in June, 1978, are employed, according to a report presented by senior vice-president Don Shields to the college's board of governors.

The report shows a four per cent increase in placement over last year. A survey of 1,343 full-time post-secondary graduates shows 89% are employed and 31% are continuing their education. The remainder are looking for work.

Shields told the board employment is good and is evenly distributed through all of Sheridan's schools and divisions.

He also noted that there are more students employed in part-time jobs than in previous years. "By their own choice students are working part-time rather than full-time."

Graduates of the School of Nursing are in better situations than in past years he said. Currently there are seven graduates working temporarily in Vancouver and many nursing graduates are working part-time in Ontario rather than moving to the United States where Canadian nurses are in demand.

The survey also shows the median salary for graduates is \$11,990.

The placement report, compiled annually, is the result of four months' work by placement services officer Linda Spray. The report will be reproduced and distributed to area schools.

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**Laundromat glass broken**

The front window at the laundromat on Main Street was smashed by vandals early yesterday morning. The window, valued at about \$150, was broken, between 6 a.m. and 7:30 a.m.

Sometime just prior to Christmas a thief got away with a battery from a parked auto on Churchill Road.

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