PROFILES

with JENNIFER BARH

At this time of year, Santa Claus is up to his neck in work. Yet he took the time recently to talk to me because he says he feels so at home in Acton and area.

After 200 years on the job he's still as enthusiastic as ever. He certainly doesn't plan on retiring, he says, even though the workload is much heavier than when he first started.

Fortunately, greater business and travel efficiency have streamlined the job making up for the vast increases in population, though he still has to rely on time differences in order to make his famous world trip in one night, December 24.

"We have computers at the North Pole, now, you know," Santa explains, "although the elves do get the things mixed up sometimes."

Gift lists, requests, and children's reports are all computorized cross-filed, and speedy referenced. However, even with all this efficiency, mistakes can and do happen.

"The elves are only human, after all." Santa explains.

Rudolph starstruck

Transportation has improved. Santa uses helicopters for fast publicity trips and has been known to buckle himself into the first class seat of a jet plane. But when it comes down to that crucial world trip on Christmas Eve, it's the reindeer, Santa counts on. He says he's very glad he's running on reindeer power this year with the price of gas skyrocketing.

The reindeer, the team of eight harnessed to the Santa sleigh, are currently in training for their gruelling flight, says Santa. He describes them all as docile and well-behaved. All, that is, except Rudolph. Although he's the guiding light and the nucleus of the team, Santa says he's apt to be quite bigheaded and prone to temper tantrums.

"Sometimes he'll get in a sulk and refuse to eat but when he does start eating he really eats!" Santa goes on to comment Rudolph seemed to suffer from excess ego around the mid-40's when the song "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" first became popular.

"But he's never let us down," chuckles Santa affectionately.

Christmas message

There are times, says Santa, that he becomes "pretty fed up" with our commercialized Christmas and gets disgusted with the "hard sell". "If it wasn't for the children, I wouldn't enjoy this line of work nearly as much," he comments.

The children are still special and often bring tears to his eyes. He tries to give them the spirit of Christmas rather than a lot of fancy toys, he says, the most blessed are those not caring for material things.

But even with a non-material message, Santa still has a pack of work to do at Christmas. His 25 elf staff work overtime filling orders looking forward to their six month holiday from January till next June when the whole panic starts again.

Elves do a good job, says Santa, and he's found no-one generally as enthusiastic or as hard working as the little folk but dissension is creeping among the staff over the amount of work necessary to complete the list by deadline. Santa has heard rumors of unionization.

If it wasn't for Mrs. Claus keeping everyone extremely well-fed, says Santa, he would have lost his elves to easier jobs long ago.

Santa's increasing girth is evidence of his wife's good table and he finds now he has to have his suits specially made for him. Styles have changed though and Santa tries to keep up with the times. Belts are narrower, trimming changes and new fabrics make Santa's suits wash and wear.

Toy requests have changed, too. Nowadays Santa has requests for toys he'd never heard of 200 years ago. He says he has quite a task keeping up with the toy manufacturers' lists.

When the big day is over, Santa falls exhausted into bed until he smells Mrs. Claus's good Christmas dinner. He says the blessing, then tucks into turkey, plum pudding and all the trimmings.

When his dinner is over he's like a soft bear, he says.

"I want to get into my cave, put my head against a rock and go to sleep."

Before he does that the last thing he remembers murmuring, he says, is: "MERRY CHRISTMAS."

Organizers were delighted with the turnout at Sundays Autograph party for Rev. Charles Beaton's new book "From the Wheehouse" written in co-operation with his father, Captain Horace Beaton, a Great Lake ship captain. Checking over new copies of the book are: from left to right, Rev. Beaton, Jean Beaton, Captain Beaton, Mrs. Marjorie Beaton, Jim and Jean Filby of Boston Mills Press, publishers of the book. The party was held at Trinity United Church.

Doug Black . . .

(Continued from Pg. One)

"There have been others who have expressed interest," he said. "Whether they will be contesting the nomination or not I don't know.

"I know at least one candidate has indicated she's willing to support me and I think that's true of a second person."

Mr. Black was noted for running a campaign last spring which focused strictly on the issues and he refused to get involved with the infighting between Philbrook and Jelinek.

He said he would conduct the same type of campaign this time around if he gets the nod from the NDP next month.

"If I'm the candidate my approach will be to simply lay out our guns and say 'here it is on the table we think it's a good approach, we think it's reasonable and it's different than the other two parties," he said.

"Our approach will be to show that the other two parties are one and the same."

Cathy Coles won the Acton merchants' weekly draw for $50. Home Hardware owner Mike Kinal presents Mrs. Coles with her cheque.

Jelinek will have challenger

Although Gerald Knapp does not expect to beat Otto Jelinek when the Conservatives hold their nomination meeting he feels the Halton MP should not go unopposed.

Knapp, a 39-year-old marketing manager from the Ottawa area, moved to the region in July, and decided to follow through on his desire to seek the Tory nomination on Jan. 9 because of some basic disenchantment with the party.

"I feel as a long-time Conservative there are a few things in the party that I haven't exactly agreed with," said Knapp. "I don't think the party is in tune with the grassroots enough."

Knapp added the party hasn't been listening to the people and cited the proposed Canadian embassy move to Jerusalem and the sale of PetroCan as examples.

"I don't expect to beat him," he said. "As a matter of fact I don't have a snowball's chance in hell. It gives Otto the opportunity also to expand on his platform at the nomination meeting so we can all hear exactly what his views on the issues are. I don't want to make a big stink or get a lot of publicity over it but I really do feel he should not get the nomination by acclamation."

However, along with simply contesting Jelinek for the nomination, Knapp has some views of his own, which he hopes to expand on Jan. 9.

"I've been threatening (to run) for years but this is my first crack," said Knapp. "The theme that I'll be expanding on is that a local politician, whether he be running for dog catcher or Prime Minister, must be sensitive to the needs of his constituents. He cannot remain aloof. I think politicians in the past have been getting away from their constituents desires."

Cabinet reviews Site F

A provincial cabinet decision of the fate of Site F could come as early as this week.

Milton Mayor Don Gordon announced last week before an incredulous Region Chairman Jack Raftis that Milton had received information "the item will be going before the Cabinet next week."

Milton Council had decided to appeal to Cabinet the decision made by the Ontario Municipal Board June 15 selecting Site F as the future Halton landfill site.

Mr. Gordon declined to say how the item had gone forward to Cabinet but he did say Tom Lane of the Premier's office had informed him of Cabinet perusal of the Site F question.

Mr. Raftis said he did not believe Cabinet would look at Site F as soon as Mr. Gordon predicted.

He said he had only signed a letter to Premier Davis the day before last Wednesday's meeting of Regional Administration and Finance Committee, where Mr. Gordon made his announcement.

Mr. Gordon said he had heard the item was before Cabinet after "considerable pressure from the region."

Booth appalled

Halton Hills councillor Roy Booth said he was appalled by his colleagues Monday evening at council when some members voted against a resolution to endorse the town of Oakville's efforts to have a review of all aspects of transportation of hazardous materials.

The Oakville resolution stated, "In light of the recent train derailment in Mississauga and the potential but miraculously unrealized tragic consequences resulting therefrom, this council strongly requests a full and comprehensive review of the applicable legislation by the appropriate Provincial and Federal Ministries with a view toward stricter regulations concerning all aspects of transportation of hazardous materials by rail, air, sea, and highway, including but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the labelling and separation of the said hazardous materials . . ."

Councillor Pat Patterson labelled the motion as an "exercise in futility". "They've been transporting that stuff for years and will continue to do so."

The motion carried.

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Region expected to back review

There will be a review of Halton Regional Government which will look at a number of problem areas, including funding and representation.

In recent weeks there have been several clashes between the four municipalities with votes forming along municipal, instead of region, lines.

The Town of Milton, for instance, feels it should have a fourth representative at the region; while Burlington Mayor Roly Bird says he has a "serious" problem which his city cannot get resolved under regionalism.

What resulted in a decision to review the regional act (Bill 151) started with Mayor Don Gordon's request last Wednesday at the Administration and Finance Committee for a fourth representative.

Mayor Bird said he was "delighted" to see the request and said he supported Milton's desire fully.

Based on population, Mayor Gordon said a fourth Milton councillor at the region made sense.

"When we look at this (population figures he provided for the meeting) we see the population of Halton Hills not moving. Oakville's representation is right on.

"But in Milton, we had three councillors when regionalism started in 1973 with a population of only 16,000.

"We've got 24,000 in 1979 and we're going to have 34,000 in just a few years," he said.

Mr. Gordon said he has been told the representation can be altered with changes to Bill 151 and he had asked committee to support the request and find out what changes in the act would be required.

"Now that regional government has been in operation for almost six years, I feel a review of the complement of regional elected officials is warranted," Mr. Gordon said.

This brought Mr. Bird's complaints about his problem and an open discussion about a full regional review and the progress of a committee to look into problems.

Mayor Gordon told this newspaper he later in the day received a note from Regional Chairman Jack Raftis indicating he would support a full review of all aspects of regionalism.

Mr. Gordon said he would press for an early start to a review, upon returning from a vacation. He left for holidays on Friday.

Oakville lands conference centre

The $15 million conference centre, first planned near the Forks of the Credit, but rejected by the Niagara Escarpment Commission, will be built instead, by the Glen Abbey golf course Oakville.

Cantrakon (Canadian Training and Conference Centre Ltd.) chose the site over 100 others, and are negotiating the purchase from Genstar, the builders of Glen Abbey to accommodate the 175,000 square foot complex in north Oakville.

The complex is slated to contain a 400 seat auditorium, three conference rooms, seating 75 each, and 12 seminar rooms with seating for 25 each, and is expected to employ 150 people.

Architect of the large building will be Ed Ziedler, who designed the Eaton's Centre

Halton Hills was one of the locations suggested

Ed Wood thanks Pomeroy and staff

Even though Halton Hills council still has one more year in office, councillor Ed Wood wanted to thank Mayor Pete Pomeroy and staff for making his first year in office easier.

Councillor Harry Levy took Mr. Wood's cue and publicly congratulated Mr. Pomeroy on the "fantastic job of leadership" in the past year, in spite of personal differences, he said.

Garbage on roads

The dumping of garbage on rural roads is on the increase, Councillor Russ Miller told Halton Hills council, Monday night, and cited three truckloads picked up from the sides of the Fifth Line and one from the Sixth Line, north of Highway 7.

He said the quarry at the Ninth Line and 27 Sideroad is also being used as a dumping area.

He said the cost to the town in labor and time in picking up garbage along the roads is tremendous, and suggested it would be cheaper to have a better garbage transfer system at the former landfill site.

He promised to pursue the subject at the region.

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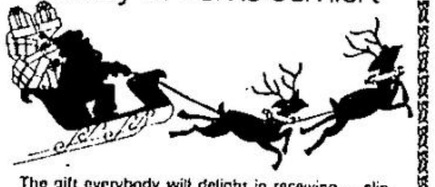

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