

The Acton Free Press

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Business and Editorial Office

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Award deserved

Just a few weeks ago we praised the volunteer firefighters, as well as their employers, for their great efforts in the Thompson Fuels fire.

Only in cases of major fires do we really see the expertise resulting from hours of training and practice by the firefighters. Also, only when there is a big fire during working hours which keeps the volunteers off their regular jobs for several hours do we appreciate the sacrifice for the community made by employers.

Recently our volunteers were honored for their efforts in another, not as well publicized area—rescue and resuscitation calls.

The Halton Safety Council became aware of our firefighters' devotion to the community in terms of rescue calls through a nomination for a safety award prompted by a local resident after reading an article in this newspaper last year about the firefighters saving the life of baby Andrew Coe.

But this was just one example of the life saving efforts the volunteers perform in this community on a regular basis.

Certainly, many citizens are aware that in cases of children or adults being pulled from rivers, lakes and ponds the firefighters are called to perform resuscitation duties.

They are the first emergency service on the scene, except possibly the police on some occasions. It's interesting to note that even in cases of tragedy, a drowning, expert witnesses such as ambulance attendants, doctors on the scene, police officers etc. all testify at subsequent coroner's inquests in glowing terms about the efforts of the firefighters. They can't always save a life, but they certainly have the expertise to do an excellent job of attempting to save a drowning victim.

But their rescue work goes far beyond drownings.

Choking victims, people who have something like a big slab of concrete fall on them, suffer a stroke or heart attack or some other health and life threatening situation, have all been helped by the firefighters.

But our firefighters' expertise in the area of rescue work is even more important in a community like Acton. With no hospital in town and ambulance service coming from Georgetown, the firefighters provide a vital link in our emergency health care system.

Our congratulations to the firefighters for this most deserved honor as well as our thanks for providing this crucial service to the community.—G.M.



Our readers write

W.I. concerned about programs

Following is a letter to the chairman of the Halton Board of Education, Len Auger, which was filed with this newspaper for publication:

Dear Mr. Auger,
The members of the Limehouse Women's Institute were somewhat concerned at their last meeting to hear rumors that the Board of Education is considering cutting the Family Studies and Industrial Arts Program in the elementary schools. Following a lengthy discussion it was decided to write expressing our concerns about the motion made by Cam Jackson and seconded by Mrs. Diane Filman which is currently before the Board.

The motion reads as follows: "That the staff investigate and report to the finance committee and to the Board before April 1983 on all costs associated with the Board's Elementary Industrial Arts and Family Studies program. And that this enquiry include all costs for staffing, supplies, transportation, equipment costs, including all capital purchases, as well as the square metre-square foot maintenance cost associated with the classroom space used for these programs".

Our concerns are based on what we feel is the intent in this motion. We are afraid that the intent is to cut the program as a means of cutting costs. Perhaps cost must be cut somewhere but let's take a careful look at what is being eliminated.

Today, more than ever before, the Family Studies and Industrial Arts programs fill a very important need in the home. Many families have both parents working, many on shift work and our young people are being called upon to accept more responsibilities in the home. At present boys and girls take both Family Studies and Industrial Arts in our elementary schools. This is an excellent opportunity for our young people to learn the basic skills and to apply them to every day situations. The school program is often the first introduction to these skills.

As a result of the introduction in the elementary school program many students have decided to further their education in these areas of study. These courses are no longer compulsory in our high schools. If our elementary students are not exposed to them in our senior schools how are they going to know whether or they want to pursue this area of study in high school?

We feel the Board would be doing our young people a great injustice if these programs were cut from

our curriculum. The number one priority in selecting program should be the needs of our students and this should be considered ahead of the dollar and cent signs. We urge you to consider this carefully and retain the Family Studies and Industrial Arts programs in our elementary schools.

Yours truly

Jean Anderson
President Limehouse WI
Jean Kirkwood
Secretary Limehouse WI

Children shortchanged

The following letter to Chairman of the Board of Education, Bill Harrison, and Robert Filman has been filed with this newspaper for publication.

Dear Sir:
I have just returned from the Milton Family of Schools meeting at Robert Baldwin School, where our Halton Board Trustee, Bill Harrison and Robert Filman, president of Halton Elementary Teachers Association, along with several other trustees were present to discuss several issues that concern all of us.

The average class size in Halton Elementary Schools is the highest in Ontario. Halton is in 76th place compared with all of the school boards in the province. (There is a total of 76 boards.)

Our teachers have been working without a contract for six months. Despite the anger and frustration these dedicated people are experiencing it is obvious that our children still come first—Robert Filman, speaking for H.E.T.A. made it quite clear that our children would never be used as pawns to negotiate contracts.

It is time we parents began to speak up and also give support to our children's teachers. Let us all work together to find out:

1. How our tax dollars are spent for education?

2. How does this compare to our neighbouring boards?
3. How much will it cost to improve?
4. How will Bill 82 affect this situation?

Halton may be number 76, our teachers are number 1. Let's show them we care and share a common goal—we must have more teachers, and surely the 12 being requested for Halton is a modest proposal.

Parents do have a voice. Our children are being short-changed.

Sincerely

Joan Woodall

Story has snags

Dear Sir,
Oh, I went to the Press one milder day

To complain to my friend Hartley He had to cease his teasing tone Or I'd rap his head right smartly. Girdles, garters, hose et al Are no concern of hisen If he doesn't re-evaluate his priorities and get on the ball I'll drop him in the mizzen!

Love from an Anonymous female hoser

P.S. I spent 32 cents of my retail dollar on this stamp!

Alternative view

Dear Sirs:
I should like to present an alternative view to that expressed by "A Nature Lover" in the March 2 issue of the Free Press. This person uses a series of rather strong adjectives to refer to a group of people she/he has never met which demonstrates unforgivable bias. However, such is perhaps to be expected in one who evidently enjoys nature while walking by an unspooled sewage plant!

More seriously, this letter again raises the issue that many people of various ages and backgrounds enjoy riding motorcycles off the highways where they can let off steam with little danger to themselves or other people. For example, how many innocent people are killed by incompetent young (and not so young) drivers showing off to their peers on the highways in cars? I suggest the number is significantly higher than those killed while riding motorcycles off the highway. Are they really such a bad group?

The community is pleased to enjoy the taxes paid by the merchants who sell motorcycles and is no doubt grateful for the local jobs that their sales produce. Unfortunately the same community does not see fit to provide any land for the use of dirt bike riders. In contrast we learn that the "town spent \$46,753.20 on summer sports"

and thereby covered most of the costs (90 per cent of many other sporting activities.) We also learn that much of that money went for making many major modifications to some of the formerly most scenic areas of the town (see the list of structures erected, etc. in the article on page 9!). I have nothing against using taxpayers' money to help finance sporting activities but I fail to see why one specific sporting activity which causes far less permanent ecological damage than sewage plants, ball diamonds, ice rinks and subdivisions should receive no support whatsoever but rather suffer active persecution by so-called nature lovers. The Region owns a lot of land. If a small portion were made available for motorcycle use, then this healthy form of exercise for many of our young people could be indulged without infringing on private property.

As a final point, I would like to know why your courageous Nature Lover was unable to sign such a bigoted letter? How many lawns has he/she seen torn up by angry trail riders? Perhaps facts would detract from the argument!

Yours sincerely,

I.B. Heath,
Nature Lover, Professional Biologist and Off Road Motorcyclist

Coles' slaw Newspaper accuracy sore point with some

The perfect guest, says Your Morning Smile, is one who can make his host feel at home.

Jim Fleming, the Minister of Multiculturalism, couldn't have read that before he appeared at the annual convention of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association in Toronto last week. Dubbed the Minister of Newspapers for his proposal to create a press council, the minister explained his mandate was only to deal with the daily newspapers. However, he warned that if the concentration of ownership in the community newspaper field did not abate he might be forced to look at them as well.

He said the Government is forced to set up a council in the daily field because of the concentration of ownership which could throttle a free press. The government, he said, would create the council and then step back and let it operate without any government interference.

Mr. Fleming said he was grati-

fied at the number of community newspapers who voluntarily joined the Ontario Press Council, among them this newspaper. So long as these press councils were effective, he suggested the government would keep their hands off any further attempts at regulating the press.

The minister did not pooh pooh the suggestions that newspapers face real future competition from the electronic media but he felt that people do want to depend for their news and other information on a small screen. They welcome the printed page because it lets them digest the news at their own pace, he maintained.

The minister also maintained the current fad for cute headlines, short stories and large pictures among some newspapers, will soon fade away. In-depth stories and analysis of the news will eventually win over the superficial treatment of the news, he says.

However, he noted that the fate

of the newspapers of the country, both daily and community, would hinge to a larger part on cost and efficiency. He noted that the community newspapers had something going for them in the accuracy department as well because surveys showed less than 10 per cent of the people believe their community newspaper to be inaccurate.

That point has been a sore one for the dailies, as was pointed out to me last Saturday night when it was my job to explain the role of the community newspapers to an assembly of public relations officers for the Boy Scouts of Canada assembled at the Blue Springs scout reserve for the weekend. Some of the reps complained loudly and long about inaccuracies they found in stories in dailies about their groups and how their aims were misinterpreted just so someone could get a cheeky headline or story which missed the point of the news.

Far be it from me to criticize the daily newspaper scribes who

are faced with daily deadlines and pressures but there have been instances where the criticism is warranted. It can apply to any purveyors of the printed word, daily, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or annual.

Let's face it, accuracy is sometimes blunted by immediacy and the pressure to publish ahead of the competition.

We at the Free Press try our darndest to make stories and comment as accurate as possible. But there are instances even when they are double checked that errors creep through. When that happens we feel as badly as those who depend on us to convey the news.

Mr. Fleming suggests the revolution in printing technology, which has turned the newspaper field upside down, should be of tremendous benefit to the publishing business. Computers enable the reporters, editors and researchers to call up information at the touch of a switch. In

the past it often meant tedious searches through files and other documents.

Mr. Fleming acknowledged that we can't control the future but we can nudge it in the direction we want it to go, a point I feel can't be debated.

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Still on the subject of accuracy some readers of this column have suggested the statistics which appeared in this spot last week on the average Ontario woman were not only untrue but fabricated. I can't vouch for their accuracy, only to mention they came from an Ontario Government publication.

My comments on penitence were also subject to some criticism since I had never worn any. To correct that deficiency one friend sent a parcel with a big red bow, professionally wrapped, enclosing a pair.

I haven't tried them on yet but when I do you can be sure I won't tell you about it.

Back Issues

10 years ago

March 7, 1973

Esquering councillors voted themselves a \$500 pay raise last week. Councillors will now earn \$2,000 annually.

North Halton Ratepayers are opposed to a proposal by officials of Indusmin that a worked out quarry be used as a sanitary landfill site for Metro Toronto garbage disposal. Ratepayers appeared at a public meeting at Esquering Community Hall.

Joe Hurst, retiring clerk-administrator of the town, was surprised with a retirement party Saturday evening. Family and friends all attended the gathering at the Music Hall, and friends all attended the gathering at the Music Hall, and Mayor Les Duby presented Hurst with a large, upholstered armchair with footrest from the town, to make his retirement years comfortable.

Grant Usher has been appointed new clerk-administrator in place of Hurst, with Hugh Patterson deputy clerk-treasurer.

20 years ago

March 7, 1963

Tom Sawyer was all the rage at Robert Little School this week. Students staged the operetta Wednesday and Thursday nights at the school with Mike Vale as Tom, Denise Parker as Becky Thatcher, Robert Platt as Huck Finn and Wendy Jank as Aunt Polly.

A quarter mill was chopped off the Halton county 1963 budget this year as a result of an increase in the county assessment. The entire county budget totals \$1,401,403.

Two of Acton's local hockey teams took top honors at a four-town tournament in Fergus over the weekend. Acton Firemen Bantam team and the Businessmen PeeWees took home trophies.

50 years ago

March 9, 1933

The arena was a colorful spot for the Carnival put on by the Arena Committee and the Acton Businessmen's Association. Well over 100 appeared in costume. After the judging of costumes and races there was a burlesque boxing match between Gordon Cook and John Dennis, with Bill Eccleshall and Jack McGeachie as seconds. B.D. Rachin was timekeeper and scorer. Then two teams of businessmen played a hockey match. A moccasin dance culminated the event. The band played from a platform in mid-ice.

Prizes were donated by business places, Mason Knitting, Hewetson Shoe, Storey Glove, W.D. Talbot, Jas. Symon, H. Wiles, V.B. Rumley, Acton Machine Shops, B.D. Rachin, C.B. Swackhamer, H.N. Farmer, M. Pallant, J. Leishman, F. Roney, Dr. A.J. Buchanan, H.W. Hinton, Elliott Bros., W. Cooper, Kenney Bros., E.J. Hassard, W.K. Graham, C. Thompson, Nelson and Co., A. McIsaac, J.C. Matthews, Ritchie and Agar, Watson's Bakery, G.W. Benton, Carroll's.

75 years ago

March 5, 1908

There was a gay assemblage at the rink Monday night for the fancy dress carnival.

Last month was a busy one for Mrs. Graham, Librarian, at the Free Library. The largest number of books ever issued in a single month since the reorganization of the library 10 years ago was given out, aggregating 600.

Owing to the storm on Sunday, Rev. Willoughby was unable to reach Churchill, his afternoon appointment. Rev. Father Feeney has had much trouble this winter getting to his church at Oustic.

100 years ago

March 15, 1883

A meeting of pastors and members of the several churches in town was held in the Methodist church on Friday evening to take into consideration some means by which the desecration of the Sabbath by the G.T.R. authorities, running local passenger and freight trains, may be discontinued.

A committee was named to prepare a petition setting forth our grievance. The peace and quiet of the Lord's Day is disturbed and the running of trains is a temptation and open opportunity for the community to desecrate the sacred day of rest for wicked and ungodly purposes.

Since vermin have become prevalent among the children of the second and third departments, these departments were dismissed for one week.

Acton's population is 1,250.