

You have to love driving a cab

By Doris Lindauer
Staff Reporter

It was quite late in the evening and a man had called a taxi. Getting into the car, the taxi driver asked him "Where to?" The man who had had a bit too much to drink replied, "You're the taxi cab driver, you should know where I live."

This was somewhat of a

Vivian is one of two female taxi cab drivers in Georgetown. Her colleague is June Secord of Georgetown Taxi.

In a lot of ways both women are much alike. Always smiling, always a cheery note, always with something witty to be said, hardworking and enthused, pleased and successful with their work.

for over one year.

June has been behind the wheel for two years and has been with Georgetown Taxi for about one year.

While we carry out our nine to five jobs finishing when that second hand hits twelve, the taxi cab driver has no such hours. Vivian's first reaction to being questioned on what her hours were was "Oh my God."

In the morning until six o'clock at night. Then she returns home (where the office is located) and answers the phone until 1 a.m. Saturdays and Sundays are slightly different however a rest is still not available.

Saturday calls are taken from nine in the morning until twelve o'clock midnight. When Vivian isn't driving she is at home answering the phone and working the dispatch radio.

June has it no easier. In fact her total number of driving hours are higher but then the difference comes in when no phones have to be answered.

June gets up at four o'clock in the morning (not even the earliest of birds are up at that time, nor the sun for that matter). She begins driving at about 4:30 a.m. and from Monday to Wednesday drives from that wee, small hour until six o'clock at night. Thursday and Friday June gets to sleep in because she doesn't begin to drive until nine in the morning. However, she continues until ten at night. June takes her day of rest on Saturday and on Sunday she is back at work.

It should be pointed out that these women cannot shut off at the exact hour. If a call has to be answered or if they are in the middle of a run at their quitting time it would hardly serve as hospitality to literally dump their customer off in the middle of who knows where.

By chance and chance only, June was contacted for the interview at one of her rare lunch hours stops. She pointed out that it is perhaps once every two weeks that she has a chance to really sit down and enjoy a lunch. Thus, as she was sitting in the McGibbon Cafe, slowly eating her lunch, she took time out to talk about her life as a taxi cab driver.

"Why did I decide to drive a taxi? I once said that I'd never drive a taxi but, I was out of a job, and this was the only thing available at that time so I took it. Now I love it so much that I've even bought my own car."

What did June work at before her career as a taxi driver began?

"Well I've done quite a few different jobs. I've driven a dumptruck, pumped gas, drove a bulldozer, a tractor trailer and waited on tables (didn't like that job). I guess I've done everything but fly a plane."

June enjoys hard work, as it is obvious as well as enjoys working outside.

After working at these types one might suspect and probably be totally convinced that June is one of "those women's libbers." Not so "I'm totally against women's lib. Well it's not all that bad I guess but I do think it is carried much, much too far. I just enjoy hard work."

"Driving a taxi is fun. First of all I love driving. Secondly I'm outside which is terrific. Third, I get to meet so many people. Everything about it is great. You do have some bad days but they are usually so few and far between that the good days easily make up for the bad ones."

Recently much has been written and reported concerning safety of Toronto taxi cab drivers or for that matter the safety of a cab driver in any area. It seems though that luckily Georgetown is still a small town at heart with not too much danger for our cab drivers.

"There was only once when I was scared. It was late in the night, actually it was early morning and I had to pick up this guy. Now this man obviously had had too much to drink. Funny thing was this guy really scared me. Weird enough though, he never said anything to me. Never did anything to me, but, maybe that's what scared me. The fact that he wouldn't talk. I just had this feeling that a knife was going to be stuck in my back."

As most cab drivers June has picked up a number of drunks in her time, has had to listen to them and try to determine where they really want to go. She also has had a few close calls as not making it to the hospital in time for the birth of a baby.

But those are the joys of a driver.

There are occasions when June does get upset with her employment.

"I guess the worst part is when you get those overgrown hound dogs in your car licking the back of your head. But then on the other hand I love animals and I really never mind taking them anywhere."

That's definitely no nine to five woman.

"It suits me, driving a cab. And I love it," concluded June. So, next we try Vivian Shaw. After a message was relayed through Park's Confectionery contact was made. However Vivian too had not much time to sit down and talk.

So, determined to talk with this woman I travelled in the taxi for two and one half hours with Vivian. Actually the length of time was not intentional but calls kept pouring in and there was virtually no time to drop me off back downtown. That ride was some experience.

Within two and one half hours I had travelled close to 100 miles. I met a public school teacher, a public school student, a factory worker, a mother with two small children, a high school student, four housewives and a radio dispatcher. I even got to ride to Milton, Norval and Glen Williams. I also learned the meanings behind the two key sayings of ten-nine and ten-four.

I learned also that a car with bad points and plugs if passing a taxi, will create a great deal of static over the radio. In fact in that two and one half hours I obtained a lot of first hand knowledge.

I also learned that as June, Vivian, thoroughly enjoys work. "I enjoy the job very much. You get to meet all kinds of people. The hours don't bother me at all," explained Vivian.

"I've always enjoyed driving. Georgetown is a friendly town and consequently the people I drive are really friendly."

As for being badly shaken up

or scared by one of the customers Vivian has, as yet, never gone through such an experience.

"I've had no trouble at all with any of my customers. I've had a few drunks but they all have been very good. No I haven't been really scared as of yet. But, then again, I guess there's a first time for everything."

"Outside of once, that has not happened to me. However, that time when it did happen I just drove the person to the police station. Well, needless to say, that shook him up and yes, he did pay me," Vivian told.

customer, upon being delivered to his or her destination, decides not to, pay their fare?

"Outside of once, that has not happened to me. However, that time when it did happen I just drove the person to the police station. Well, needless to say, that shook him up and yes, he did pay me," Vivian told.

always be friendly with someone and talk to someone without having to know their names."

Many a customer really lets loose in the cab and often takes Vivian into their confidence. However at times things do get out of hand and, "you get some people who have more problems than Carters have liver pills. When those type are



TEN FOUR. Vivian Shaw of Flash Taxi is one of the two women taxi drivers in Georgetown. When Vivian isn't driving the taxi she's at home answering phone calls and operating the dispatch radio.

unique experience, however a taxi cab driver like Vivian Shaw of Flash Taxi expects this type of incident to happen.

Vivian and her husband, Kenneth have owned and operated Flash Taxi for almost a year now with Vivian driving

Vivian gets up at 6 every morning. Monday through Friday she will drive the taxi from shortly after six o'clock



IT'S A HECTIC DAY for June Secord of Georgetown Taxi, for each morning she gets up bright and early at 4 a.m. and begins to drive. She doesn't mind the hours because, "I love my work."

Re-hashing her experience with the man with a bit too much to drink Vivian stated that, "I didn't have a clue who this man was. I didn't have a clue as to where he lived. But I know now. Anyway, that's one person and one experience I'll never forget. Thinking about it now it was hilarious."

What happens when a

Vivian has many regular customers whom she picks up at a certain time each day.

"These people I usually get to know their names. However, with most of them I don't know their last names. I know their number and street but their last names are unknown. Names aren't really necessary though. You can

riding I just sit back, grin and bare it," concluded Vivian. Driving a taxi at first glance, might seem like a pressure-free slow job, but as shown, those thoughts should be quickly changed. For like life, it's hectic, constantly moving, and so much fun "we wouldn't change it for anything."

Parents upset with 'fiasco' at board

Betty Fisher of the Halton Concerned Parents Organization termed last Thursday evening's Halton Board of Education meeting as a 'fiasco'.

Three representatives of the Halton Concerned Parents group, Mrs. Fisher, Christine Louth and Lillian Kilpatrick, were joined by another parents organization Halton Renaissance for the confrontation. However, the two concerned groups were protesting and questioning in two different areas.

Mrs. Fisher explained that the Renaissance committee presented the board with

excerpts of a book, 'Go Ask Alice' which is presently used as text in the school system and asked Mr. Boich, superintendent of programs to read certain passages. After Mr. Boich refused to read the passages the uproar began.

"In all my years of going down to the board of education meetings I have never seen such a protest," stated Mrs. Fisher.

Mrs. Fisher approached the board and stated the following, "As taxpayers of Halton we would like to have the following information:

"How much money is spent on directors, assistants to the directors, superintendents, and assistants to the superintendent?"

How much money is spent on co-ordinators, assistant co-ordinators, all consultants, principals and vice-principals of elementary and secondary schools, secretaries, technicians and all other personnel connected with various levels of the Halton administration?

How much money is spent on trustees?

How much money is spent on conferences attended by administrators and-or trustees? What have their expenses been for the 1974-75 school year?

What is the total expense to date?"

Mrs. Fisher explained that Judy Alexander, chairman of the Halton board, stated that it would take some time to accumulate the information. However, it was agreed by the board that the concerned parents group will receive their desired information within seven to ten days.

Mrs. Fisher also explained that MPP Julian Reed checked into the matter and the group is legally privileged to obtain the information wished. In fact, they are also legally able to obtain all the audited spendings of the board.

"What we are trying to find out is exactly how the pie is divided? We are also trying to find out the effectiveness of the various areas of special programs etc. Also we want to see if and where costs can be trimmed?" stated Mrs. Fisher.

Mrs. Fisher also added that the group has hired a lawyer to

deal with all the legal matters.

"We have found that the board will not deal humanly, only legally. Thus, we have to match them and so we too will deal in a legal manner."

"Because of the meeting, the way it turned out, it is obvious that people are becoming impatient and will not sit quietly any longer. I, myself, would rather see us sit down calmly, discuss this thing and get things cleared up as soon as possible. But, if things aren't changed soon this type of fiasco will continue," concluded Mrs. Fisher.

108 of 190 NEC permits okayed

Of the 190 applications for Development permits reviewed by the Georgetown office of the Niagara Escarpment Commission 141 have been processed thus far of which 108 have been approved.

The Georgetown office of the NEC covers Halton, Peel and the county of Dufferin.

Development permits are required in about 40 percent of the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area before a local

building permit can be obtained. The controls came into effect on June 10, and in the four months since, a total of 523 applications have been received by the NEC covering all areas of the escarpment.

Of those, 456 have been processed with 303 being approved.

Under the Development Control system, when the commission makes its decision on an application, a copy of

this decision is then sent to the applicant and all property owners within 400 feet of the subject land. Recipients of this notice may appeal against it, in writing, to the minister of housing within 14 days.

An independent hearing officer will then hear the appeal and report to the minister of housing, who, in turn, makes the final decision on the appeal.

Open house at the fire hall

As part of the continuing campaign for fire prevention the Georgetown Volunteer

Department will be holding an open house at the Chapel Street Fire Hall from 7 to 9

p.m. Thursday evening. Films and slides will be shown.

Parents study crowded class



AUTUMN LEAVES Linda and Bonnie McGlashan with Valerie and Marilyn Maw were among the thousands of leaf rakers in Halton Hills.

Finding a solution to an overcrowded Grade One classroom at Holy Cross Separate School has been set as the first priority of a group of approximately 35 parents of children enrolled at Holy Cross.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the enrollment of 41 students in the school's only Grade One class the parents last Wednesday night formed an organization which is now examining the possibility of obtaining an additional full-time teacher for the school.

"That is definitely our first priority," commented Tom Ramautarsingh, president of the newly formed organization.

The committee that was set up to look into class sizes is

also considering the need for a portable for the school to provide additional space.

Parents at the meeting were told that if another class is added there would be problems in finding classroom space for it.

Barry Gowan, principle of Holy Cross, explained to the 35 parents present, many of whom have students in Grade One, that when estimates of class sizes were first made it was expected that 392 students would be enrolled in the school with only 30 expected for the Grade One class.

However a totally unexpected 425 students have registered so far of which 41 are now in the first grade. The overall ratio set out by the Halton Separate School Board

states that the student-teacher ratio should be in the area of 30-to-one.

He credited part of the large jump in registrations with a large turnover of students from the public school system to our system.

Parents questioned if Grades One and Two could possibly be combined but Mr. Gowan replied that the differences between the two groups would be too great.

Mr. Ramautarsingh, a teacher at GDHS, added "It's not educationally sound. It would do more damage to those student than leaving them in their present situation."

Parents praised the work of the current Grade One teacher, Mary Hartley, in

handling the large class with the assistance of one volunteer parent.

"But any teacher can only work to a maximum," commented Mr. Ramautarsingh.

"She can have only a certain amount of output before her responsiveness to the students suffers."

The idea of split shifts for the Grade One students was also quickly ruled out by the parents. A split-shift system in Peel produced a number of problems for both teachers and students said one member of the group.

Hart Sherk, separate school board trustee for Georgetown, was present at the meeting and, although he reserved judgement on the parents organization's role "until I've

seen what its purposes and goals are" noted that their point about an additional full-time teacher was a good one.

He explained that the board has already decided to advertise for a part-time teacher for Holy Cross but whether or not a portable classroom can be obtained will have to be studied by the board.

"It's possible that a portable could be obtained, but certainly not within the very near future."

The parents organization formed its executive at the meeting which consists of: Mr. Ramautarsingh, president; Colin Whitehead, first vice-president; Mrs. Evelyn Fisher, second vice-president; Kathy Papenhuyzen, secretary;

Anthony Dalton, treasurer.

Committees were formed to examine various aspects of the school's operations. The chairmen of the committees include: Jack O'Sullivan, class size; Kay d'Entremont, program; Con Papenhuyzen, building and fixtures; Gary Kirkpatrick, school organization.

In outlining the purpose of the new organization Mr. Ramautarsingh stated, "As parents we have to totally alert when it comes to the education of our own children. We should not entrust their education solely to others."

He added that the group would, however, "give our teachers our full-hearted support."

Former Herald circulation mgr. dies in crash

A former circulation manager of the Herald, John Garfield Nieman, 19, died early Saturday morning following a single car crash in the Pembroke area.

Mr. Nieman died after the car he was driving left Highway 62 just west of Pembroke, struck a culvert and overturned. A passenger in the vehicle, Maurice Gorr, 20, of Pembroke was rushed to

hospital in Ottawa where he was reported in serious condition.

Mr. Nieman had been circulation manager of this paper during the early part of this year. He was transferred to a similar position in the daily Pembroke Observer.

He is the son of Garfield and Naomi Nieman. Funeral services were held Monday in Pembroke.

Mysterious chemical sends 4 to hospital

Firemen were called on four times over the weekend to handle minor fire problems in the Halton Hills area.

At 12:40 Saturday afternoon the fire alarm sounded for two fire calls, one at Georgetown District Memorial Hospital and the second at 7 Faludon

Drive.

The automatic alarm at the hospital was triggered accidentally with no fire evident. The call to the home of E.R. Barrow, 7 Faludon Drive sent four people to hospital for treatment.

Two family members and

two fire-fighters were admitted for treatment after contact with an unknown chemical which was concocted by a four-year-old of the Barrow family.

All were released following a routine checkover at the hospital.

Two rural fires on Monday did damage to a barn and a tree struck by lightning.

The barn was in Milton fire district but the area was temporarily reassigned for the holiday weekend to permit the families of the firefighters a peaceful Thanksgiving.

Police may be over year's budget

One problem overlooked until now may result in an over-budget situation in Halton police salaries for the current fiscal year.

At Thursday's session of the regional police commission area superintendent Floyd

Schwartz indicated to the members of the group that the current vacation pay schedule calls for two weeks paid vacation annually or a figure of 4 percent of the annual pay.

These two figures are usually the same and no im-

mediate notice of the problem was discovered until Superintendent Schwartz began budget reviews and found that with overtime consideration the 4 percent figure added greatly to the vacation pay. It will be more than is allotted for

in the budgets.

A recommendation was made to adjust the budget accordingly, to examine the existing contract and modify any new one to avoid the over-budget situation in the future.