

# Johnson seeks region council seat



Scott Thompson, 4, of Georgetown points out the safety equipment which is standard on all school buses. The axe could punch out a window if necessary. The first aid kit handles minor repairs. Flares signify trouble to passing motorists. The fire extinguisher is always ready for an emergency. Scott's mother drives a school bus and he accompanies her most mornings, he says.

## Seat belts for buses? Drivers say no thanks

Even though seat belts are proven to reduce injuries school bus drivers are opposed to having them installed in their buses.

"We see seat belts more as safety weapons than as safety measures," says Anne Kozlowski, a Travelways bus driver on a Georgetown route. "It would be virtually impossible to ensure that all the kids had their seat belts fastened while we were driving. Even if we made a check before we pulled away with a load by the time we got back to our seats half the kids could have unbuckled their belts and we'd never know it. It would just be too hard to enforce rules on using seat belts in school buses."

Mrs. Kozlowski, who was providing information on buses and bus safety during Georgetown's sidewalk sale on Main Street, explained that a number of safety features have been added to school buses in recent years.

All buses now have dual braking systems in case of emergency. All buses have two-way radios which can contact other buses or the base yard. Bus mirrors are now electrically heated so they never fog up or ice over. New buses also have a buzzer system on the emergency exits so that the driver knows when an exit is not properly closed.

All bus drivers with the company do a five-minute walk around check before starting off to pick up passengers, Mrs. Kozlowski says. This includes inspecting all signals and lights, windshield wipers and washers, tires, wheels, all mirrors, the exhaust system, the emergency door, the

brakes and various gauges. In addition to a daily inspection buses get monthly checks under the bus, under the hood, inside and outside the bus and finally takes it for a road test. A total of 56 items receive attention during an A inspection. These items range in importance from things like checking the rod ends and brakes and clutch to checking the seats for cuts.

The bus also gets an annual nine-point tuneup, an eight-point check on the wheels, a five-point major inspection of the busy body and a road test at the end of each school year. Travelways operates 87 buses and a couple of station wagons in the Georgetown area. Last year this division, which includes Campbellville, Milton and Guelph had the best safe driving record with the fewest accidents for all the areas, Mrs. Kozlowski says.

While the company is concerned about the mechanical fitness of their vehicles, they are also concerned about the quality of drivers they employ. Ila Bayley has been with Travelways for 18 years and is now a driver trainer with the company.

"I believe drivers are much better qualified than they were even five years ago," she says, "and they're certainly much better than when I started." In those days they took you out for five minutes to see if you could drive and if you managed to get the bus into a parking space between two others that was good enough. The medical wasn't hard to pass either. So long as you had an eye on each

side of your face and you could move your hands and feet you passed."

"Today's bus drivers must have a B licence, a perfect driving record and the patience for the job."

The government doesn't hand out B licences indiscriminately. To get one the applicant must be 21 years of age, pass Ministry of Transportation and Communication (MTC), eye and medical examinations, pass a 100-question MTC written examination on signs, bus safety and the rules of the road, take a nine-hour defensive driving course and then take 20 hours of instruction with a qualified instructor. After that they must pass an MTC road test.

Although there are no government regulations requiring drivers to take first aid courses Mrs. Kozlowski says quite a number of the drivers she knows have taken St. John's Ambulance courses.

Travelways also demands that its drivers stop their buses at all railway crossings whether they are guarded or not. Travelways safety director Blake Williams tells his drivers they don't have to stop at crossings if their buses are empty, but they aren't completely empty if the driver is in them and thus they remember not to ignore crossings, she says.

"I get so used to stopping at crossings I even do it in my car," Mrs. Bayley laughs. "People behind me must think something's wrong with me but it gets to be such a habit you do it automatically even when you aren't driving the bus."

William Johnson of Nassagaweya, the outspoken environmentalist who was unsuccessful in two attempts to win the Halton-Burlington seat in the provincial legislature for the New Democratic Party, has announced his intention to enter the Nov. 13 municipal election as a Milton candidate for Halton regional council.

Mr. Johnson, 56, told The Herald this week that he will not brandish his political affiliation with the NDP in the forthcoming election when he attempts to unseat Wards 1 and 3 regional councillor Jim Watson.

Asserting that "the days of the big spenders in all levels of government are over", Mr. Johnson claimed that his voluntary work over the years with a variety of organizations attests to his high regard for "dollars and cents".

Employed as a stationary engineer at the federal government's Canadian Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, Mr. Johnson can indeed claim a long list of accomplishments he has achieved on behalf of Halton citizens, and particularly the residents of Nassagaweya in northern Milton, during the 25 years he has lived in the area.

Mr. Johnson says he has won the respect of regional council as well as Halton Hills and Milton councils as an environmentalist and a champion of

workers' rights. Their respect, he predicted, will be "a great asset" in the municipal election.

In the late 1960's, Mr. Johnson founded the Group United Against Rural Dumping (GUARD) which successfully fought off Metro Toronto's attempts to establish a landfill site in the Milton area where it could unload its waste. The victory led to his continuing affiliation with the Ontario Garbage Coalition and has placed him in good standing with the opponents of the regional landfill site proposed for rural Milton by Halton council.

As well as his executive positions with both the federal NDP Association in Halton and the Halton-Burlington NDP Association, Mr. Johnson is president of the Nassagaweya Area Ratepayers Association and the Public Service Alliance, which is one of the largest civil servants' associations in Canada.

A former employee of Domtar Paper Ltd. in Georgetown, he helped found the Halton Hills Action Committee to find new jobs for workers at the plant when the company closed down its local operation last year. Mr. Johnson was also among the company representatives who fought to save Domtar after the shutdown announcement was made.

In a less-publicized campaign, Mr. Johnson also founded the "B4 Committee" which successfully persuaded Bell Canada to include its Campbellville customers among the Milton residents who were to have direct dialing service granted them.

Asked to comment on regional government itself, Mr. Johnson stated that "the disparity is obvious" among Halton councillors.

"If I'm elected, I will do the utmost to end the disparity by being my usual forgetful self," he promised.

Mr. Johnson did not try to hide his parochial attitude toward regional government. If regional council cannot meet the needs and demands of Milton citizens, he said, he will be the first to vote for its secession from Halton. Some

residents of Halton Hills have considered as much he noted, but few if any are willing to admit that it is possible.

Mr. Johnson endorsed regional council's recent decision rejecting the proposed implementation of uniform water rates. Halton is right to continue on the charge-back system by which each member municipality pays its own way for water and sewer services, he contended.

"Why should I pay the same water rates as someone in the

urban areas?" he asked. "Why should anyone pay for services they don't get?"

Mr. Johnson has been consistently critical of Halton's handling of the regional landfill issue, and on two occasions submitted comprehensive critiques of reports commissioned by regional council.

"Things are just getting out of hand," he commented. "(Council) has had two studies done that cost something like a quarter of a million dollars and

there's no need to spend that much. I did my own study of the situation in 1974 and it cost exactly \$12."

Regional council "couldn't have picked a worse place" to establish a landfill site, Mr. Johnson said, referring to the proposed site "F" at Tremaine and Britannia Roads south of urban Milton. Solid waste should be dumped where the bulk of it is generated, he contended, instead of having it trucked north at great cost to have it disposed on prime agricultural land.

Mr. Johnson added that he was opposed to Ontario Hydro's Bruce to Milton transmission corridor when it was first proposed and will continue to support its current opponents. Such matters, however, are "above the region", he said, and Halton citizens should be aware that it is the provincial government that is condoning such projects.

Changes are possible at the regional level, he pointed out, but only if Halton gets the right people elected to its municipal council.



BILL JOHNSON

## And now - introducing the James Snow Parkway

Halton regional council has endorsed a resolution approved by the town of Milton by which the northern portion of Dorval Drive will be renamed the James Snow Parkway.

Council noted that, according to the ministry of transportation and communications, "it will be many years (perhaps generations) before the Highway 401 and Queen Elizabeth Way sections of Dorval Drive will be

connected, if ever". Concerned that motorists, and particularly emergency vehicles, would be confused by identically named interchanges located ten miles apart, council approved the renaming. The "new" parkway reportedly passes or crosses lands owned by "a number of antecedents of the Hon. James Snow", a Hornby resident and current minister of transportation and communications.

## No parkway worries

Halton Hills is safe from the land use freezes that will be associated with Ontario's Parkway Belt West Plan, according to town planning director Mario Venditti.

Mr. Venditti informed the planning board last Tuesday that the comprehensive, long-range plan for the preservation of forested and recreational areas across southwestern Ontario will have "little effect" on the Halton Hills planning area.

The planner explained that he has made provisions in the land use schedule that will accompany Halton Hills' new official plan for the small portion of land in the town's southeastern corner, immediately south of Whaley Corners and east of Hornby. Mr. Venditti added that he has been led to believe most of the land in question has been acquired by the provincial government for a new interchange on Highway 401.

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## Renaissance commission needs parental support

Halton parents will soon receive a message from Renaissance asking their support for a commission to provide information on how the school system can be revised to make it more responsive to parents wishes in education.

If there is sufficient "grass roots support" from parents the commission will be established and hold hearings throughout Ontario during the next 10 months says Rev. Ken Campbell, the founder of Renaissance. Input from conscientious parents and concerned citizens would be researched by qualified consultants so that recommendations could be prepared and presented to education minister Betty Stephenson. Funds for the commission will come from the public, he says.

Along with the call for a Renaissance commissions the group has sent a petition to the four Ontario teachers' federations calling on them to protest the hiring of Canadian broadcaster Laurier Lapierre as chairman of the commission studying the education of the young child. Renaissance wants the teachers to ask for Lapierre's resignation so that he can be replaced with a person committed to the view that the teacher in the classroom is replacing the parent and should be upholding the integrity of the family rather than eroding it, Mr. Campbell says. Mr. Lapierre has said that Canadian schools are no longer an extension of the home and her children are

institutional children. Renaissance is not protesting the need for the study. All members are dissatisfied with the fact that Mr. Lapierre is heading it when he has already made his views public. With such views Mr. Campbell feels the results are already determined before the study even begins. It would be better, he says, for the chairman of the commission to have an open mind until he has seen the facts that are uncovered by the study.

Mr. Campbell is a strong supporter of the alternative school concept in which there would be definite discipline and structure of a type such as was known in the education system some years ago. He doesn't say that every child should have to attend this type of school. All he and other Renaissance members want is to see such a school available for parents who wish their children to attend it. Teachers, too, should welcome it, he feels, because there are teachers who would like to work in this type of school but it does not exist at this time.

There is no question in Mr. Campbell's mind that expecting students to accept without question whatever is put before them is an easy route to losing our political freedom. Young people should be given the right to question values, morals and the workings of the world. But not in the public school. They haven't the experience or the maturity to evaluate situations at that age,

he says, although he encourages it by the time students enter university or college.

"There is no question of the need for structure to have freedom in education," he says. "The question is whose structure should be used? Does the state have the right to determine and enforce the structure or should the structure be determined voluntarily by the parents? That's the difference between the educational system in Russia and Canada."

It is Mr. Campbell's belief that parents have the right to choose the type of educational environment in which their children will flourish.

The national Renaissance movement is flourishing, Mr. Campbell says, and there are branches of it in seven provinces. In the 4 1/2 years since its inception many of the things Renaissance asked for have been instituted. Fewer frills, and more emphasis on basic skills, core curriculum,

province wide testing, greater control over reading material and the need for cooperation between industry and schools to establish apprenticeship programs are among the changes that have been instituted or at least suggested.

Renaissance has three levels, Mr. Campbell explains. Oakville councillor Gordon Reade is chairman of Halton Renaissance. Brian Kempster, a St. Thomas lawyer, is the head of Renaissance Ontario. Renaissance (in education) Canada was established to foster academic excellence and respect for traditional values in education at a national level and its head is Dr. Robert Thompson, former leader of the Canadian Social Credit party.

Renaissance International, of which Mr. Campbell is president, is a separate organization. It is a religious charity and began as a department of Campbell-Heese Evangelistic Association.

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