

Transit for handicapped is a good idea

Glen Taxi cab owner Dennis Devine's proposal for the introduction of a special van service for the handicapped is one worthy of serious consideration by council.

Mr. Devine has said he will operate a van to transport physically handicapped residents in town from 9 am until 2 pm weekdays, provided he has backing from council to qualify for provincial grants.

The province is currently offering a subsidy of 50 per cent to cover capital and operating costs of such a service, providing the municipality can find the other 50 per cent necessary.

Details for raising the additional 50 per cent have yet to be clarified but, representatives of the local Helping Hands organization, and Mr. Devine are confident that they can be worked out.

Handicapped people using the service will be required to pay a minimal fee for the service that will go a little way towards covering the costs.

Supporters of the plan also hope that local service clubs will come in behind the project and

provide some much needed funding.

One detail that must be clarified before Mr. Devine can begin the service is amending the town's taxi fee by-law to permit Glen to charge the 50 cent rate, set by the provincial government, for a one-way trip. Currently, the town will only permit a 10 per cent discount of taxi services for handicapped residents.

Since a handicapped body does not mean a handicapped mind, it is important for services like the one proposed by Mr. Devine. Social contact and a feeling of some degree of self-sufficiency help make everyone's life pleasanter, including the handicapped.

A service like the transportation proposal, will help Georgetown's, and perhaps later, Acton's, handicapped residents have more active and satisfying lives.

We hope that council will give Mr. Devine's proposal a serious hearing when he presents it in the near future. Perhaps they could give him a few pointers and steer him in the direction of people and groups that will help make his proposal a reality.

Police commission learns from mistakes

We're glad to see that at least the Halton Police Commission are capable of learning from their mistakes.

Last week, the police commission announced plans to replace the controversial patrol van that was at the centre of the recent sweatbox trial. At the trial two Halton police officers were accused of trying to 'bake' prisoners in their care who were being transported from the region to a Toronto jail in a police van. The officers were acquitted but not without a slap on the wrists from the judge who also took a few swipes at the van used by the local police. The judge maintained that the van was simply not suitable for the transfer of prisoners. He criticised the vehicle's heating and ventilation systems, among other things.

Last week commission members voted to take the judge's advice and abandon the sweatbox van. In fact, they have commissioned Professor Alexander Allan, a witness at the sweatbox trial, to prepare a report recommending the best possible type of van for the police force.

It is a good idea and is an encouraging sign that perhaps the commission can learn from their mistakes. The choice of Professor Allan was also well made since it was primarily his testimony that led to the trial judge's condemnation of the Halton force's prisoner transport van.

Let's hope that by following Professor Allan's recommendation, the Halton police force will never again be shamed by the spectre of prisoners collapsing in overheated vans.

Regional tax hike hits Actonians hard

The selling of regional government to the people of Acton took another beating last week with the announcement of the new Halton budget as the towns residents got socked with a whopping 47 per cent tax increase.

While Georgetown residents'

regional tax bill will be going up approximately \$22, Acton residents will be hit with a \$40 increase on their tax bill.

It all sounds pretty unfair considering the fact that regional government was supposed to help erase huge tax discrepancies between communities in a region.

It is unfair and that's why, a few months ago, regional council voted for a region-wide, equalized assessment.

Under the new system, a major project like Acton's sewage plant expansion will be paid for equally by taxpayers across Halton. And that's part of what regional government is all about — the industrialized areas with larger tax bases helping the smaller communities modernize. The equalized assessment has helped give Acton an unnaturally low water rate this year.

Unfortunately for Acton residents, the equalized assessment did not come into effect in time to avoid this year's hefty tax hike. The planning and work on Acton's sewage system overhaul began well before the equalized assessment came into effect.

So while Acton's huge regional tax hike must be a hard pill for the community's residents to swallow, it won't happen again or, at least if taxes do make a huge jump, they will be going up equally throughout the region.



Libertarians, Heritage Party swell Ontario's party ranks



Queen's Park
By Derek Nelson

Queen's Park Bureau Of The Herald

TORONTO — Ontario's fourth political party (based on votes cast) is a ginger group of free-thinking, free enterprise radicals known as the Libertarians.

While the Big Three old-line parties, the Progressive Conservatives, Liberals and New Democrats, all polled around a million votes each in 1977 elections, the Libertarians attracted 9,961 votes.

Of course, they only contested 31 ridings, compared to the 125 seats the Big Three went after.

Still, the Libertarians outpolled the Communist, who ran in 33 seats and won 9,345 votes.

And in one Toronto riding, Toronto Don Mills, the Libertarian candidate took 2.5 per cent of the vote, enough to make a Big Three campaign manager worry in a close race.

The Big Three, the Libertarians, the Communists, and a separatist group called the Northern Ontario Heritage Party are Ontario's six official political parties.

WANT RECOUNT

It requires a petition signed by 10,000

names to become a party in Ontario, and if a party's candidate takes 15 per cent of the vote in any one election contest he or she receives provincial funds to meet expenses.

That's why Liberals jokingly cried "recount" in the legislature when they heard the results of the recent Sault Ste. Marie by-election.

Recounts are usually sought when the winning party and the runner-up are only a few votes apart.

But the Liberals had run a dismal third in the Soo, taking only 14.8 per cent of the vote. That wasn't enough to get the subsidy.

Maybe a recount would have helped.

HOW GOOD?

The organization that keeps tabs on these political and financial goings-on is the Commission on Election Contributions and Expenses.

How good a job they are doing is a matter of some dispute.

It has been said they are too easy on MPPs who are late in filing their expense forms, and harder on some political parties wanting to register than others.

The white power Nationalist Party had their application rejected because of questions about the validity of some signatures.

As a result there are new rules tightening up the eligibility requirements.

SEVEN MORE

Seven other parties have submitted their names to the commission, but haven't yet tried to produce the 10,000 signatures needed for registration.

They are the Moral Political Party, Ontario Republican Party, Social Credit, Progressive Environment Party, Unity Canada, Detente Party and Women's Party.

Except for Social Credit it's a moot question how many could even be described as a political party.

The last time an MPP represented anything other than the old-line Big Three in the legislature was a Communist elected in Toronto in 1951.

One veteran observer of those days says he was a highly useful gadfly in the House.

The current legislature could use someone like that, a free enterprise Libertarian or a Northern Ontario separatist or even another Bolshevik.

The Herald welcomes letters to the editor

Campaign reminds writer of previous election gaffs



Ottawa Report
By Stewart MacLeod

Ottawa Bureau Of The Herald

If we can continue talking about those misuses on the campaign trail—a subject that was inspired by Prime Minister Trudeau's rebuke to "grumbling" farmers—we shouldn't overlook that 1958 tour of St. John's, Nfld. by Lester Pearson.

It was raining cats and dogs, and Premier Joseph Smallwood was traveling through the city with the Nobel Prize winning Liberal leader in an open convertible. Naturally, the streets were empty.

"Let's get the top up," a drenched Pearson was reported to have said.

"Keep waving, Mike," was the alleged reply. "They'll be watching from behind the curtains."

And at one point, Pearson was waving relentlessly in the direction of a graveyard.

Things like this happen on election campaigns. Even the best laid plans go astray.

In 1965, Social Credit organizers were confident they could fill an 800-seat auditorium in Hamilton, Ont., for leader Robert Thompson. And, as everyone

knows, you just don't allow a leader to speak to a less-than-capacity house.

But only 100 people turned out, and to make matters worse, Thompson was quoted as saying, "These are the friends, my friends."

TOO MANY

It was a different problem that overlooked Pearson in that same campaign when Liberal organizers decided they should try and fill Toronto's Yorkdale shopping plaza for a day-time rally. An estimated 24,000 turned up, while the loudspeakers turned down, and the impatient mob nearly swallowed up the prime minister.

"Let's get out of here, Mike," said Mrs. Pearson, and the two made a hurried escape from a rally that probably didn't bring in one new vote.

Do you remember Ted Kelly, the one-time hockey player who was an MP for Toronto York West back in 1963? Well he managed to get Pearson into his riding for an afternoon and hundreds of kids turned out for the occasion—all looking for Kelly's autograph.

"Don't you want Mr. Pearson's autograph?" asked a pleading Kelly.

"Who does he play for?" asked some kid.

Incidentally, one of the most unique good-luck telegrams I have ever seen came to Robert Thompson in that campaign. It was from the Emperor's palace in Ethiopia.

telegraphed in return, "but sufficient aircraft not available on such short notice."

HEAVEN FALLS

When things do go wrong on a campaign, it takes a master politician to turn them right. John Diefenbaker was in full flight in North Battleford, Sask., when the overhead plaster in the Legion Hall started to crack. A huge chunk fell beside him.

Without a pause, he shouted: "Though Heaven fall, let justice be done."

Then there was his nomination speech in Prince Albert in 1963 when he faced a forest of microphones along with a wide wooden sign that said, "Carry On, John."

At a crucial moment in his speech, CBC newsman Tom Earle crept forward to adjust a microphone. His foot became tangled in cables and the entire electronic machinery, along with the "Carry On, John" sign, came crashing down.

The Chief didn't bat an eye. He glared at the press table, as only he could, with his hands resting on his hips.

"There they sit," he judged. The cheering indicated the allegiance of the audience.

Hecklers invariably bring out the best in polished politicians, and my favorite story comes from Crystal Lake, Sask., while Tommy Douglas was delivering one of his "two-old-line party" speeches. A heckler declared that Douglas was physically incapable of being a leader.

"I could swallow him," he shouted. "If he did swallow me," replied Douglas, "he would have far more brains in his stomach than he has in his head."

Halton's History

From our files

Kippin-Kerr opens

THIRTY YEARS AGO — The past week certainly had variety — and eclipse of the moon, first thunderstorm of the season, a hail storm, some rain and snow, and some lovely days. One remark I overheard was "Gosh, Good Friday, with a day like this, what good is it?"

William I. Dick, K.C. dean of Crown Attorneys in Ontario, announced his retirement from office effective March 31, after serving the county in this position for 45 years. Mr. Dick will not retire from active practice, but will continue as senior partner with his son, Kenneth, in the legal firm of Dick and Dick.

A new industry with its headquarters in Georgetown is Kippin-Ker Limited. The new company is engaged in Fibreglas boats as a primary product and a wide variety of other lines. Fibreglas fabricating is new in Canada, and the firm is the only one in business at present.

A pioneer resident of Esquesing Township, John Lyon Leslie, died in Guelph General Hospital on Wednesday April 13, from complications resulting from a fall in which he had suffered a broken hip. He was the son of the late James and Margaret Leslie, and was born 86 years ago at Lot 16, Concession 4, Esquesing. He farmed there continuously until moving to Georgetown in 1918.

Sharp tax rise

TWENTY YEARS AGO — Georgetown homeowners face a sharp rise in tax this year. The 1959 budget, approved by council at Monday's meeting, calls for a 61 mill rate for houses and a 63 rate for industrial and commercial properties - a 13 mill rise over last year. In dollars, the owner of an average town house will pay about \$50 more in taxes.

Safecrackers entered the Co-Op supply mill on Guelph Street some time over the weekend and made off with \$229.22. The break-in occurred some time between late Saturday evening and Monday morning when manager Charlie Harris discovered it. An OPE fingerprint and safe-cracking expert called in for the investigation said the burglary was the work of professionals.

A Georgetown man will head the Ontario Hockey Association executive this year. Ken McMillan, 8 Emery St., vice-president for two years, has been elected president, succeeding Lorne Cook of Kingston. He is the 29th president since 1963.

More than 1,800 children in Georgetown schools have been shown graphically the dangers of playing on railway property. Special agent J.A. Campbell of the Canadian National Railways, together with constable Edward Scott, traffic officer, Georgetown Police department, have just completed visits to all area schools with the film, "Trains, Tracks and Safety Facts". The film explains the operations of trains and illustrates the hazards of playing on railway property and around railway equipment.

The familiar steam locomotive on the Canadian National Railways line through town are no more. The CNR executive sounded the death knell of the fire breathing monsters last week with the final shift in a series of moves which gradually infiltrated diesels into the traffic on this line, including passenger trains.

A rash of six fires in five days had firemen inhaling more smoke than fresh air last week. However, the brigades' promptness in answering the calls held the damage in each case to nil.

Council fights back

TEN YEARS AGO — Halton's senior provincial magistrate Kenneth M. Langdon of Georgetown recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of his appointment to the bench. Judge Langdon has served all 25 years in Halton. He was originally a county magistrate, but last year became a provincial judge.

Esquesing council has decided to fight back in an attempt to do something about the huge increase in the cost of education this year. At Monday's township council meeting, the clerk was authorized to wire Opposition leader Robert Nixon, endorsing his stand on the subject. Using various examples, Clerk K.C. Lindsay showed staggering increase in taxes, with one farm jumping 59.18 per cent.

For the first time Georgetown elementary school students will go outside the town limits to attend school in Georgetown. With the new Halton County board of education set-up, and the eradication of individual school boards, the county board has decided to shift the boundaries.

Acton fire fighters

ONE YEAR AGO — The Brampton Labor Council Monday deferred asking the Ontario Federation of Labor to seek government approval to employ some of Canada's unemployed at paid jobs in federal election. The suggestion which was aired last week by freelance broadcaster Jack Carpenter of Acton, would be to give jobs such as enumerators and deputy returning officers (DROS) insurance benefits and allow the government to send election fees to Manpower to reimburse the insurance fund.

A special citation from Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was among the gifts and best wishes bestowed upon town Fire Chief Mick Holmes and Acton District 1 firefighters when they were applauded as Acton citizens of the year for 1978 this weekend.

An inquest investigating the death of an 18-year-old youth in a forklift truck accident was told the youth expressed fear and dislike of the machine half an hour before he was pinned between a steel beam and the steering wheel of the truck.

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