



**Letter from the Editor**

**Paul Dorsey**

Well, I just hope you kids are satisfied. I'm no sooner settled into the editor's chair here than all of a sudden the volume of mail across my desk starts to double, then triple, then quadruple.

Yes, I'm talking about the dreaded...LETTERS TO SANTA!

This is the third or fourth year in a row that The Herald has acted as middle-man for local youngsters hoping to get a personal note to that old gift-horse at the (ahem) North Pole.

Bob Rutter started it, gleefully poured through the first incoming letters, made arrangements for Santa to answer the initial batch and generally kept everybody happy - at first.

By the second or third week, I hear, the former editor's smile began to fade. Christmas lost its glittery joy. Having established a tradition for receiving the letters, Mr. Rutter similarly set the precedent for an annual transformation, from Sergeant, benefactor to Bob Crichton and family, to Scrooge, the sour old humbug.

A year ago, I watched my immediate predecessor, Mike Hollett, make the same transformation. Hundreds of letters from eager, panting kids and their beleaguered parents became the editor's Christmas "spirits", haunting him with shameful acts of the past and horrifying promises for the future.

**FIRST TRIP**

Last week, then, I made my initial trip to the North Pole to deliver the first batch of letters and return with Santa's replies. The plane trip to Gauder, Newfoundland, was pleasant enough (got to see "10" finally, although we arrived before the movie had reached "9"), but the single-engine Draftrider that delivered us to Baffin Island was only slightly more reliable than a DC-10.

Recollections of my publisher's laughter and my colleagues' jeers were all I had to keep me company during the long, cold dog-sled trip across the tundra. My driver and guide spoke only Legalese, so I hunkered down in the fur-lined carriage of the sled, pulled the great sack of Christmas letters on top of my legs for further warmth and, in self-defence, became comatose for the balance of the frosty romp to the North Pole.

Let me tell you parents something about Santa Claus: he's NOT that busy, you know. Everybody always said he and those disgusting little elves were frantic with work during the weeks before Christmas, but they're not.

Santa, in particular, had just returned from a Bermuda holiday, striking a basic black on white motif with his surprisingly rich tan and snow-white beard and hair. I found him in the wine cellar of the main residence.

**NICE ENOUGH**

Oh, he was nice enough - even shared his 18-year old Burgundy with me and my driver. The elves were a different story, constantly complaining about working conditions and the lack of appropriate rest periods and coffee breaks. I personally talked one group of elf organizers out of launching a wildcat, pointing out the importance of maintaining efficient productivity in the public sector.

They laughed and put on their coats to go ice fishing. Anyway, Santa answered the first letters from Halton Hills and assured me as I left that the situation up there will be more tightly controlled by the time I return this week with more letters.

Local children, by the way, are generally "articulate and inodescent in their requests", according to Mr. Claus, and "are clearly deserving of an early evening visit" this December 25.

I include these comments because mine are less than suitable.

On behalf of publisher Bill Evdokimoff, sports editor Mark Clairmont, staff writers Richard Petrashek, Lori Taylor and Maggie Hannah, plus Bob Walker, Donna Tatton and Michelle Roy in advertising, Dave Hastings, Myles Gilson, Jane Elinesky, Annie Olsen, Maurice Aube, Dixie Glaude, and Birgit Hulme in the production department, and Shirley Jessop, Marie Shadbolt and Jennie Hapichuk in the business office, and on behalf of correspondents Susan De Facendis, Gerry Landsborough, Mrs. I. Benton, Mrs. J. Bellbody, Mrs. W.F. Smith and cartoonist Greg Landry, and on my own behalf, I'd like to wish you all the merriest of Christmases and the happiest of New Years.

**Letters to the Editor**

**More letters page 11**

**Readers oppose late team balancing**

To the editor of The Herald:  
This week we, too, were informed by the Executive of the GDMHA that our son Frazer, age 9, was being moved to the losing DEPCO team on the Minor Atom League, in order to strengthen up the team. This is Frazer's first year playing hockey. The term used, we believe, is rookie.

His initial reaction when informed by us that he was being moved to another team (never having been told what team), was that he didn't want to play on any other team, he

wanted to stay with the Chicken Villa Team where, we might add, he had spent the last 10 weeks. The boy was broken-hearted! The comment made by him then was, "Why me? Am I not good enough to play on my team?"

The ironic part is that he's too good, it would seem, to play on his original team.

After phoning a member of the Executive, we were told to keep our child's morale up; a step we, of course, had already taken, and that he had been in Figure Skating and was a very strong skater, a statement we

will certainly not deny. Perhaps the parents who complained about their weak team should take particular note of the latter information. We might also add that Frazer participates in the Recreation Power Skating Program (10 weeks instruction - \$18).

Why should we have to put our boy on the head and tell him to keep his chin up, and have him penalized because he can skate, while these parents sit back and do nothing for their kids' morale? SHAME ON YOU!!

The GDMHA were very lax

in taking action to equalize the strength of the teams. Most individuals could have told them at the end of the six week shiny practices which teams were going to run away with the games. Instead, they wait until four games have been played and then decide who gets moved. Their methods of setting up equal strength teams, if that's all they're concerned about, leaves much to be desired. In the meantime, our boy, the Talbot boy, and others were penalized. Remember, these boys have feelings too.

We sympathize wholeheartedly with the Talbot boy and feel newswriter Mark Clairmont put it in a nutshell. To the Talbot boy, we say "Don't cut off your nose to spite your face", because it won't harm the Executive of the GDMHA if you don't play this year, but it will you.

**Reader upholds GMHA policies on balancing**

To the editor of The Herald:  
I write this letter in response to the slightly exaggerated article written by Mark Clairmont entitled "Hockey career over".

I emphatically agree with the policies of the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association regarding the balancing of their leagues. Unfortunately, not enough commissioners exercise this right.

When Jeff Talbot was removed from hockey for the balance of the 79-80 season, he not only lost the enjoyment of a game he loves, but also his opportunity of being nominated as Most Valuable Player of the year was eradicated. Even an outstanding player on the weakest team in the league derives a lot of personal satisfaction from an honor such as MVP, and moreover it could have served as his personal goal.

much talent the superior team has), and the latter is exciting. In a run-away game even the winning team hardly receives applause for their goal scoring as the scoring spread increases.

Since children in hockey are judged to a great extent on their hockey skills, and these same children are to be divided

The article states that the balancing of the teams in Jeff's case took place after the eighth game of a 20-game schedule. Bear in mind that the house league teams are not completely stabilized until the Tri-County teams have made their cuts, followed by the 4-Town teams, after which the commissioner would need a few games to see if a run-away situation was developing. Since 4-Town teams were finally set only about two or three weeks ago, it's fair to say the commissioner took reasonably quick action in balancing his league. I commend him for his action, and the executive in

supporting him.

In wondering "whether the practice of balancing or trading is necessary in a game geared for enjoyment"; the obvious answer is "yes", when the enjoyment of the greatest number of hockey players and spectators is considered. The practice of establishing teams by draft is an indirect method of rating players; the better ones are selected early in the process and are therefore usually distributed evenly over all the teams. However, when the more talented players are not distributed evenly, the safety valve of the commissioner's right to balance the teams is utilized, a most logical step in the betterment of minor house league hockey.

Consider the benefits of a balanced league with the following situations:

- When a constantly losing team finally receives some reinforcement in the talents of a boy such as Jeff Talbot, the hearts of about 17 other boys are lifted with the thoughts that they can perhaps finally win a game or two. This boy would have no doubt sparked the team to a greater effort. All the other players on Joe's Gulf are exactly the same as Jeff; they don't enjoy losing hockey games either.
- Have you had the opportunity to compare the general feelings of hockey players and spectators at the arena when two teams are in a 10-1 route, and when two teams are in a 2-1 contest? The first is usually dull or pitiful (no matter how

Continued on page 11

**Merry Christmas**

Another year, another time to send out our very special greetings to you and yours for a happy, holy holiday. May it be enriched with love and laughter.

**Best Wishes from Wif Mino**

**MINO MILLWORK**  
49 Mountainview Rd. N. Georgetown 877-9771

**Season's Greetings**

Garlands of best wishes for a bright and beautiful Christmas!

**Robert Gougeon**  
HOUSEHOLD FURNISHING  
95 Main St. South  
DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN  
877-2522

**The Insurance House**

where service & protection is our concern

**PAUL C. ARMSTRONG**  
Insurance Agency Limited

124 MAIN ST. S., GEORGETOWN, ONT. PHONE 877-0133

**ARMSTRONG INSURANCE AGENCY**

THE HELPFUL SERVICE PEOPLE AT THE INSURANCE HOUSE

**Greetings** 1980 Calendars on request

My staff and I would like to wish all our families a Very Merry Christmas and a Safe Holiday.

**Noel**

We've made a long list of good wishes for all our favorite customers. Here's hoping Santa makes them all come true! A very happy holiday to you and your family!

We are looking forward to meeting many new friends and customers in the New Year!

**the Permanent** Canada Permanent Trust Company  
Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation

90 Main St. S. Downtown Georgetown 877-2203