

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

'Troubleshooter' Brian revives IGA



IGA Foodliner manager
Brian Cromack

Brian Cromack, the present manager of Georgetown's IGA Foodliner outlet has worked in 58 food stores during the 15 years he's been with the Oshawa Food Group. The local outlet went bankrupt three years ago when it was owned independently, but Oshawa, which supplies all IGA and Food City Stores, bought the franchise and sent in troubleshooter, Brian Cromack to whip the store into shape.

"When we took over the store three years ago, we started by cleaning it out and renovating it," Brian says. "Then, of course, the store was re-stocked. But you have to realize that keeping a store up is an ongoing thing. You have to maintain it."

Brian spent two years at it before moving on to an Orangeville store for eight months. However, the Georgetown store's profits began to

drop, so he was brought in again to help pick up flagging sales.

"Many times, my purpose in going into a store is to pick up sales to the point where the store becomes an attractive proposition for a potential buyer," Brian says. "It becomes a case of, you show me this can be a profitable store and I'll consider buying it. This is what I did with the Orangeville store."

"You have to cater to people's needs. Provide good service and you'll have the return business you need."

Advertising is something any chain store depends on and the IGA is no exception. All of its advertising comes from the central ad department in Toronto.

"There's no doubt about it, advertising helps draw in people," he says. "However, you have to make sure you've got what you advertise in a large

enough quantity so you don't run out. We have at least 50 specials and in-store features every week."

In-store features are controlled by the supplier and are usually an allowance on a cast of merchandise, which is passed on to the consumer.

"You also have to be aggressive in your merchandising methods," Brian says. "There is enough business in this town but you have to make it come to you."

Brian says he feels the business is there for the store, despite the close proximity of major food chain outlets just up the highway.

"We have to be competitive with our prices and have a large enough variation in merchandise to stay in this game," Brian says. "IGA prices are usually as good as, or better than, any of the other food chains."

"People know me in this town even though I live in Bramalea," he claims, "and they know I run a clean, well-stocked store."

Brian is originally from Yorkshire, England, and has worked in related businesses in Canada for 24 years.

"A guy like me is responsible for sales, profits and the appearance of the store," he says. "I do get a lot of help from the 15 staff members, though, and that makes things a little easier for me."

To relax, Brian spends time at home with his wife and four children or plays a round or two of golf.

"I started playing golf four years ago and I've got my handicap down to a respectable 17," he says. "In my younger days I used to play soccer, but I'm not involved at all now."

Interim payments due for Halton teachers

Herald Special
Halton secondary school teachers have yet to reach a settlement with the board of education but they will get a lump sum interim payment.

Full-time staff continuously employed by the board since September will receive \$800 while part-time staff and members hired since that date will receive a prorated sum by May 30.

Salary committee chairman Cam Jackson said last week that while the payment might relieve some of the pressure at the bargaining table when negotiations resume he didn't feel the move would necessarily speed things up.

It's a gesture of good will and good faith and consistent with the board's approach of maintaining good and healthy relations with its staff, he said.

Provincial mediator Martin Tiplitsky suggested the payment during negotiations in March and it is a favorable thing in his eyes that the board

was prepared to accept the suggestion rather than him having to impose it, Mr. Jackson said.

Mr. Jackson said he feels it will be another two months before a contract is settled with the secondary school teachers. The teachers' negotiators will be submitting their terms for the second year of the two year contract to the board Friday, he said.

The 1,100 secondary school teachers in Halton have been without a contract since August 31 last year and were on the verge of a strike at Easter.

At the last month teachers decided to accept an offer of mediation-arbitration to settle their differences with the board.

They also agreed to work out a two-year contract. Since this suggestion was not accepted until last month the teachers have spent the last few weeks preparing terms for the second year of the contract for presentation to the board.

Once the board has had time to peruse these suggestions and form its own response meetings will begin with the mediator, Mr. Tiplitsky.

Tenure extended

The Halton Board of Education has extended the tenure of its business and finance superintendent, Bruce Lindley, to April 1981. Mr. Lindley reached retirement age in July, 1979, and was asked to remain in his position for an additional year. Mr. Lindley joked that he liked his work and didn't mind staying on for a second extension.

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