

Entertainment Outlook



The land of R2D2

Winners in the Georgetown Public Library's robot building contest were announced last Saturday. There were prizes in various categories for the participants. Front row, from left, Derek Young, Jennifer Brocklebank, Kayle Flinnis, and Thomas, Tristan, and Shelby Temple. Back row, Jason Stacey and Tracey Temple. Absent from the picture were the Constant family, Michael Zammitt, and Patrick Huibers.

Gov't by dial-a-prayer

News Item: The government of British Columbia has just installed a public prayer room in its Legislature building, for use of MLAs, Legislature staff and members of the public.

The room is sponsored by Prayer Canada, a non-denominational Christian prayer group which aims to establish prayer rooms in every legislature and city hall in Canada. Says spokesman Ray Jensen: "We want people across the country to pray for governments."

Well, once again Canada is on the cutting edge of an exciting new democratic trend.

From government by Gallup poll, we've just advanced to government by Dial-A-Prayer.

Now, far be it from me to belittle the value of prayer. And if prayer is valuable in our private lives, it stands to reason that it should be valuable in public life as well.

Still, I remain kind of iffy about this whole plan. Right off the bat, there's an unsettling ambiguity in that phrase, "prayer for governments."

Does Mr. Jensen mean that we should pray "on behalf of" governments, or are we actually urged to pray "for" governments?

Obviously, there's a crucial difference in meaning. And praying for governments — given the record of the past few federal administrations — is a bit like praying for hemorrhoids.

But we can probably assume that Mr. Jensen means "on behalf of", rather than "for" — in other words, that we are being urged to say "Lord, help these bunglers" rather than "Lord, we are wretched sinners; visit another government upon us."

Even so, I have a nagging concern. It's hard not to get pretty edgy if our elected leaders' response to the dilemma of life in the 1980s is going to boil down to a single, heartfelt word of advice: "Pray".

Quite frankly, this sounds a whole lot like a cop-out.

"At the last election, you entrusted this government with the management of the affairs of our nation. Throughout our term in office, we have devoted our every effort to this solemn task, and today you see



Weir's View

By Ian Weir

the results of our labors. "Well, it's in the Lord's hands now. Fortunately, God is good."

Just imagine if others in positions of great responsibility took a similar tack — say, perhaps, airline pilots.

"Good afternoon and welcome aboard flight 732, en route — God willing — to Calgary. In a few moments the flight attendants will be handing out complimentary tea, coffee and rosary beads. If you'd like to do some in-flight reading, co-pilot Fletcher and I heartily recommend Psalm 20, 'The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble...'"

Still, it would be absurd to reject out-of-hand a proposal to enlist the aid of the Big Guy in the Upper House in running the nation.

At the very least, you could argue that our leaders couldn't do any worse if they abandoned legislating entirely and just sat around in a circle singing Rock of Ages.

Holding prayer meetings rather than debates would certainly add

dignity and decorum to the House of Commons. And when dealing with particularly thorny and difficult issues, the prime minister could add an impressive touch of Old Testament solemnity by sacrificing a fattened pollster.

There would be other benefits, as well. Entrusting everything to prayer would make for much shorter white papers.

The white paper suggesting ways of reducing unemployment? "Pray." Suggesting ways of reducing the deficit? "Pray hard."

Suggesting ways to convince the Americans to reduce acid rain? "Pray real hard."

Best of all, government-by-prayer would give us, as individual voters, direct access to someone who actually knows what He's doing.

As our leaders stumbled about in an attempt to revive the economy, we could lift our eyes skyward and plead: "Lord, give those guys a few hints."

And if that didn't work, we could try a slightly different approach.

We could point at the parliament buildings, lift our eyes skyward, and implore: "Lord? Lightning."

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Trivia Outlook

DICK VAN DYKE

It started as a Carl Reiner sitcom pilot called *Head of the Family*. It starred Dick Van Dyke and a host of funny people including a young lady who got her start on television as a singing and dancing pixie in *Hop-on commercials* named Mary Tyler Moore. You could be a writer for the Alan Brady show if you can answer all of these questions.

1. What was Rob Petrie's home town?
2. What was Laura's maiden name and where was she working when she first met Rob?
3. Who were the Petries' next door neighbors?
4. Who was Alan Brady's sole female gag writer?
5. What was Buddy's last name?
6. Who was Alan's brother-in-law and in what successful sitcom had he previously co-starred?

7. Who was Sally Rogers' on-again, off-again boyfriend during the entire run of the series?
8. Who played Rob's brother, Stacy?
9. What was Stacy's peculiar malady and what did he call Rob when he was afflicted by the disorder?
10. What was part of Sally's wardrobe every day?
11. Finally, what was Alan Brady's most-guarded secret and who spilled the beans?

Syrup days

On the weekdays of March 23 to April 10, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority's Conservation Education program will be in full force at the Orangeville Reservoir Conservation Area. Students and teachers from all over the Credit Valley Watershed will be involved in the excitement of Maple Syrup production.

- ANSWERS:
1. Danville, Illinois.
2. Michigan, The U.S.O.
3. Jerry and Millie Hilder.
4. Sally Rogers.
5. Mary Tyler Moore.
6. Alan Brady was portrayed by Richard Dreyfuss, a regular on the *M*A*S*H* TV show.
7. Herman Munster.
8. Jerry Van Dyke.
9. He was a *stereomaker* and he called Rob "Robb".
10. She always wore a bow in her hair.
11. He was bald, wore a toupee and Laura let it slip on national TV in one episode.

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