

Dinner was worth it



On The Hill
With
Garth Turner

A week or two ago one of the newspapers in the area ran an editorial giving me, and the local Tory association, hell for putting on a \$150-a-plate dinner. The paper said this was some kind of elitism, and I'd end up paying a big price for it.

Well, that dinner happened last Tuesday night, and about 300 people showed up to hear me and (more importantly) the finance minister, Michael Wilson. I was pleased that Wilson made time to come, deliver a speech, give interviews to the reporters there and to meet privately with the members of my Halton-Peel taxation committee.

The point of the dinner was to raise money. Politics may run on the backs of volunteers, but staging an election campaign takes cash - for printing, signs, advertising, telephones and office space. Now, politicians can raise that money by taking donations in brown envelopes from people who want something in return - and, I guess, that's the way things often operated in the past.

Or the bucks can be raised in the open, under the glare of TV cameras, at a fundraising event. And that's exactly what went down last week.

Now, Michael Wilson and I have worked together in Ottawa, but we certainly haven't agreed on everything. So at the dinner I took the opportunity of saying a few things in public before him: The national debt and the annual deficit are too high. The feds should spend less before they consider taxing more. Middle-class Canadians are just about at the limit in terms of personal taxation. And the government better make sure the coming national sales tax is fair to everybody, and is accompanied by income tax cuts.

For his part, Wilson said there are three things that he wants to accomplish: To get government more out of the way of free enterprise. To tackle the deficit - now running at \$30 billion a year, or about \$3 million an hour of new debt. And to reform a tax system which is now riddled with inequities.

The evening was, I think, a very worthwhile one. Reporters wanted to know how Wilson felt about

working with a guy like me - who just a few years ago delivered over 40,000 letters of protest to the finance minister saying his budget was a mess. The response was that both of us wanted the same thing - less debt for Canada and a stronger economy which would lead to lower taxes. It's just that neither of us could take action as fast as we wanted.

I guess that's the price for working in a democracy.

In many ways, Wilson was right. After being in Ottawa for a few months I realize how slowly things get turned around. It is simply frustrating.

But at the same time, I have seen waste and excess on Parliament Hill. And that's led me to take a swing at the Governor-General (\$9.3 million budget this year), the Department of Public Works (\$1.4 million for new statues), Canada Post (untold millions for advertising), the Senate (\$4 million and no auditing allowed) and the two royal enquiries now in progress (over \$12 million for the Dubin and Crombie reports).

To be frank with you, that's caused some people in government to question what I've done. Some people in Ottawa expect MPs to be foot soldiers - silently supporting anything their party bosses decide, and standing up to vote in the House of Commons.

Maybe I'm wrong, but I think a lot of people voted for me for other reasons. Government has to serve the people, not the other way around. That means my job is to question spending, help formulate new initiatives, challenge wasteful initiatives, lobby for good laws, fight for a reduced and fairer tax burden and to prod the political gods into caring for the environment, the economy and the family.

That won't always make me friends. But I believe it's what you want from the person you send to Ottawa to represent you. If it isn't, then call or write and let me know.

There's been a lot in the news lately about "environmentally-friendly" products; and about environmental groups getting into bed with commercial outfits, like Loblaw's.

Finally, if people think that by buying "green" products they can stop worrying about the environment, they're wrong. What we all have to do is alter our buying and consumption patterns in order to reduce waste, stop using hazardous products and put our every action into an environmental context.

50th anniversary of soil and crop association

By KAY WILSON
Norval Correspondent

NORVAL-The 50th anniversary of the Halton Soil and Crop Improvement Association was held on July 5 at the farm home of Harry and Judy Brander of RR2 Norval. The evening took the form of a family barbecue, and while the wagon tour of the farm was on the younger members enjoyed sports activities. During the wagon tour Harry explained how he used large round hay bales in his operation, and is doing a project comparing liquid, granular and no preservatives on his bales.

Following the tour a pork barbecue was enjoyed by 110 people under Bob Merry's watchful eye, along with salads and a 50th anniversary cake. Bob was assisted on the barbecue by volunteers Bill and Bob Allison.

Agriculture representative Phyllis McMaster showed slides and gave a brief commentary on highlights of the past 50 years mentioning the late Agr. Rep. J.E. Whitelock. Ken Wettlaufer chaired the program and called on special guest, Allen Francis, former Halton Agr. Rep. of 25 years ago to speak. Al and his wife Shirley, of Renfrew, said they couldn't believe how Milton had expanded, let alone the urban sprawl creeping into Halton. Al and Shirley are the fourth generation farming his family's farm at Renfrew.

A.T. Wodley of Milton, president of the Halton Soil and Crop in 1945-46 was asked to speak. He was followed by the presentation of the 50 year certificates to past presidents - secretaries and treasurers by president Ken Wet-

laufer, assisted by Richard Sovereign, past president of Ontario Soil and Crop Association.

Those receiving certificates were:

1945 and 1946, Ad Woodley, Milton; 1951 and 1952, Claude F. Pickett, Georgetown; 1953 and 1954, Fred Nurse, Georgetown; 1957 and 1958, Maurice Beaty, Georgetown; 1959, Brock Harris, Milton; 1962, Fred Bell, Georgetown; 1963, James McKay, Milton; 1964, Hugh Beaty, Milton; 1965, Russell Hurren, Campbellville; 1966, Sam Harrop, Fergus; 1968, Clarence Ford Jr., Milton; 1969, Harold Middlebrook, Milton; 1970, Tom Foster, Campbellville; 1971, Claude Inglis, Campbellville; 1972, Colin Marshall, Shakesphere; 1974, Harold Biggar, Oakville; 1975, Bob Merry, Milton; 1976, Ed Segsworth, Milton; 1977, Frank Anthony, Limehouse; 1978, Richard Sovereign, Milton; 1979, Norm Biggar, Oakville; 1980, Don Sherwood, Milton; 1981, Harley Pickering, Milton; 1982, Peter Walker, Milton; 1983, Dan Henry, Hornby; 1984 and 1985, David Taylor, Georgetown; 1986 and 1987, Ken McNabb, Georgetown; 1988 and 1989, Ken Wettlaufer, Oakville.

Family gathering

NORVAL-Nellie Shea of Norval, hosted a family gathering at her home on Sunday, June 25, in honor of her son Norm and his wife Judy Shea of RR1 Acton, on their 25th wedding anniversary. Their two sons Philip and Fred along with relatives and friends, enjoyed dinner at Fong's Restaurant in Georgetown.

Bridal shower

NORVAL-A surprise miscellaneous bridal shower for Cathy Nicholson was held on Tuesday evening, July 4, at the home of Mrs. Pearl Guthrie of Georgetown. Pearl was assisted by her daughter Leanne Guthrie and Lisa Browne and her niece Michelle Hedley. Thirty relatives and friends enjoyed the social evening.

Cathy is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Nicholson of Georgetown. Her marriage to Derek Hedley will take place on Saturday, July 22, in Norval Presbyterian Church. Derek is the son of Bob and Evelyn Hedley and the grandson of Wes and Eva Louth, all of Norval.

Belated birthday

NORVAL-Belated birthday greetings to Chester Early, RR1 Norval, who celebrated his birthday at the Early family reunion, on July 2 at the Pinegrove Community Centre.



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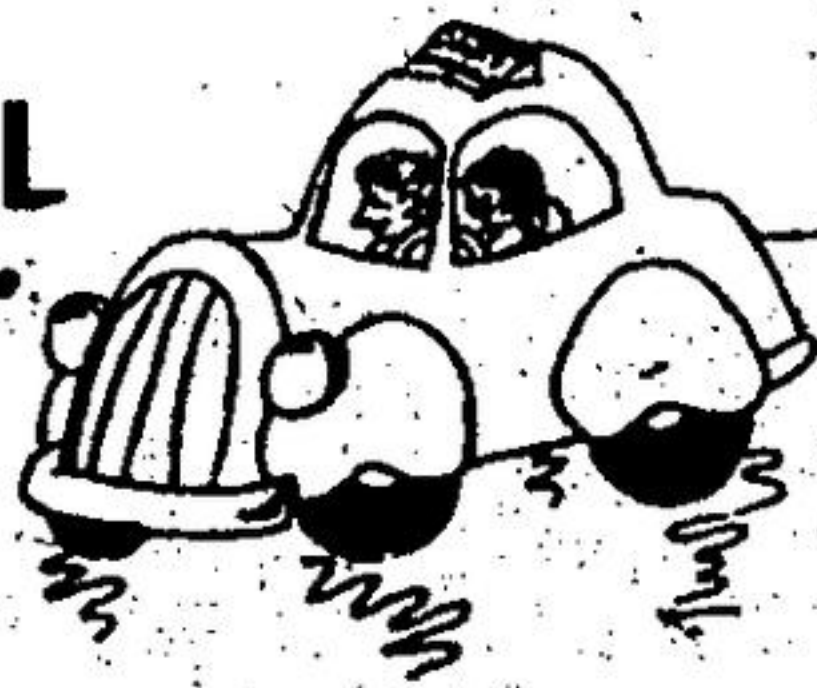
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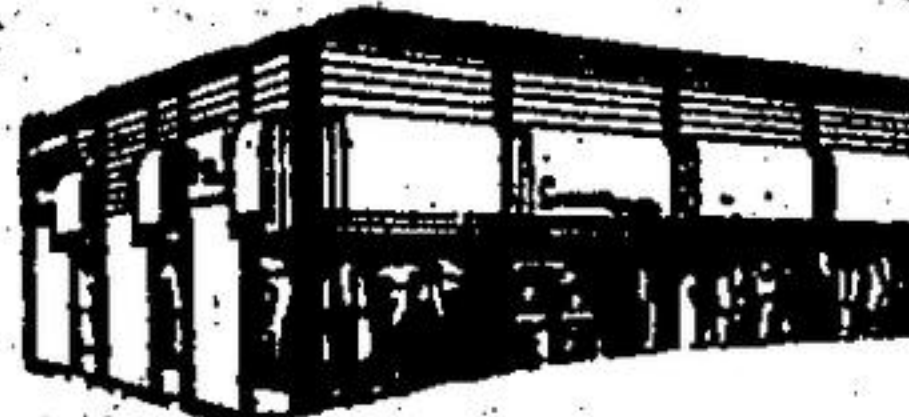
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