

"Mr. P" to his students; George retires from teaching

By GRACE MIEDEMA
Herald Special

Anyone who has ever served on a committee or on the school board calls him George. Among themselves the students call him "Mr. P." He's teaching children of former students. Some of the graduates come back for years just to talk. He is stability in a changing world.

Twenty-four years ago Mr. Petrusma was invited by Jack Fokkens and Bill Braam, the school's president and secretary respectively, to become principal of a New Christian School. Mr. Petrusma, along with his wife Jean and three small boys moved to

Georgetown from Aylmer, where he had been teaching for 10 years and principal for seven. Said Mr. Petrusma, "I remember being impressed with the school building. Instead of being the barest basic cement block building like so many christian schools of the time, this school had three classrooms, separate office and kitchen space, and had been properly designed by an architect from London, Ont. I felt it would be a real challenge to help establish a new Christian School.

"We expected about 75 students that first year but started with 99. Rev. Van Dyke of Acton

volunteered to look for the one hundredth little lamb but it didn't come that year. We did get up to 230 students at one time. Of course facilities have expanded too - four more classrooms, a new kitchen, library, kindergarten and gym.

"In those early years Jean helped me with administration at home on the kitchen table. Now she works four mornings per week in her own office at the school."

The students changed over the years too, stated Mr. Petrusma with a smile. They became less inhibited. They ask questions now that they either didn't think of before or were too shy to ask. They more easily talk to people in authority than they did 24 years ago.

When asked about his plans for the future, Mr. Petrusma said he was taking an early retirement because he wanted to enjoy his health while he still had it. A friend in Aylmer had also offered the Petrusmas a building lot. Mr. Petrusma estimated the difference in real estate would comfortably cover a year's expenses. What to do with all the free time coming up? Catch up on a lot of reading, mostly history, and do some quiet gardening and landscaping. Jean thought there would be more time to enjoy the grandchildren of which there are now four.

The educator's life has obviously fitted comfortably with the Petrusma family. Son Ed married one of his father's staff - Theresa Van Til, and is himself vice principal in Rexdale; son George teaches history and physical education in Durham Christian High and son Michael after putting his wife through school, is also studying to become a teacher. Daughter Marlena just finished E.C.E. training and will work with Peel Region's pre-schoolers in Streetsville.

Does Mr. Petrusma have words of wisdom for his students? "Work hard and use the talents God has given you. You'll be amazed what can be accomplished. New gifts and talents will be developed as you go on."

Amen Mr. P. May your green thumbs be blessed, and may you also discover new gifts as you enter a new phase together with Jean.

Asphalt plant has some neighbours angry

A proposal for a temporary asphalt plant at the corner of Steeles Avenue and Winston Churchill Boulevard had some neighbors angry at a public meeting held Tuesday.

Bluecliff Holdings Inc. applied to the Town of Halton Hills to use a 10-acre site at the southwest corner of the intersection. The asphalt plant would serve Halton Hills road construction industry and would be under a three-year contract, a Bluecliff representative said.

But area residents are concerned with traffic, noise and dust from the proposed asphalt plant.

A lawyer representing Fred Hachman, who lives across the street from the proposed asphalt site, asked how many trucks would be travelling through the plant. There would be one truck every four minutes, or 75 trucks a day said Bluecliff Holdings representative Ron Webb.

Neighbors said this would be too much traffic.

"You look at Steeles Avenue, you know what it's all about," said area resident Gunther Hoewing. "Our roads are not capable of handling this." He said the area's roads are filled with holes and are not in good repair.

Bluecliff assured that trucks would stay on the main roads, travelling mostly from Winston Churchill Boulevard to Highway 401. An extra 75 to 80 trucks a day would not cause undue stress on local roads, Mr. Webb said.

But a Tenth Line resident said she isn't satisfied that trucks will use the main roads.

"You can't tell me that these dump trucks are going to use Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road. What about these dump trucks roaring up and down the roads all day," said Karen Harden. "The obvious route would be right down our Tenth Line."

Other residents said the asphalt plant would ruin the entrance to Halton Hills. Increased truck traffic could be a danger to children, and would add to "removing the rural character" of south Halton Hills, said resident Louise Banducci.

"We moved here thinking it was a haven," she said. "Now that has kind of been destroyed."

And the role of pollution from the asphalt plant is being

"underplayed", Mrs. Banducci said.

Town staff said the proposal for the asphalt plant would only be for a three-year term. But Bluecliff Holdings could apply for a second temporary permit.

Bluecliff operated an asphalt mixing station at Highway 401 and Highway 10 in Mississauga. Even with increased traffic in the area, there were "no occurrences", Bluecliff representative Ulti Alfano said.

The company offered the City of Mississauga a bond for security. Mr. Alfano said he was willing to do the same in Halton Hills. If people weren't satisfied with the plant's operation, the bond would cover costs.

The asphalt plant, if approved, would operate from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., five days a week from May to November, council heard. Materials from quarries would be mixed on the site and would be stored in piles no higher than about 20 feet, Mr. Alfano said.

The town limit is 50 feet for piling materials, the same size as a five-storey building.

Bluecliff representatives want to meet with area residents. They say a meeting held by the company recently had a poor turn out. But Mr. Webb said the company will try again.



Recently retired principal of The Georgetown New Christian School, George Petrusma, tells students success depends on working hard and using the gifts that God gave them. (Submitted photo)

Bell to spend \$1.75 million in Georgetown this year

Bell Canada will spend \$1.75 million in Georgetown this year, with much of the money going to the newly-built Halton Hills Village and the new Civic Centre.

A press release issued by Bell Canada this month said the phone company will spend the \$1.75 million above and beyond almost \$600,000 it contributes to Halton Hills through municipal taxes on real estate, business and gross receipts.

"As soon as there's new development in the area, it's very costly," said Bell section manager for Georgetown, Nancy Creede.

Local phone work in 1988 amounted to \$250,000 cost to the phone company.

This year Bell plans to place phone cables in the Halton Hills Village area off Mountainview Road, and to put in cable for the phone services at the Halton Hills Civic Centre on Princess Anne Drive.

The company will build a concrete structure to house an underground cable system on John Street from McNabb Street to Mountainview Road.

New facilities will be added along Guelph Street and in other parts of the exchange, Bell says.

Bell's Main Street switching centre will receive some work as new cables are added to support increased service.

The money spent by Bell in Georgetown will not affect the

monthly service charge to businesses and residences. Basic service in homes will still be \$8.75 per month. Business phones will still cost \$29.10 per month.

There are 9,967 Bell customers in the Georgetown exchange, according to Bell statistics. Bell estimates that the company will spend \$300 on each customer during 1989.

Bell Canada spent \$2.2 billion across Canada in 1988, with \$1.4 billion being spent in Ontario. The forecast for 1989 is \$2.3 billion across Canada and \$1.4 billion in Ontario.

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