

# Opinion Page

## 30 years ago

A member of the Knox Presbyterian Church, Jim Ritchie, became the guest of honor at a dinner in the church hall for church board members and their wives. Mr. and Mrs. Ritchie were there to say farewell to the church since they are leaving for Orillia. The clerk of the session, William Cromar extended good wishes, on behalf of the gathering, to the Ritchies for their new work and new home. A senior elder, Herb Cleave, presented the couple with a silver tray which bore an inscription noting their years of faithful service in various capacities to the church.

Dave Copperauld, the new president of the Canadian Legion Branch 120, presented a cheque for \$10,000, at the same time Bill Hewitt Jr. presented a cheque for \$3,000 from the Kinsmen Club, to the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital campaign fund. The cheques were accepted by Thomas A. Dillon, the general chairman of the campaign.

The Canadian Bandstand is set to host a cross section of Georgetown's teen population on March 4. The Club Midtowners will be occupying the tube for the second time. The television program will be beamed over Kitchener's channel 13. The two bus-loads of Midtowners will be transported by the Georgetown Transportation Service.

## 20 years ago

A member of the Georgetown District High School's staff for the past 22 years has decided to retire at the end of the term. Alexander McLaren Baxter will retire in June. His resignation was accepted by the board of education on Thursday, March 5. Mr. Baxter taught science at the school between 1948 and 1957. He became vice-principal in 1957, under J.L. Lambert and has served there ever since. As well as being the vice-principal at GDHS he also serves as the principal of night school.

## Halton's History from our files

### 10 years ago

Georgetown's Evelyn Walker celebrated her 90th birthday in grand style with special greetings from the mayor. The greetings were conveyed by Councillor Walter Biehn. Congratulations were also handed out by two of her Kincourt neighbors, Emily Bessey and Jessie Williamson, both of whom will also turn 90 this year.

Every fourth year the Pickells triplets get together to celebrate their Feb. 28 birthdays and their mothers Feb. 29 birthday. This year the trio joined their mother to celebrate her 18th birthday at the family home on Fifth Line near Norval. Barb Pennycook, Mary Lou Ransom and Linda Hillhouse were the first triplets born in Peel, 32 years ago. Mrs. William Pickells was born 72 years ago.

### 5 years ago

Plows led the way for an ambulance during a snow storm that dropped over 24 centimetres of snow in one day. The plows made their way from Preston's in Glen Williams to Sideroad 27 between Ninth Line and Tenth Line to clear the way for an ambulance. Cleaning up after the severe storm will cost the town \$50,000, public works director, Bob Moore said. "It was a pretty severe storm," Environment Canada climatologist Denis Paquette said. "It has been a long time since we had something big like this." He said high winds, up to 60 kilometres an hour combined with the heavy snowfall made drifts that were hard to clean up on the highways and roads.

## LETTERS

# Over 550 kids wait as musician walks on late

Dear Sir,

This letter is in reference to the recent performance at Club 2000 by Young M.C. and Maestro Fresh Wes. I will attempt to offer an explanation to those concerned about the delay in the concert. Due to the popularity of both artists, we at Club 2000 chose to provide two shows:

- one show for teens which would be a non-alcoholic event, and
- a show for adults.

The interest in the performers was evident with many tickets being purchased for the matinee show. We were sure of a success therefore provisions were made.

There were 22 security people on duty as well as strict regulations being enforced upon entering. A metal detector was used to search out items considered dangerous and unsafe. All precautions were taken to ensure a safe concert. Everything was in order on the morning of the concert. The truck carrying the sound and lighting unfortunately broke down causing it to arrive five hours late. The artists must complete a sound check and a rehearsal before the doors open. This was not possible as the equipment was not in the club, at 3:15 neither the performers nor their equipment had arrived. A decision was made to open the doors to allow youngsters in the building out of the cold. Finally the lighting and equipment arrived. Every effort was made for a speedy set-up.

Maestro Fresh Wes arrived and was ready to perform. Young M.C. was not on the premises. He was claiming a disruption in the contract as a result of the sound equipment not available when scheduled. His manager was suggesting that he would not appear. Maestro Fresh Wes took the stage at 7 p.m. We were informed that Young M.C. would perform shortly after. At 7:15 I received a phone call from the manager of Young M.C. requesting to be paid more. After several conversations the show finally continued.

It was apparent that there were many disappointed youngsters and angry parents. The anger is very

understandable as the show was planned for the sole purpose of entertaining young fans of both artists. When unforeseeable delays occur, it is going to create some concern. We would like it known that the events leading up to the delay were no fault of Club 2000. We would like to apologize to the disappointed fans.

Young M.C. and his management had no compassion whatsoever for his young fans. Their attitudes were beyond belief and the

language backstage deterred us from allowing autographs. In an attempt to compensate, we will be offering to those whom attended the concert, a reduction in ticket price for the next All Ages concert.

We humbly apologize on behalf of the stars and trust that your compassion will lie with us.

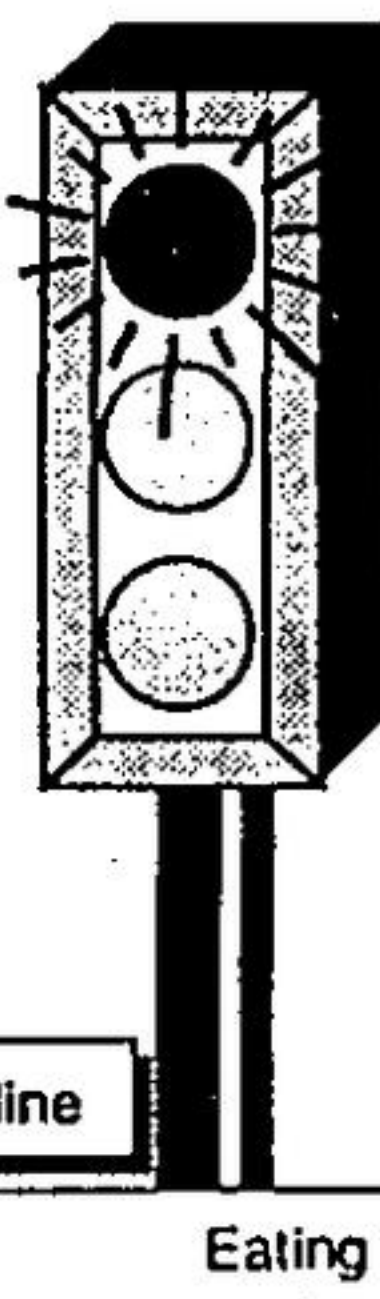
If you have any comments, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,  
John Fisher,  
General Manager

## Doing Time

A survey of 6,000 people shows that, in a lifetime, the average person will spend:

- 6 mths. Sitting at stop lights
- 8 mths. Opening junk mail
- 1 year Looking for misplaced objects
- 2 years Unsuccessfully returning phone calls
- 4 years Doing homework
- 5 years Waiting in line
- 6 years Eating



## Write us a letter!

The Herald wants to hear from you. If you have an opinion you want to express or a comment to make, send us a letter or drop by the office. Our address is 45 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ont., L7G 3Z6.

All letters must be signed. Please include your address and telephone number for verification.

The Herald reserves the right to edit letters due to space limitations or libel.

## Language tensions high in US

Continued from Page 6

The Hispanic population in the U.S. is now about 12 million (about five per cent of the overall population) and is expected to exceed 16 million by the turn of the century.

No state has officially recognized bilingualism, but that hasn't stopped them from offering services in Spanish or other languages whenever the need is felt. Even in states that are officially English-only, the laws haven't stopped the spread of bilingual services.

Chris Pattarozzi, a researcher for the National Conference of State Legislatures, surveyed all English-only states two years ago. "Every state that had an English-only amendment couldn't tell me how it applied," she said. "They were actually non-responsive."

Two officially English states are California and Florida. In both, though, services are offered in Spanish as well as English to communicate with the growing population of Hispanics. However, the states do not have formal guidelines on when non-English services should be offered.

### COMMON SENSE

"It's a common-sense approach," said Bob Gore, press secretary to California Gov. George Deukmejian. Managers in individual government offices hire people who can speak other languages "when the need for bilingual services is obvious."

A constitutional amendment making English the official language was approved by 73 per cent of California voters in 1986, but Gore said he was unaware of any restrictions on providing bilingual services.

"California is a state where the minorities are rapidly becoming the majority, so you have to have it," he said.

That attitude enrages English First's Tryfiates.

"I think one of the problems we're seeing in this country is an effort to impose bilingualism from the top down," he said. "That's the kind of obstruction we are facing. It's frustrating that we have politicians who don't care what the people are saying."

In Florida in 1988, a constitutional amendment giving English official status was endorsed by 84 per cent of the voters. Despite the vote, services are still routinely delivered in Spanish.

Not all significant minorities receive bilingual services.

Despite the large population (300,000) of French-Acadians, or Cajuns, in Louisiana, the state has nothing on its statute books mandating bilingual services, said Kate Lemon, an information specialist with the Louisiana state assembly.

Louisiana is poor and is having trouble providing basic services, "so any provision for services like that would be few and far between," she said in an interview.

Most Cajuns can speak English, but Louisiana also takes an informal approach towards bilingualism. Government workers in Cajun areas would be able to speak French when the need arises, Lemon said.

The Louisiana legislature considered an English-only bill in 1987, but lawmakers did not take it seriously because of the large population of minorities, she said.

States that have English-only bills or constitutional amendments include: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

## It's me or the orchid!



Ian Weir

Weir's View  
Thomas Ross Service

There are certain fears which are difficult to confess without leading people to believe that you are down to your very last marble.

But I've come to suspect that my potted orchid is plotting to kill me.

This may take some explaining. Please be patient.

It all began with an eerie little news item concerning an Edmonton woman whose apartment was nearly set ablaze by a cactus.

Apparently, Elizabeth Finnegan was asleep when the caretaker smelled smoke coming from her apartment. Firefighters were called and they noticed a partially melted plastic flowerpot containing the aforementioned cactus.

The problem, they explained, was decomposing soil. It seems the decomposing process had produced enough heat to ignite combustible material in the soil, which would eventually have caused a fire.

Ms. Finnegan is quoted as observing: "It kind of makes you scared of your plants."  
Now granted, we're all familiar

with the phenomenon of spontaneous combustion. This has been well-documented in the supermarket tabloids.

According to these reliable journals, people burst into flames quite regularly. I believe Elvis did so at a Burger King in Des Moines last week.

But until now there had been no reports of spontaneous combustion involving house plants. So this news item was pretty unnerving for someone like me, whose relationship with plants has always been dismal.

Until recently, I had owned just one plant in my life. This was a fern named Fred, given to me by a friend who promised that ferns are nearly indestructible, no matter how little one knows about plant-care.

Fred lasted three weeks.

As such, you can imagine my alarm when I was subsequently roped into house-sitting for a vacationing friend who had two dogs, three cats and several dozen plants.

"Don't worry," she told me cheerfully. "Just water ther plants until they've had enough."

This, of course, was not very helpful. Plants are sophisticated organisms, but they lack the capacity to say "when."

In desperation, I actually phoned the CBC Radio gardening program. The resident expert had just completed a dissertation on soil nutrients when I called in to ask, "Um, how do you know when a house-plant has had enough water?"

There was a slight, strained pause. "When it feels heavy," he sighed and hung up.

Naturally, this didn't help much either. How was I supposed to know whether a plant felt heavy? How much was it supposed to weigh in the first place? And what if it had a thyroid condition?

It soon became clear that my friend was going to return from her vacation to find a houseful of dying plants. I was agonizing over ways to break this news gently when one of the cats died instead.

This was sad but it did solve the immediate problem. When my friend phoned from the airport to ask how her plants were doing, I was able to smile bravely and explain that they were doing a little better than the cat was.

All of this may serve to explain my feelings last week, when another friend gave me a potted orchid.

It was a lovely orchid and a kind gesture. Naturally, I couldn't tell my friend the truth - which was that the jig was already up for this unfortunate plant.

So I named him Oswald and put him on the shelf in my study. Sure enough, he started to droop the next morning. Three days later he was turning brown. That's when I read about that cactus in Edmonton - and a thoroughly unsettling thought began to dawn.

What, precisely, is Oswald thinking up there on that shelf?

Is Oswald the sort of orchid who can remain brave and stoic in the face of certain death? Or has he begun to realize that his only chance is to get me first?

I'm trying to avoid plunging into utter paranoia.

But if this column doesn't appear next week you'll know that Fred the fern has been avenged.