

Federal government is still Canada's biggest advertiser



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It noted with interest the other day a newspaper article detailing the amount of money spent on advertising in Canada. A company called Media Measurement looked at the advertising expenses of more than 4,000 companies and governments. This was done by examining ads in 96 daily newspapers, about 260 magazines, billboards, television, radio and print supplements.

Ontario's government was successful in cutting its spending on advertising by 18 per cent in 1989. This was part of a successful effort by the Provincial Treasurer, Robert Nixon, to cut the government's costs in areas that do not bring direct benefits.

The Federal Government has retained its top spot as the country's biggest advertiser in 1989, but has managed to cut its advertising bill by 17 per cent. Ottawa made its biggest savings on Air Canada which it sold off during the year and Via Rail.

These figures were interesting because overall spending on advertising went up by about eight per cent in the last year. While Alberta followed the trend towards less government money for ads British Columbia increased its spending by more than 70 per cent and Quebec added about 35 per cent to its budget for advertising.

The move to get better control of spending by Ontario Government ministries has not been directed at advertising budgets alone. During the last year the provincial government has succeeded in cutting \$500 million of spending. This money came from programs that were no longer useful and from administrative costs. Each department was asked to examine everything they were doing to see where they could save money and use what they had more efficiently.

In a related move the Provincial Health Insurance Branch will implement a new, computerized OHIP system. The new system, which is expected to be in operation by July will give each resident of Ontario a separate OHIP

number. The present system assigns numbers to families rather than to individuals. Unfortunately, this has allowed some people to cheat the system and obtain medical services without cost when they were not entitled to them. This fraudulent use of OHIP cards, by people who are from out of the province may have cost the taxpayers millions of dollars since OHIP was introduced in the '60s.

These few examples are just a small sign of the reality facing all levels of government. As new pressures for services, programs and capital spending are felt by government we must continually look for areas to save money and increase efficiency. In order to preserve basic services, government must make better use of its present resources. Each time a new request for money is received the benefits for the residents of Ontario must be closely examined to see if they are worth the extra cost.

Horticultural society plans annual strawberry social

By ELAINE VANDERBURG
Georgetown Horticultural Society
The monthly meeting of the Georgetown Horticultural Society was held Feb. 21. A good turnout of members were present and new members who have joined the society were welcomed. President Verna Jespersen brought information of events within and around the area including the following:

—The District 6 annual meeting is being held in Oakville, March 31. The topic - Great Gardens Naturally. Contact Verna if you wish to attend.

—The Canadian Iris Society will be meeting at the Royal Botanical Garden on April 18.

—The Georgetown Horticultural Society will be holding its next meeting March 21, 8 p.m. at Knox Presbyterian Church, Main St., Georgetown. This meeting is a presentation of Landscape and Design for the home owner given by Brian Spudgg of the Etobicoke Garden Centre of Sheridan Nurseries. This meeting is open to the public and there is no admis-

sion fee. Bring your questions.

—The cookbook committee headed by Madge Whitfield continues its work on the cookbook which is expected to be available for sale at the spring flower shows.

The flower show committee headed by LindaBoynes met March 5. The theme for the flower shows have been decided and the booklets have gone to print. The booklets should be available for the April meeting. The guest speaker for the April meeting will be Zena Calantonio of Wheel and Cullen Nurseries. She will present a follow-up on Landscape and Design for the Homeowner.

May will be an active month with the annual shrub sale May 19 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and the regular meeting May 17. Don't forget this is the first flower show of the season.

June 16 the society will present the annual strawberry social and flower show. The society thanks the guest speaker Mike Pembrey for his informative talk on organic growing presented at the February

meeting. Mr. Pembrey is editor of the Country Side Magazine, an organic farmer and gardener and director of the Ecological Farmers of Ontario. He shared his experiences in his transition from agriculture farming to organic farming - a transition from farming and growing using chemicals and pesticides to one of not using these products. Organic growing is the growing of plants without the use of any artificial input. The farm or garden must become a self-sustaining growing area. In doing this, the farmer helps nature to work with the environment not against it. Mr. Pembrey explained the use of compost and expressed the importance of rotation planting as well as illustrating a rotation plan for the society.

The meeting closed after a draw for door prizes, plant sale and refreshments.

For information on the society contact Elaine Vanderburg at 877-6288.

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