

Steamer chugged away from truant officers

If you have been reading this column on a regular basis by this time you'll know I can hardly read, write or spell.

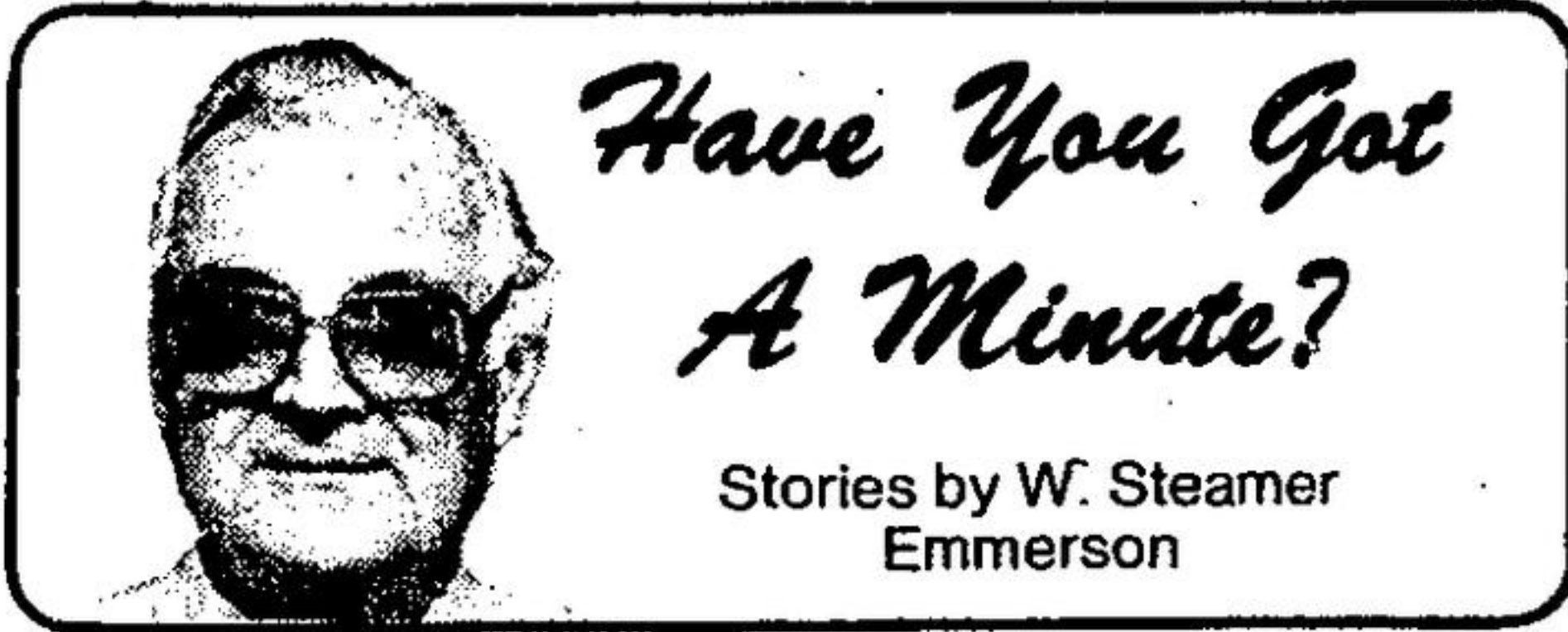
Ask the editor. He knows. The mistakes of spelling, writing and addition are so ingrained there's little that can be done. Now don't get on the band wagon about it's never too late to learn, or point out many a senior citizen has earned a degree through adult learning centres or correspondence courses. If they have truant officers count me out.

My problem is I'm a truant and I'm afraid of truant officers.

Starting in Grade 1 at old Chapel St. School I had tall slender bobbed-hair Miss Hume.

I watched her age overnight as she struggled to pound two and two into my head.

She met her match when I arrived that first day. Horsemen would say I was rising six.



Have You Got A Minute?

Stories by W. Steamer Emmerson

My interest in school was not the same as hers. She wanted me to learn. I wanted to get out and I often did.

If I was placed in the hall for disobedience I took off for home.

Then the bell was rung to signal the end of recess if I didn't feel like going back into my cell I didn't.

So you see I don't want to get involved in some program of higher learning where I might come face to face with a truant officer.

One Miss Frewer was enough for me. She even pulled me out of a steamer truck in the back kitchen of our home and marched me off to school. Miss Frewer could put any S.W.A.T. team to shame and her only weapons were her tongue and an old fashioned umbrella.

I can still remember my reluctant surrender when she tapped on the lid of that old truck and ordered me to come out with my hands up.

I didn't give up without a fight. My backside was still smarting

from my mothers hand as Miss Frewer a step behind me poked and prodded with the metal tip of her umbrella at any sign of reluctance or tardiness as I was marched to school.

It must have been all of three days before I forgave my mother for revealing my hiding place.

Naturally in order to punish me for my absenteeism some sort of restraint was often threatened but never carried out.

Miss Hume knew and all the others who lived in dread of me passing into their classes a ball and chain held no mystery or fear. They knew I'd pick the lock.

One punishment I remember in Grade 8 made me feel like the winner.

Even the principal Howard Wriggleworth gave me the benefit of the doubt.

Once I was returned to school it was discovered I had not written one single solitary line of a composition on Mt. Edith Cavell.

My punishment, I would have to give it orally. Duck soup undaunted I launched verbally into the majesty and history of the grand old lady with the hyperbolic lingo of a side show Barker.

Howard let me go on. The kids were rolling in the aisles. They knew I didn't know if she was located in the Rockies, Andes, Appalachian or Himalayas.

I don't know to this day. If I had know then the old gal was shot by the German army in World War I I would have done another ten

minutes. When Chapel school was to be closed a chap by the name of Doug Price was the principal and had taken over from Val Stein for the remaining two years of the schools life.

He called on me to act as master of ceremonies at the official closing and good-bye ceremonies. I agreed.

I told him I was more familiar with the principals office than he was.

His exuberance in organizing the demolition party brought out the rebel in me.

All of a sudden it dawned on me I would be up there helping to dismantle a lifetime of memories of people who taught me, guided me, even loved me, Miss Hume, Miss Lindsay, Miss Young, Miss Scott, Miss Harrison, Miss Langdon, Miss Giffen, Miss Frank, Mr. Wigglesworth.

My classmates like Nora Williams, Doris Armstrong, Peggy Hornby, Jose Lorusso, Kay Boyle, Jean Harlow, Barbra Faram, Lois Neilson, Margaret Harding, Theresa Doyle, Ron Latimer, Don Early, George Walker, Vic McNiven, Bill Kelly, Betty Paul, Chas Laws, Eddie Doyle, Kay Tyers, Pearl Webster and I'm sure I've forgotten one or two would be my characteristic self at our last time at school.

I did exactly as expected. I played hooky that day.

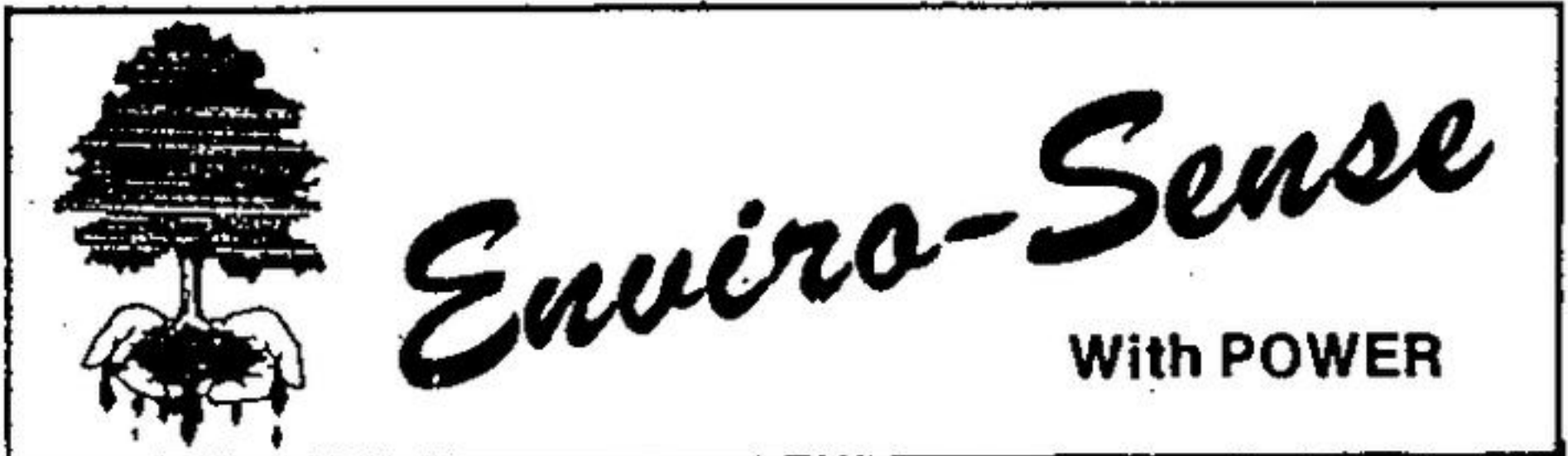
Miss Frewer would have turned a blind eye if she had been living.

Economic growth a root cause of our disposable society

By DIANE VANDE VALK

Today's perception of "economic growth" is one of the root causes of our present day disposable society. If a blender breaks after five years of use we are told that it will cost more to repair than to buy a new one. So we discard the old one and head off to the store. This injects money into the economy by providing jobs for the store keepers as well as the factory workers who assemble the components, the people who extract the resources and to make the components, the administrative people and so on.

We are now only just beginning to understand that there is more to the cost benefit analysis than simply jobs and "economic growth". The true costs and benefits of our disposable society are being felt (but not yet measured) through dwindling resources and environmental contamination. We understand these issues in a broad sense, but have not yet linked them directly to the way that we live.



Once this connection is made, people will begin to change their behavior patterns and we will be on the road towards sustainable development.

The question is then, "What will cause people to make the fundamental changes necessary to reduce our impact on the environment?" (Don't misunderstand me ... residents have readily embraced the blue box program, but residential recycling is just one of the many steps needed.) So far, there are only two ways that I have heard of to affect this change:

1. Education: a proactive approach which will ensure that all of the costs and benefits of our

choices as consumers are known. Knowledge and common sense will then guide us to make the right choice.

2. Crisis: a reactive approach where change becomes essential and not simply a wise choice. At this point significant damage will have already occurred.

Let's not wait for a crisis ... we must become informed and make the right choices now.

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