

School days, school daze - fond memories flow

If we accept April as a harbinger of Spring and rebirth, of sorts; then surely we must regard September as a harbinger of Fall and a rejuvenation time for all the young people returning to school.

Much more than in the past, it seems youngsters are chomping at the bit to get back into the school environment.

When this intrepid scribe was in school, I looked forward to what I regarded as the four highlights of the day. Two recesses, a lunch break and the final bell, signalling an opportunity to run over any number of my pals as we scampered down the stairs to freedom. This behavior continued through my university years, I must admit.

My personal Darth Vader, Mr. Mathews, was always there to check the footprints on the writhing bodies left hither and yon on the stair steps and hanging precariously over the banisters. No one was every seriously injured during the daily "Great Escape" but occasionally the janitors would question the lunch selections of the students as they were mopping up after the

horde had exited.

Bright and early next morning I would show up in the school yard for some pre-school frolics with my buddies and invariably, Mr. Mathews would be on yard duty casting a stern eye on our antics.

Inevitably he would call me over and start interrogating me about the footprints found on the slower students who were left littering the halls after the previous day's final bell.

I could never win. Mr. Mathews was always right. He despised me with a passion.

I wore size six shoes. Mr. Mathews would wave a jacket in front of my face with a size twelve footprint on it and accuse me of running over the unfortunate victim. I would point out my running shoe size and Mr. Mathews would then confront me with the inescapable evidence that I must have run over the poor sucker twice.

Into the main office we would trot where Mr. Mathews would proceed to give me suggestions on what I could do with my worthless life if I survived Grade Five, while administering the

"As I See It"

by
Colin Gibson



strap. One of his suggestions was that I join the circus and volunteer for the lion teeth-cleaning detail.

My response was that if I wanted to see a circus, all I had to do was hang around the teacher's room after classes. This, I pointed out, was when the real clowns could be seen.

Eight more lashes with the strap.

Yes, times have indeed changed.

The last I heard of Mr. Mathews, he had been run over by some kid with a size 14 shoe and since the strap has long since been abolished, all he could administer was a tongue lashing.

You know where you can find sympathy in the dictionary.

Some advice to teachers patrolling the hallowed halls of schools nowadays.

Don't underestimate the kids of today.

Sure, you'll get some knob-heads, but then again, knob-heads have always abounded. And not just in the student population. You can also find knob-heads in the teaching fraternity.

Kids know what's going on in their school - even if they pretend they don't.

Taken further, the school is the kids world and believe me, despite the respective knob-heads that abound, they will protect and defend their school.

When the Beach Boys record, "Be true to your school" was first released, it was adopted as an anthem by both public and secondary students.

A case can be made that the same emotion still rings true.

Walk the streets of Georgetown or Acton and ask some youngster what school he/she attends.

You will likely get a

pugnacious prideful reply ending with, "And my school's the best."

In the small town in Northern Ontario where I grew up, there were only two public schools and the rivalry was fierce.

The local volunteer ambulance brigade used to attend sporting events between the two scholastic rivals until their ambulance was torched one time (by whom we shall never reveal) because the attendants appeared to be paying more attention to one school's injured players than the other school's maimed warriors.

The two schools played hockey games against each other at various times during the winter months (on outdoor rinks) and the guys on my team used to warm up by firing pucks at the other school's coaches.

A lot of games never got finished. Then again, a lot of games never got started.

(Unfortunately, Mr. Mathews didn't coach).

School days, school daze. Looking back, I really do miss them.

As I see it, anyway.

Residential waste challenge rests with the public

The message is clear: recycling alone won't solve the Greater Toronto Area garbage crisis. Halton residents, along with people throughout the GTA, will be required to reduce and reuse a lot more material that would normally end up in a landfill.

Regional Public Works Commissioner Art Leitch recently pointed out recycling only diverts 5 per cent of the waste stream from landfills. The only way a more significant amount of potential residential waste could be diverted from landfills is decreasing and reusing a lot of this material, and the challenge rests with the public.

People can either do their part voluntarily or be forced to through legislation. The urgency of the matter becomes that much clearer knowing the province re-

quires municipalities to reduce their waste stream by 25 per cent by 1996 and 50 per cent by the year 2000.

I agree with Halton Hills Engineer Ted Drewlow, who favors using education as the means to encourage people to reduce and reuse potential garbage. He explains forcing people to take such action would be an administrative nightmare and extremely costly.

An example of the legislation that could be used would only permit people to put out a maximum number of garbage bags on the curbside per week. Mr. Drewlow said the Town would require "garbage police" to ensure people would be abiding by legislation. The end result would be a significant increase in taxes.

As well, people, in reaction to



Ben's Banter

by
Ben Dummett

the legislation, would find ways to get around the legislation such as placing their extra garbage bags outside other people's houses.

As Mr. Drewlow puts it, legislation teaches people how to get rid of garbage at the expense of

others instead of teaching people about the importance of saving the environment.

Education appears to be the way to go, at least initially. Because the push has been on recycling more so than on reduction and reuse at both the provincial and municipal level of government, it follows people are not fully aware of the importance of reuse and reduction, as well as the methods to achieve results in these areas of environmental protection.

However, few, if any, don't realize the province is running out of landfill space. In this sense, it should take little public education for people to realize the importance of reuse and reduction and the need to act accordingly.

If people don't jump on the bandwagon in the areas of reuse

and reduction as they have done concerning the blue box program, they only have themselves to blame when they are legislated to do so.

Meanwhile, Halton Region could lead by example by doing more work in encouraging industrial and commercial sectors to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste stream. It doesn't make sense these two sectors produce more than 50 per cent of Ontario's waste stream and yet the Region has virtually no staff devoted to help industry divert potential garbage from landfills.

If people and government's haven't realized it yet, the waste problem will only go away once all sectors of society focus their attention on the reduction and reuse of garbage. Recycling isn't enough.

"Muddling through" no longer an acceptable excuse

The obvious reigns. Even at the municipal level candidates for office vie with each other for the ultimate banality. They wish a "regulated" growth, to "preserve" the environment, "quality" of life. No candidate is in favour of poverty and squalor, slavery, pollution, and child prostitution. Which, in a way, is a pity, as it would give us at least some variety. As a public service, some suggestions.

Growth is not necessarily a good thing. Growth is also not a necessity. Growth can become a sickness - see cancer.

There is no example of growth having reduced taxes. In fact, an inexpensive trip down to Brampton (or to Toronto) will show how growth has increased urban squalor, crime and taxes. We are not obliged to grow. The reason we have a decent "quality of life" is mainly because there are few of us.

As scientists did provide years ago population density is directly correlated to social tension and eventually violence. There are no two ways about it: growth is taking away from quality (as anybody who has lived around the neighborhood for the last fifteen years can confirm). And stopping growth does not mean being self-centred; it means being good stewards of what we have. Once the countryside is littered with sub-divisions the beauty we now enjoy is there no longer, for anybody.

By the way, many municipalities the world over

have thrived on zero-growth. It is not a pipe dream, it is successful reality. We are totally ignoring the needs of our youth and our seniors. We have built an utterly unnecessary "municipal building" while our children "hang around" gas bars, convenience stores and pubs. We can build for our politician a council chamber which is used a few hours a week but "we do not have the money" to provide seniors with comfortable, accessible, friendly meeting places. We have the money to build for our bureaucrats, straighten rural roads, remove old bridges...

We talk of "quality of life" while our kids spend their youth at fast-food outlets making a few dollars and spending them smoking around gas bars. Our "public" buildings are closed to the public: "sorry, they are closed after five" is the idiotic answer, so schools stand empty, gyms deserted, labs abandoned, arenas shut down, cafeterias shuttered, while our most deserving and vulnerable people are left to their own devices.

The first duty of government is to serve the needs of its people, not to protect the integrity of its assets or the slumber of its staff. Municipal politicians are the most important elected officers of the country: they have much more power to make our life miserable than the feds or the Queen's Park boys. The past council, and the one before, showed a remarkable ability for muddled thinking and lack of deci-



Another View

by
Carlo Testa

sion. The only predictable feat has been the growth of taxes - well above inflation rate. But do not forget, taxes grow so that we can encourage growth... which will cause higher taxes!

In the past "muddling through" was for a small municipality the best policy. No action was a good way of preserving a certain way of life. Now mental sloth is no longer acceptable, to "go-along" is not enough. We need rigorous analysis, comprehensive plans of action, aggressive implementation.

But to get my vote the candidate needs simply to tell me what she will do to make the arena available to kids or seniors, what will be offered to them in terms of recreation and public transportation (where do all the yellow buses go after nine?). She just needs to tell me that the town population will remain the same, that we will try to eliminate some of the ugliness we

have built and replace it with some beauty. She may also tell me that she is against the Acton dump, what the heck, I am willing to take some bromide if I get

the rest! Do you know that severe speed and weight limits on dirt, twisty, bumpy roads with narrow bridges make dumps and similar beauties uneconomical?

Poets' Corner

LAUGHING STOCKS

Snowbirds flit around
On a wild sort of day
We have a way of shopping
In a wild sort of way.

Americans have their laughs
Aware in their views
They know what's going on
It's not exactly news!

They know we're the dupes
They lap it up; they grin
They know we're all washed up
They know we don't fit in!

The whole world must notice
Watching us like hawks
Waiting to descend on us
We're in for multi-shocks!

By Lois Richardson

THE PROPOSAL

Where was Paul on
Saturday night?
And where was his Leslie,
his love?
What were they doing at
about 9:00 p.m.

When the plane towed his
proposal above?

Paul offered his heart to
his Leslie

He declared his love,
witnessed by all
What a beautiful tale for
their children -

"Leslie - I love you,
Marry me, Paul."

It's obvious Paul's a romantic
The romance is
supposedly dead -
We all saw Paul propose to
his Leslie

And we wonder what answer
she said.

Could it be...? that ...
Leslie and Paul have decided
They'd like to tie the knot
And say the vows to each other
That most of us forgot.

They'll pledge their
love forever

Paul will take her for his bride
And they'll begin their
life together

True love - side by side.

S.L.W., Rockwood.