

Editorial

No win situation

Death and taxes - to borrow from that old cynical oxymoronic cliché - the only things guaranteed in life.

Metaphorically-speaking, this is the exact situation facing the Halton Board of Education as it attempts to reduce its 1993 budget by \$1million. The cupboard is bare as far as the province is concerned when it comes to additional education funding.

Both the board and the teachers are only too-well aware of this situation and this is where the death or taxes scenario comes into play.

Ratepayers in Halton won't stand for another hike in the mill rate to cover the \$1million shortfall, so the board has asked the teachers to donate one day's pay to help balance the budget.

This is unfair to the teachers, who are being asked - in effect - to double-dip into their pockets to cover what some view as simple fiscal mis-management by the board.

Teachers pay school taxes just like the rest of us. Why should they be asked to assume more of the financial burden than all the other residents of Halton who rely on our school system?

The board in turn, through education director Bob Williams, has gone on record as stating that if the teachers choose not to voluntarily work a free day, there is the distinct possibility up to 75 teaching jobs could be axed to bring the budget in line.

Reading between the lines, one can only see a sort of quasi-compromise being reached. That would be to chop extracurricular activities - including such things as inter-scholastic athletics, drama clubs, debating clubs, camera clubs etc. - which would mean that not only the students would suffer from the lack of a well-rounded academic-social education environment, but so also would the community as a whole.

There is no easy solution to this fiscal quagmire, but the board is determined the matter be settled at its meeting tomorrow (Thursday) night. This is a no-win situation for all concerned.

Here's hoping that cooler heads will prevail - rather than confrontational rhetoric - and that realistic compromises will be made so our already-suffering education system doesn't suffer yet another body-blow.

Changes not for the better

To the Editor

In reply to the article in Halton Hills This Week on March 17, 1993, my family would like to express a couple of things regarding Eddy Li's comments. As he said "an option to change" exists in agreements. That is true, but only if the change is "same or better quality" as per our agreement that we signed. Our opinion is that none of these changes were for the better (or even the same). One example is the hot water heater. He said the change from gas to electric is "a benefit to the individual owner". We tried to find some "benefits" but all we got was disadvantages.

1. Gas costs almost half than electricity (we pay a lot more than we would with gas);

2. Gas heater rental is about \$7/month, but Union Gas repairs the unit free of charge. Our electric tank is ours so we have to pay for every repair or maintenance that occurs;

3. The unit is 30 gal. For five people, there never is enough hot water unless we schedule everything like who takes a bath at what time, when we can wash the clothes or dishes, etc.;

4. If they decided to put an electric tank in, at least they should

have given us the option to switch to gas later if we want by putting in the ventilation system. We don't even have that option because there is no ventilation put in so we can never switch to a gas heating tank.

The other example we have is our heating/air conditioning unit which is installed inside our family room in a cupboard. In the sales office we were given plans for an electric unit nicely tucked under the windows. Now we have a huge furnace (gas heating/electric air) with ducts going in our ceiling from our front door to our back door all the way through the family room. The reason for this change that Larry Law gave us on the mentioned public meeting was: "gas is more efficient and cheaper to maintain than a baseboard heater".

Now, one thing doesn't make sense to us. We are using our hot water tank 365 days a year (it is electric) and we are using our heating maybe about four-five months a year (gas). How could we save this way? If the reason for these changes were like Law says, (savings for homeowners) we would like Eddy Li or Larry Law to explain to us how we could do that.

Sandor Sturm,
Georgetown

The People's Corner

Homeowners are a disgruntled group

To the Editor:

We as homeowners in the Law Development Project "Kingsmill-on-the-Credit, Phase 2", wish to respond to your article dated March 17 regarding the concerns expressed by some of our neighbors. We would like to point out that those people who spoke out, through letters read to the council on March 8 are not alone in their concerns.

Many people with whom we have spoken have expressed some. All of these people with whom we have spoken have concerns but for a variety of reasons do not wish to speak out publicly.

With regard to some of the comments made to your paper by Law's executive vice-president, Mr. Eddy Li, in response to these issues, we would like to make a couple of points and in doing so, to borrow some of Mr. Li's own words.

First issue is that of the installation of an electric water heater in lieu of a natural gas rental unit as "contractually" promised by Law. We have talked to both Union Gas and Halton Hills Hydro and have been given the following figures based on an average family's annual consumption:

Electric Unit: Total annual cost - \$413.

Natural Gas Unit: \$258 annually

Town booster

To the Editor:

Regarding the March 17th article concerning Law Development Group.

The adjective "disgruntled" was used in describing me. I beg to differ.

The appropriate adjectives would be "the disappointed and concerned homeowner". That is why I approached the town council regarding Phase III.

I like this town and my neighborhood, and I will continue to show concern regarding its future.

Michael Foley,
Georgetown

Community effort

To the Editor,

During the 33rd annual bantam hockey tournament, community members gave all sorts of help. I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks to Goodlets Hardware for the use of a refrigerator and to MVP Sports for donating laces and tape.

Gerry 'Perky' Perkins
Referee-in-Chief
bantam tournament

and monthly rental fee of \$7.65.

Total cost: \$349.80.

We cannot comment on the reason or reasons why Law Development made the switch from gas to electric water heaters, but given the scant information we have received from Law on the subject, we cannot accept that in doing so, they had the best interest of the homeowners at heart. As to any financial "benefit", the above figures speak for themselves.

The other issue is that of the lay-out changes, furnace and electric

panels in living areas, etc. Mr. Li is quite correct in saying that these problems have been addressed. What he did not say was what they are planning to do about them.

The fact is that to the best of our knowledge, Law Development has not given any indication that they have any intention of resolving any of these problems and have bluntly refused to consider offering financial compensation in lie.

Paddy and Nancy Hanratty,
Georgetown

People are the community

To the Editor:

Re: Delegates' presentations to Halton Hills Council March 8, 1993

This is a letter of disagreement with critical opinions expressed in letters recently published from several writers.

Without exception, the delegates who spoke are honorable people voicing their feelings and concerns for our community!

Unfortunately perhaps, we the common people have very limited ways to get our thoughts across to our elected representatives. Our options include addressing council

- one by one - (as on March 8) or a phone call to a councillor or write a letter to the local paper(s).

If the time ever comes when interested people such as these are not willing to stand and be heard, then we will be in trouble!

By means of the electoral system, we hire the mayor and councillors to look after the interests of our community and needs of the people.

After all, people are the most important element of our community!

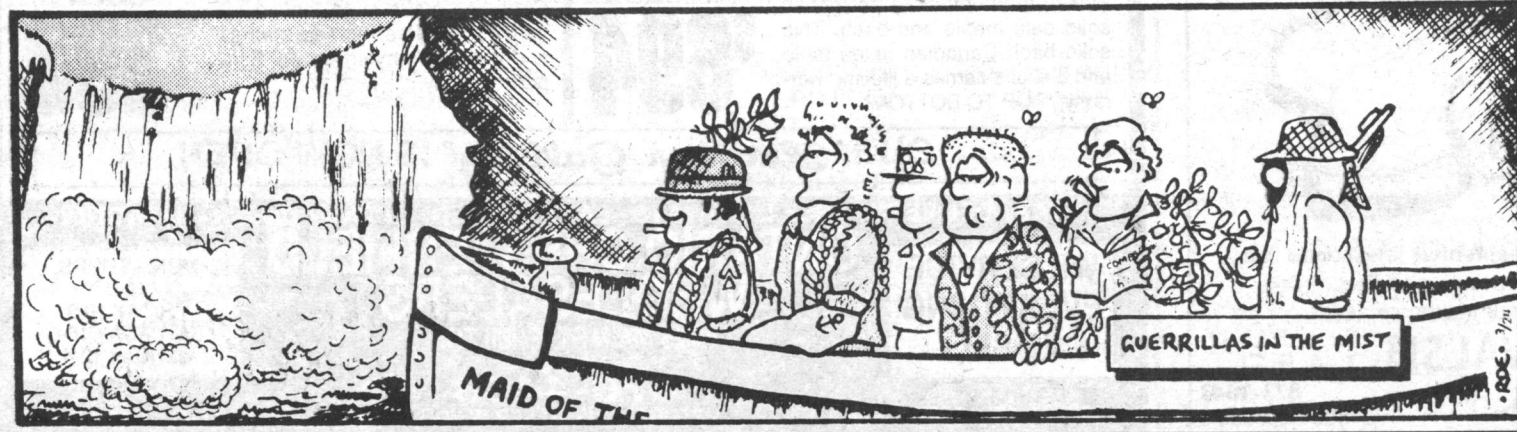
Lew Ward,
Georgetown



La Semaine Nationale de la Francophonie (National Francophone Week March 20-27) got underway in fine style last Saturday at Georgetown Marketplace at a special booth of the Association de parents-Ecole Sacre Coeur. Amanda Besner (left) and Jessica Gilmor modeled early French period costumes near the booth manned by the association's president, Lise Gilmor.

Photo by Simon Wilson

For Pete's Sake



by Roe

Halton Hills THIS WEEK

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EDITOR: Colin Gibson
OFFICE MANAGER: Jean Shewell
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Marie Shadbolt
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PHONE: 873-2254 FAX: 873-3918