

Defeated candidates plan their next moves

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

What happens when the ballots have been counted, the posters are down, and the municipal election fades to a memory?

Five of six defeated mayoralty candidates and area councillors we interviewed expressed disappointment in last week's standings.

The sixth, Rob Barlow, seemed more concerned with his distaste for local media than his 1,499 votes that placed him fifth in the mayor's race, his second straight defeat contesting the mayor's seat.

What particularly irked Barlow was a letter from Hide House president Steve Dawkins published in *The Acton Tanner*. The letter said Barlow, when a member of Protect Our Water and Environment Resources (POWER), telephoned then-MP Garth Turner and suggested he not attend a meeting with Acton's three councillors on critical developmental issues.

"The letter *The Tanner* printed from Mr. Dawkins was out of character and was a totally unfounded statement. It would have been nice if I was called and asked if it was

true. If it (*The Tanner*) had any standards it would have been the first thing they would have done."

Mike Armstrong, who was 414 votes behind mayor-elect Marilyn Serjeantson, felt declaring his candidacy on the last possible day was the difference.

"I'm quite confident that if I had asked more people and knocked on more doors that the mayor's race would have been much closer," said Armstrong, 55.

Armstrong will continue to operate a life insurance business out of his Georgetown home.

Bob Malcolmson, whose 1,888 votes were good for fourth in the mayor's race, downplayed pre-election notions that the mayor-elect should have previous council experience.

"I don't believe it's true," said the 24-year businessman and policy analyst with the Brampton Board of Trade. "You want the best leader in that position. With me, the leadership was there. I've dealt with provincial, federal, Regional and municipal issues."

Malcolmson, like two other can-

didates interviewed, was also concerned by the low turnout at the polls from Halton Hills residents.

The father of three has left the door open to possibly run again.

Journalist Colin Gibson was disappointed in both his election votes (351 votes) and the poor Acton turnout at the polls.

"We got the status-quo, so it's going to be the same old, same old for the next three years," an upset Gibson, 45, said. "I hope I'm wrong, but I don't think I am."

The Georgetown resident predicted there will be no movement with the Beardmore site, Acton East development or construction of a new Acton arena by 1997.

Gibson will now turn his attention to his No. 1 post-election priority, starting a new Georgetown-based newspaper.

Acton's Rebecca Drotos is also quickly stepping aside from politics and is currently vacationing.

The 31-year-old, six-year resident who sought to bump Ward 1 councillors Norm Elliott and Gerald Rennie made it known before she left that the election proc-

ess was a valuable experience. "The Ward 1 outcome was good for the people of Acton," said the upbeat mother of one. "I had a wonderful rapport with the two candidates and accomplished everything I wanted to."

She plans to continue work on starting a research company.

Jean Hilborn, meanwhile, said the election was quite a way to spend four weeks vacation. She returned on Monday to her post as administrative assistant at New Vision Homes in Toronto.

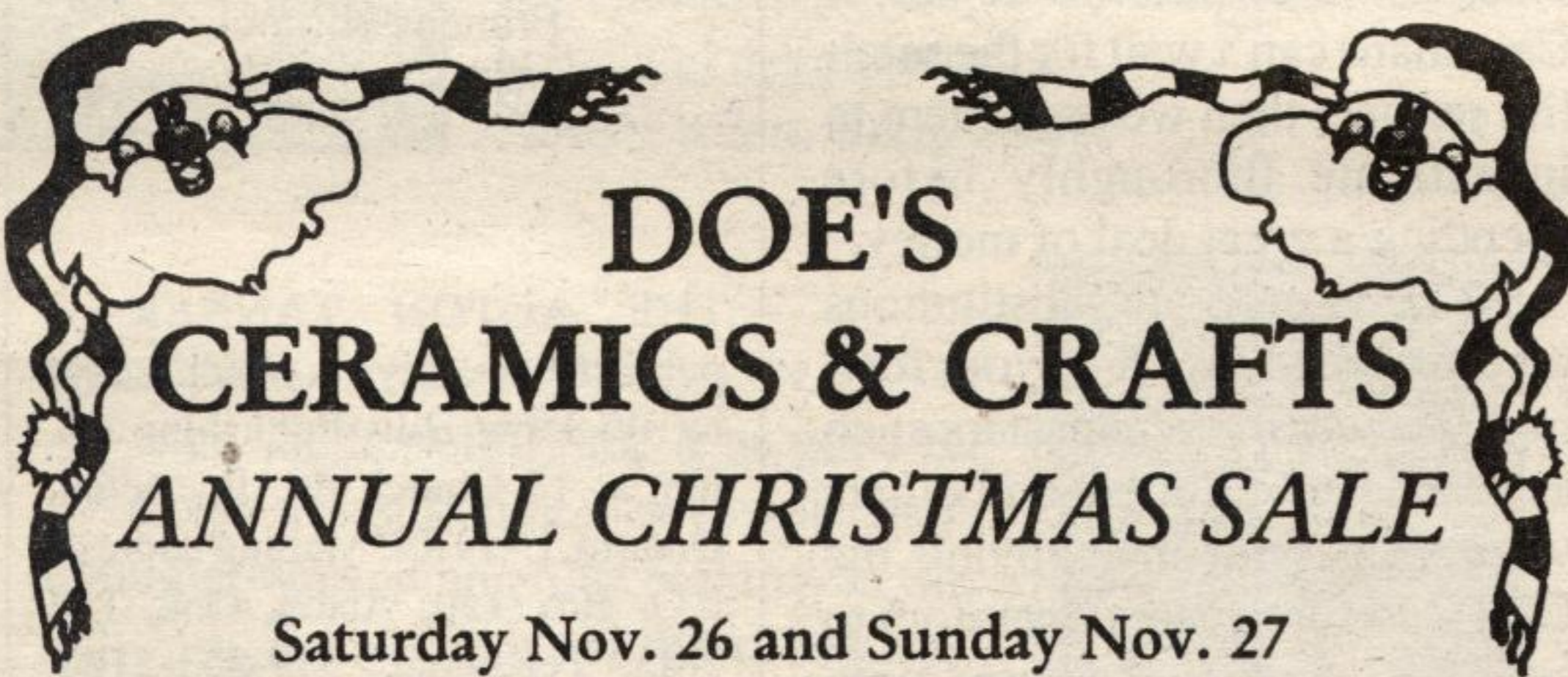
Hilborn was disappointed in Acton residents who informed her they wanted change, but didn't vote that way, or didn't vote at all.

"If they weren't happy they should have voted for change in me. If I hadn't come through with my promises they could have given me the boot in three years," suggested Hilborn.

The eight-year Acton resident, who many say was hurt by her relationship with the controversial candidate Barlow, was ousted by a whopping 1,528 to 348 by Bonnette for the Regional seat.



LEADING THE WAY! The Piercy twins, both 10, led the Acton Citizens' Band at the head of Saturday's Santa Claus Parade. Stephanie and Belinda's parents and two older sisters all play in the band. (Paul Nolan photo)



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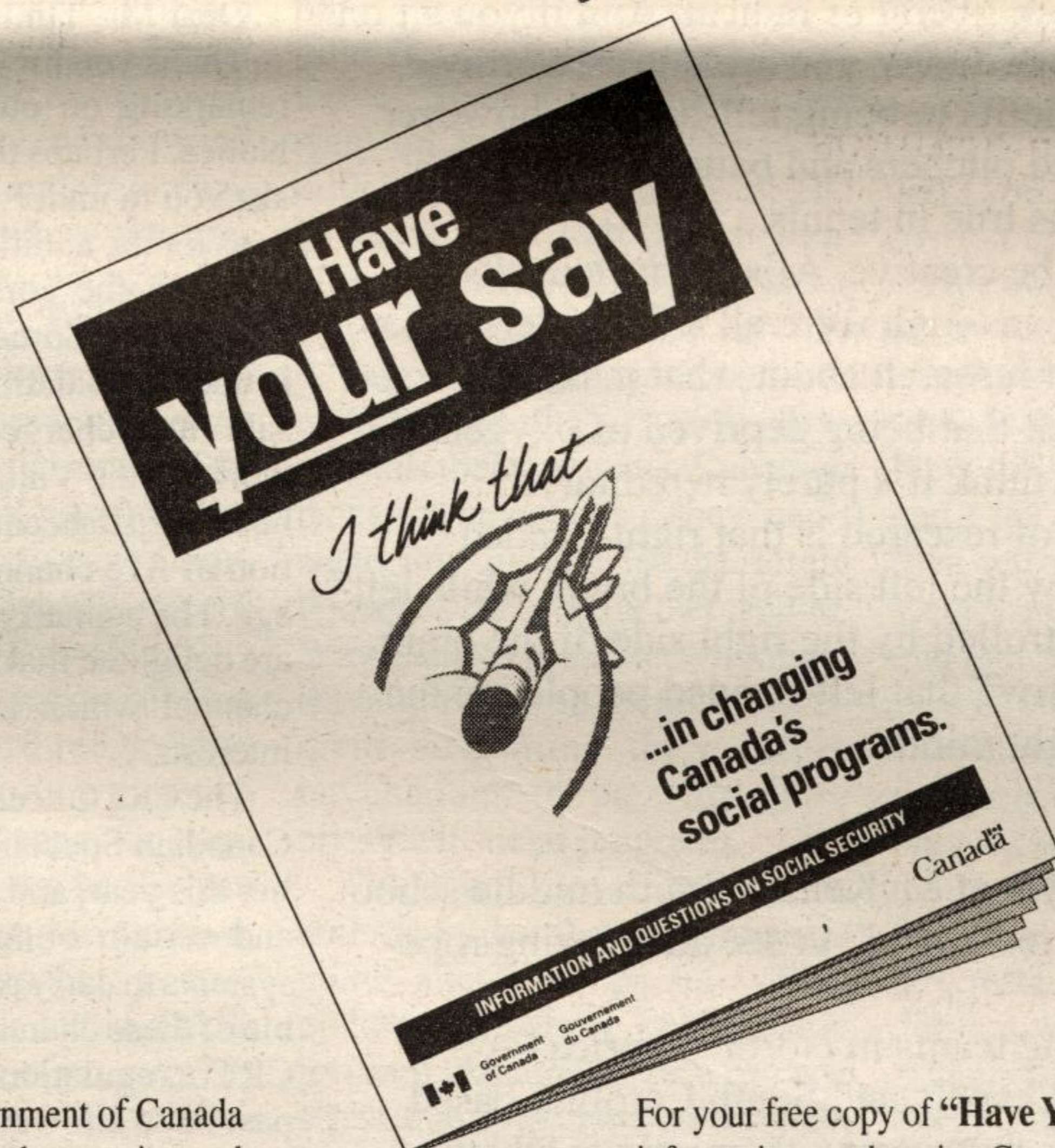
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