

She's not taking life sitting down

Nellie turns 88

When well-wishers came up to Nellie McKinnon Sunday at the Odd Fellows Hall to congratulate her on her 88th birthday, she did what comes naturally.

She stood up quickly at their approach to shake hands with every one of them.

Mrs. McKinnon isn't one to take life sitting down. She's still active in the Rebekah Lodge, cooking and serving meals at Lion's club functions for 35 men.

Sunday a packed hall of approximately 100 friends and relatives gathered to celebrate her Feb. 1 birthday, and Halton North MP Walt Elliot along with Mayor Gord Krantz brought greetings from various levels of government.

Mrs. McKinnon has four children, 12 grand children and 12 great grandchildren. Two of her granddaughters are Jane and Nancy McKinnon.

"She's a community person," Jane McKinnon said Sunday. "She's always been that kind of a person. Always giving to other people. She taught us all about the value of life."

"She's a very family-oriented person," Nancy added. "She's still very healthy, happy."

Mrs. McKinnon still does volunteer work for the elderly.

"She's a very positive, idealistic thinker," Jane said. "She's had some hard times but you never hear her talk of hard times."

"I never thought it would be anything like this," Mrs. McKinnon said of the elaborate party.

She has lived most of her life in the area, operating a mixed farm in her younger years. Mrs. McKinnon attributed her health at 88 to work, exercise and good eating.



Nellie McKinnon, centre, celebrated her 88th birthday with family and friends at the Odd fellows Hall Sunday afternoon. With Mrs. McKinnon are (left) Nancy McKinnon and Jane McKinnon, two of her 12 grandchildren. Mrs. McKinnon is still active with community groups in Milton.

Resident claims town's firewood policy is flawed

By ROB-KELLY

A Nassagaweya resident appearing before town council Monday night said the policy of allowing municipal employees to collect wood after town tree cutting operations is dangerously flawed.

Werner Koch contended that employees are placed in a conflict of interest situation when they gather the wood for personal use, and he said soon the town's credibility may be compromised.

"In my opinion, it is only a matter of time before someone claims or proves collusion between town employees and professional wood dealers," Mr. Koch said in a letter to council.

At present when the town cuts wood along the road allowance, it's left at the roadside for collection by anyone, including municipal employees. Following a 24-hour waiting period, the wood is hauled away by the town for distribution on a first-come first-served basis at the public works yard.

If a tree is felled onto private property, or cut down on private property for the town's benefit, the property owner has the right of first refusal of the timber.

The recommendation before council was to receive and file Mr. Koch's presentation, that is, to listen without administrative action. The town stayed with the present wood gathering guidelines, although they have agreed to update a brochure informing property owners of their rights to wood during nearby town cutting operations.

Councillor Brad Clements said, "it's an issue of what an employee does after his work is finished. Would it not be reasonable for him to have the same rights (as others)?"

"I'm afraid not," Mr. Koch said. "He's being paid to do a job. He should not benefit twice."

Mr. Koch said that following a recent dispute with town public works personnel over the disposition of trees and property damage, he had attempted to lay charges with the police for destruction of property and theft.

He said the matter was later "dealt with satisfactorily" during a meeting with Mayor Gord Krantz, town staff, and rural councillor Bill Johnson.

While that particular incident appeared amicably resolved and Mr. Koch chose to address primarily conflict of interest proposals, the attempted charge of theft did not sit well with urban councillor Les Laughren.

"With regard to the allegation of theft, I do take some exception. You make allegations over employees for which I am responsible."

Councillor Laughren said of the instances cited by Mr. Koch that prompted his call to police, "your ownership of the trees is under some dispute, I assure you."

Mr. Laughren added that municipal employees' rights after hours are equal to yours and mine. They do not give up their rights to gather wood after hours.

Mr. Koch, who works for the provincial civil service, had stressed what he considered the strict conflict of interest guidelines which apply to him. He countered Mr. Laughren by saying, "I'm a public servant. I'm not a public servant (just) during working hours."

Councillor Laughren said, "we have a good policy in place. It's been tightened up sufficiently. Some allegations are cruel and unnecessary."

Mr. Koch said he would not let the issue die following the meeting. He plans on bringing it to council's attention again, possibly through a petition signed by area residents.

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Another early bird

Royal Canadian Legion branch president Bob Randall and town councillor Rose Harrison made Milton's Charlie Thomas \$250 richer Saturday afternoon with an early bird draw in the legion's charity fundraiser lottery. It was the fourth such draw, with another scheduled for Feb. 27. The grand prize in the lottery is \$10,000 cash, to be drawn Mar. 26. Tickets are available from any legion member.

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