

The Penetanguishene Citizen

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Only two names for 15 seats

Few citizens volunteer to serve on town boards

Concerned citizens are not exactly flocking to the Penetanguishene Town Office to serve on the boards or committees affecting town policies for the next one to two years. (see Citizen Comment page four).

As of Monday town clerk Yvon Gagne said "there has been a great lack of response." Only two people have come forward to offer their services" he said.

Two weeks ago town officials advertised through this newspaper that council would be making appointments early in the year to the following boards or committees: Planning Board, Arena, Parks and Recreation Board, Museum Board, Public Safety Committee,

Committee of Adjustment, Industrial Commission, and the Tiny-Tay Peninsula Planning Board.

Residents of Penetanguishene interested in serving on any of these boards with the exception of municipal employees were invited to notify the town clerk by January 3. However, Gagne said it is "still not too late" to offer to serve on the various committees. "The mayor would have liked to have seen all the names in by January 3 but..."

Roughly 15 positions are open. Town officials will be contacting defeated candidates in the recent municipal election to see if they

want to serve. Some already have seats on committees but there's still room for more. When people have a beef they often ask how they could get on one of these committees Gagne said. Now that they have a chance few are stepping forward.

These committees meet on a monthly basis and provide a way of affecting municipal decisions without being elected to office. The only requirement is that a person be a rate payer in Penetanguishene. Is anyone interested?

Motorola layoffs now reach 200

Midland's Motorola plant laid off another 50 employees last month, bringing to 200 the number of workers affected by production cutbacks at the company.

Those affected were told December 20 not to return to work until further notice, just prior to the two-week production halt over the Christmas and New Year period. Production resumed Monday.

According to plant manager Bill Vidler, the layoffs affect both administrative and production employees, and have been sparked by slumping new automobile sales across North America.

In a press release issued from the head office of the company's automotive products division in Chicago, Robert Solem, vice-president and deputy general manager of the division, announced that 850 employees with the firm will be laid off this month, bringing the company-wide total to 1,750 since October 1, 1974.

"The layoffs are due primarily to the dramatic worldwide decline of automobile sales," said the release, which added that "This retrenchment of the labour force, and its duration, is directly related to sluggish automobile sales. Employment is expected to resume to more normal levels as car sales increase."

"The division's plants in Franklin Park, Illinois; Quincy, Illinois; Chicago; Arcade, Seguin, Texas; and Midland, Ontario are affected in varying degrees depend on the product mix at the facilities."

No further layoffs are planned at the Midland plant at this time, but future developments at the company will depend on sales, which, according to Vidler, "can't go anywhere but up."

He said the work force at his plant is now roughly 200, half what it was before the layoffs began in the fall.

But he pointed optimistically to two new models the company is starting to produce — a new AM / FM radio unit for Ford, on which production started December 1, and a new entertainment unit for Chrysler, with the first models to be produced in February. The entertainment unit consists of an AM / FM radio and a stereo tape deck.

Eighty per cent of the Midland plant's production goes to United States customers in the automotive industry — including Chrysler and Ford, International Harvester and American Motors. The balance goes to Canadian automobile manufacturers and distributors.

Motorola is not alone in its immediate flight. Almost every manufacturing plant in North Simcoe has laid off some workers, ranging from RCA to Kindred Industries Limited and Decor Metal Products.

Spokesmen at both Canada Manpower and the Unemployment Insurance Commission estimate there are now 1,300 laid off workers of a normal total of 5,000.

The pattern here parallels that in other parts of North America with concentrations of secondary industry. Inflation, recession and economic uncertainty are combining to slow the rate of consumption of expensive products from cars to appliances, and new housing starts are also lagging.

Area employment specialists, in the words of one, are looking for a "long, tough winter," but most economists expect the Canadian economy to weather the storm better than most in the west.



Celebrating a birthday

Three staff members celebrate the first birthday of the Centre d'Activites Francais.

the french centre turned one-year-old on Tuesday. From right to left secretary, Jean

Forget, president Rolland Desroches, and vice-president Joan Northcott.

French Centre one year old

A year ago, on January 7, 1974 the French Centre, or as its operators call it, the Centre D'Activites Francais opened its doors in Penetanguishene.

The Centre, the first of its kind in Simcoe County was the product of both the hopes and frustrations of French-speaking residents determined to preserve their culture. It operates out of a building provided by Dr. Germaine Gauthier.

Now a year and a day after its birth, Rolland Desroches, the president of the centre claims that "we've done marvelously well beyond all our expectations" as the officials look forward to expanding the Centre's activities.

Immediate evidence of expansion are plans calling for a French language music program to be aired over Channel 12 cable television twice a week and the starting of a French version of Dark Clark's American Bandstand to be aired live over the same station. "As soon as we purchase the equipment we'll be ready to begin" Desroches said. Grade 7 and 8, and high school students will be allowed to participate in the program.

Anticipated advances in the availability of popular French are just some of the new activities being added to ones developed in the past year.

Some of the developments which the French Centre has been entirely or partially responsible for are: bringing Glendon, a bilingual college into Penetanguishene, setting up an art program for children at the Centre, organizing square dancing for children again at the Centre, helping to set up a French language summer playground for children in Penetanguishene (it operated under an Opportunities For Youth grant), setting up a similar summer playground in Lafontaine with funds from the Centre, arranging for National Film Board French language films to be shown over cable television, submitting a weekly Citizen column on Centre activities, participating in the organization of a billeting program by which Midland Secondary School students spend a week in the homes of local French Canadian families, arranging for a French film to be shown at the Pen Theatre on a monthly basis, setting up a French Nursery

School program, and persuading CKMP radio to play some French songs during regular broadcasting hours.

On the whole, Rolland Desroches claims that the Centre D'Activites Francaises has been "successful in almost everything we've attempted." He'd like to hear more French music over CKMP ("if they want more records they can give us a call") but other than the music and problems with the nursery school program it has been a good year.

"We're still having a great deal of difficulty financing nursery schools" Desroches said. Because of a shortage of required funds for this program the Lafontaine Nursery School has been "closed temporarily" and the one in Perkinsfield "never got off the ground."

Joan Northcott, the vice-president of the Centre claims that "we're waiting to see where we stand with federal government funding" before pressing for expansion of the

nursery school program, perhaps in the North West Basin area.

While expansion of the French Nursery School program is currently up in the air the existing French Nursery School in the basement of St. Ann's church in Penetanguishene "is functioning very nicely" according to Rolland Desroches.

In addition to encouraging more French entertainment the Centre will be heavily involved in Winterama 1975. Desroches is one of the co-chairman of the festival and the Centre D'Activites Francais is being used as the Winterama committee's headquarters until the beginning of the carnival.

When Winterama starts the Centre will be converted into a French restaurant complete with French music and French Canadian food. Winterama headquarters will then be shifted to a room in the Hotel Brule which has been offered free of charge by owner Bob Charette.

Taskforce holds back second report

Release of the second interim report of the Simcoe Georgian Task Force has been blocked until Simcoe County Council and the city of Orillia can confirm new representatives on the Task Force's political committee.

The nearly two month delay between the completion of the report and its release to the politicians and the public was caused by the large number of municipal representatives who were turned out of their job in the December election. Defeats in their own municipalities meant they were no longer eligible to sit on the Political Committee of the Task Force as a delegate of their local council.

The report contains a series of recommendations made by a team of planning consultants about the growth levels which each municipality in Simcoe County can accommodate over the next 30 years. The population figures, Task Force officials stressed during public meetings held in the

fall to discuss the first report were only "possible" growth limits based on factors such as the destruction of agricultural land.

The recommendations of the second report, while modified versions of those from the first report, will also be subject to change based on public reaction to them.

"We want to stress that the second report is not final" Mrs. Bee Mathers, Secretary of the Task Force told the Times Friday. "What it contains can be changed after public meetings have been held."

The public will not have an opportunity to review the details of the report until it has been released by the political Committee of the Task Force. That is expected to be some time in mid-February.

After the report has been made public, a series of public meetings will be held throughout Simcoe County during late February, March and April to gauge public reaction to its contents and recommendations.

The first of the meetings will be aimed at members of special interest groups, such as farmers, environmentalists and developers. When that round of discussions is completed, the general public will have a chance to voice their views on the report at meetings later in the spring.

The public discussions which will be held in the spring, will be the last chance residents of the County will have to have their views incorporated in the final draft of the Task Force report which is expected to be completed in June.

The report will then be sent to the provincial government for their consideration and for implementation of the recommendations made by the consultants after nearly a year and a half of work and study.

Task Force representatives feel, that now, when the report is getting into its final stages, the public will participate more

actively in discussions about its contents.

The Simcoe Georgian Task Force was established by the provincial government in Co-operation with the 33 municipalities of Simcoe County to develop an overall master plan to cope with growth and development over the next 30 years.



First babe in '75

The stork was late in arriving this year. Mrs. Arthur Pike of Sawlog Bay holds her baby boy, the first child born at the Penetanguishene General Hospital in 1975. The child was born on Friday, January 3 and is as yet unnamed. Staff photo



Happy in his work

George Kobak demonstrates his smooth professional style of window washing at the Odd Copy Book Store on Main Street in Penetanguishene. In these troubled times of inflation and

rumoured depression the sight of Kobak at work eases people's minds. For the reason why read the story below.

Staff photo

Cleansing windows - and the mind

by Tom Grand

The sight of George Kobak at work in downtown Midland and Penetanguishene eases troubled minds.

Picture a hard working man or woman. Picture anyone in the working world today and you'll understand why it's good to see George Kobak, an independent businessman at work. Kobak is a window washer and in a world where continued inflation, rising unemployment, and predictions of doom and gloom dominate newspaper headlines and daily conversations it's reassuring to know a person can start up a business on his own.

In the United States, president Gerald Ford and highlevel experts (that's what they always call people who advise an American president) met over the weekend to discuss ways of creating jobs in a country where present unemployment figures are approaching those of the depression years in the 1930's.

And in the North Simcoe area the employment situation is not good either. Industries, many of them secondary suppliers for the struggling automotive industry are facing a slump in orders and sales due to the jittery international economic situation and people are being laid off.

When the big boys like Ford and General Motors start laying off, when the losses of mighty mighties like Volkswagen outstrip profits for the first time in over two decades, when industry after industry tightens its belt, and when even the government cuts back on staff, then every ordinary Joe and Mary knows the country's into hard times. And we worry. We worry about our jobs. Will they be there tomorrow or will we be laid off, cast out into the world to fare for ourselves.

That's why it's good to see George Kobak at work. He's reassuring because he's making a living at something few people would think of doing and in a way which few would try — working alone.

His profession is a rather exclusive one, especially in small towns where towering, glass and steel faced apartments don't exactly dominate the skyline. Yes the job attracts a limited

number of people and fewer still work at it the way Kobak does. He's his own boss, his own employee, a one man show. And he likes it that way.

"It beats working in a factory." "I have my own hours, I'm my own boss," says Kobak of his job, one which he admits may only be temporary. He's thinking of moving into another line of work. At age 18, a year and a half out of Midland Secondary High School where he graduated with grade 12, Kobak has plenty of time to look around and wait until a better job opportunity arises.

Until then a combination of window washing work, and part time construction work with a brother in Montreal provides a living income.

Kobak washes the windows of seven stores in Penetanguishene, every two weeks and a greater number of stores on a weekly basis in Midland. The normal charge ranges from \$1 to \$1.50 for an average store window and is higher for buildings with larger windows, or harder to get to glass.

Here's a tip for any budding window washers. Kobak claims you have to put alcohol in hot water to prevent it from breaking windows on a cold winters day.

But don't rush out on the streets with a bottle of alcohol and a bucket of hot water. Window washers should be trained, Kobak says, so that they can do a professional job.

He learned from an expert, and although training doesn't take long, he feels it is necessary.

But why the tips? In today's job hungry world why should an independent window washer practically invite competition.

Well to begin with George Kobak doesn't think that way and there is a possibility he may be starting on a full time construction job with his brother in Montreal.

A Saturday phone call to the Kobak residence in Midland revealed that George was in Montreal for the weekend to see his brother and while that doesn't necessarily mean he has landed the job - "Is anyone interested in working your own hours and being your own boss?"

BARRY



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New provincial judge named

The vacancy that was created in this area's provincial court system with the July 1974 death of Judge Albert J. Glass will be filled with the swearing in of Len Montgomery this Thursday in Orillia.

Montgomery, an Orillia lawyer will be sworn in as provincial court judge by

Frederick Hayes the Chief Judge of the Provincial Courts (Criminal Division) at a 3 p.m. ceremony at the Provincial Court on 19 Front Street North in Orillia.

Judge Ian Monroe came out of retirement to serve the courts until a successor to Judge Glass was appointed.