

The Curling Club makes a good move

It was a sight which would normally have brought horror to the eyes of any of Penetanguishene's faithful curlers. On Sunday the ice at the Penetanguishene Curling Club was filled with youngsters and adults, all of them on skates.

Skates have a habit of cutting up ice, even curlers' ice, and that's exactly what was happening on Sunday. By mid-afternoon the shiny polished ice surface was covered with thousands of snow like ice chips but no one seemed to mind. The curling season was over. It officially ended on Saturday night and while the ice is still in club officials are allowing the public to use it, free of charge, for skating.

That's a good sign because curling is only a seasonal sport. The building is our community centre and it should be used for community activities. During the winter season the centre is used to the fullest by the curling club. But what about summer?

It has been open in past summers for a few meetings, dances, and that's about it. This summer it looks like things may change. As always the management of the Penetanguishene Curling Club did an excellent job in running the club's activities this winter. Now, with the town council's approval, the curling club will be handling the management of the Community Centre on a year-round basis for the next ten years.

In previous years the recreational committee used town workers to look after the club during the summer season. The new arrangement will be less expensive to the town because members of the curling club will manage the Community Centre without pay. They're willing to do this because they expect to manage it on a profitable basis and thereby reduce the curling club's outstanding debt on the building of approximately \$27,000.

It's a sensible arrangement. To make a profit the management of the curling club will have to try to get the maximum summer use out of the community centre. That means planning and promoting events at the centre, events which will attract the people of Penetanguishene to the Community Centre.

Already plans are underway to use the centre for a number of events during Penetanguishene's "Old Home Week" centennial celebrations from June 28 to July 5. And there are whispers of holding a flea market, a big band dance night with the Penetanguishene Secondary School band, and another dance night with a rock band, all on a weekly basis at the Community Centre.

If the management of the curling club is able to spark the local interest in using the Community Centre for a variety of events during summer, the building will have gone a long way towards becoming a year-round place for community happenings.

Let's hope officials at the curling club are as successful in managing the building during the summer season as they have been during winter. Opening the ice to the public for free skating immediately after the close of the curling season was a good start.

Sugar and Spice

A fall marks winter's end

by Bill Smiley

Around here, it's one of those grand end-of-March days, with the sun pouring down, the air positively balmy (about 40 degrees), the defeated snow slinging grimly to the shadowed corners, and that lovely smell of rotten earth that precludes spring.

If it were fall, of course, and the temperature were the same, we'd be saying: "By, George! Nippy enough, ain't it. Looks like winter's not far off."

But at this time of year, the weather is

more a state of mind than a matter of temperature, and all across the land Canadians go slightly hysterical with the jubilant certainty that once more they have made it through that masochist's delight — a Canadian winter.

With the first relaxing of those icy tentacles, we go a bit haywire. Rubbers are kicked into a corner. Sweaters and scarves are hurled into closets. Babies are plunged into prams. And we all come down with a spring cold that is only slightly worse than

the vicious one we nursed all winter.

Typical example. This morning was garbage day. Just because the sun was shining and it wasn't snowing, I nipped out in my pajamas and slippers to deposit the plastic bags.

It was a trifle nippy, but the sun was shining and there was that ineluctable essence in the air. I winked at a sexy squirrel in the cedar tree. I made a V-for-Victory sign at Old Sol. I hallowed at a beautiful crow. I stopped to stroke the cat, who was lying in

the mud, basking. And I've been sneezing and blowing ever since.

No matter. Winter is over. Those long black nights and those short white days are gone for another six months, and, as far as I'm concerned, fill up the bowls and let joy resign unconfined.

Usually, we straggle into spring with nothing more hilarious than a slight lessening of despair, but this year the old lady and I ended winter with a gallant fillip. Some would call it a flip.

As you know, if you are keeping up with the social news, we "took up" cross-country skiing this spring. Most people take up sports during the season, but we don't operate that way. As I recall, we took up golf in the fall, after the leaves had begun to tumble.

Anyway, we took to skiing like a cat takes to nip, and in no time we were arguing about what kind of wax to use (we have two kinds, red and black) and clumping around in our boots like real skiers.

Our timing was perfect. On what turned out to be the last day of skiing for the season, we took a shot at a hill. Or maybe it was the other way around.

It was a long, straight hill: no trees, no rocks, nothing that a capable six-year-old couldn't handle with both hands in his pockets.

We were certainly polite enough. It was: "You go first, you're the man." And: "No, no, dear. Ladies first, you know."

As usual, I was out-manoeuvred. I steered myself with recollections of driving a bicycle head-on into a cow during an English blackout, of diving into a hell-fire of German anti-aircraft fire.

I took off. One thing I dislike about skiing is that there are no brakes. You can't even drag your feet.

Well, sir, the only way I can describe my descent of that slope is hell-bent. Squatting like a kangaroo in labor, eyes rolling, I went down there at what I reckon was about 140 mph.

And I made it. No ignominious tumble. No splits. Thirty feet from the end of the run, all danger behind, I straightened up, waved one ski-pole nonchalantly and turned my head to see if The Chicken was impressed.

Just then the snow, with an unbelievable crust, rose up and smote me a mighty smite on the head. My cap flew off. I knew I wasn't in hell, but I sure felt bent. I lay there, quietly uttering words I haven't heard since my Dad used to go down and beat the coal furnace with a shovel.

I heard a scream. "At least she knows I'm dying," I thought bitterly. "Boy, is she going to be sorry for some of the things she said to me, over the years."

Then I heard another scream. "Bill, get out of the way! I'm going to run over you!"

Wrenching my broken neck around, I looked uphill. There was a dark figure flying toward me. It looked like a witch, but it was riding two broomsticks, instead of one. Then the broomsticks began to part, in what seemed slow motion, and I knew the witch was going to split right up the middle unless the nightmare ended.

It did. I woke up. The witch was dead. One broomstick pointed straight in the air. The other was pointed back up the hill. There was silence.

Then: "Are you all right?" And: "I don't know. Are you?" And: "I dunno. I think I'm gonna cry." (That was me.)

Boy, am I glad it's spring, and there's no more skiing until December.

But skiing certainly tones you up. I can now touch my toes with no problem at all. I use a yardstick. And my wife can knit like a demon with one hand. She got good at it while her left arm was in a sling.



Streak eases the "Crying the bills blues"

by Tom Grand

Sometimes people feel in an argumentative mood. Sometimes. But lately, I've been feeling like that all the time. If I wasn't essentially a pacifist (some people would call me a chickenist), I'd lash out and punch the first moving thing I came upon right on the old beak. Of course, I'll never do it but the temptation is there and I've noticed it in others like Streak, my secretary. The feeling comes from a combination of the bill paying and winter blues. It hits most everyone when there's snow on the ground in mid-April, except for millionaires living in Florida or some other southernly paradise.

It was a Thursday, a normal workday, and I'd been dutifully taking down the court news for next week's paper since 10:15 a.m. It was now 4:30 p.m. and I was reciting a litany of my troubles to Streak. They could be summed up in a neat five letter word — b-i-l-l-s, bills, and more bills.

According to popular mythology secretaries are good listeners. They're supposed to sympathize with you when you spill your troubles. At the end of one such lengthy discourse, your troubles, if they're not solved, will at least seem lighter because someone like Streak has shared the weight of them with you. Ideally this is what should happen... ideally.

Streak is not an ideal secretary. She's married, I'm not. That doesn't in itself make her less than perfect. It's got nothing to do with her married state except, the house, the kids, hubby and the second car.

Streak and her husband, like pretty well every other all-Canadian middle class couple are carrying a mortgage on their house. The mortgage eats into both of their cheques. Streak and her husband, like pretty well every other all-Canadian middle class couple dream of a second car, but they have three or four ravenous kids, who are continually growing, eating and popping the latest in vitamin pills. Manufacturers haven't yet invented vitamin pills to enable clothes, shoes, and other essentials to grow up with kids, although washing machines know how to shrink them. The end result is that Streak and her hubby spend a lot of money on

clothes and other essential items like ice cream and lollipops.

Then there's the telephone. It's a minor item, but taken together with the clothes, the food, and the mortgage, well it means the difference between putting ham or bologna on the kids sandwiches. Streak uses bologna. She has to pay for the extension telephone which was recently put in Judy's room. Judy's her beautiful growing daughter, who at the tender age of 16 is bursting into full bloom. Judy receives a lot of telephone calls from boys; two, three, and even four years her senior. Judy needs another telephone so that the main family line isn't tied up all the time.

As I said earlier Streak is married, I'm not. When I started listing my monthly payments for the car, rent, a student loan, the \$1,000 I owe my brother, the new set of tires I had to buy for the car which I'm beginning to doubt if I'll ever own, and the \$50 to \$75 job needed to straighten out one of its fenders, she laughed. "You think things are bad now, wait until you're married."

I wish I could say that was all Streak said. It wasn't. She then proceeded to tell me about budgetary planning.

Streak's budgetary plan is to break even after receiving her cheque and paying off the bills, and to date that's what she and hubby are doing. They're paying the bills and staying basically happy. Streak suggested I be happy too. I'm paying my bills, just mind you, but I'm paying them all the same.

Then Streak eased my mind, just like real secretaries are supposed to do. She told me about her girlfriend who told off her employer for taking advantage of her by paying less than she was worth. "I didn't really feel the company was taking advantage of me," the girlfriend said. "I just felt like telling them off."

Then Streak hit me with this explanation. "It's not the bills that are bothering you, it's Winter. Winter has lasted too long."

That's as good an explanation as I've heard for the crying the b-i-l-l-s blues. Streak's words lightened the load on my shoulders. And you know something. She's not that bad a secretary after all. In fact she's pretty near ideal.

Streak's agreed to run the office without me while I head for Florida. Winter has lasted too long. The snow hasn't left us, so I'm leaving it for two weeks in Florida. By the time I arrive back, I expect to be able to handle my bills, if the snow is gone.

Editor's Note: Most of the above story is a fictional account of the middle class bill paying blues. Part of it however, is factual. The editor Tom Grand, is leaving for Florida for two weeks. Former Citizen editor Jim Park will be in charge of the Citizen while Tom Grand is vacationing in Florida.

Looking back

In the April 23, 1969 issue of the Citizen:

PSS staged the play Oklahoma. The Caribbean Island of St. Vincent donated two eighteenth century cannons to Penetanguishene's Royal Navy and Military Establishments.

The SCBE held a public meeting at Barrie's Central Collegiate in an attempt to explain the increased budget, higher salaries and other costs.

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Remembering the past a day with the 'Rocket'

Expansion has unquestionably diluted the calibre of play in the National Hockey League, but today as in the years of the old six team league, youngsters still worship the superstars.

In 1962, two years after his retirement, Maurice the "Rocket" Richard of the

Montreal Canadiens was still the most well known hockey player in Canada. Richard held the record for the most goals, 545, in regular season play. The question then was, could Gordie Howe last long enough to break the record? Bobby Hull had yet to score 50 goals in a season, something the Rocket did

in 50 games in the forties, and a fellow by the name of Bobby Orr was not yet old enough to play in the NHL.

So when the fabulous Rocket came to a town or a city it was an event. This picture shows the Rocket autographing a miniature

hockey stick, a souvenir of the one used to score his 500th goal. Claude Blondin is the stary eyed youngster receiving the stick. Claude was the grandson of Edgar Leduc who played on the original Montreal Canadian team in 1910. Mr. and Mrs. Albet Blondin look on.