

Apartments inevitable

Apparently it was with some surprise that members of the Penetanguishene planning board received a number of objections at their Monday night meeting to a proposed apartment complex in the north end of Penetanguishene.

We wonder, though, if any surprise was really warranted. After all, people generally don't like the idea of apartment buildings in their neighbourhoods. Even people in big bad Toronto complain when apartment buildings are built in residential areas.

The way they get around the problem in Toronto, though, is to build apartments in areas of their own. The result, as anyone who drives into the city along the Don Valley Parkway, or through Mississauga, can testify, is giant ugly areas covered in "wall to wall" apartment buildings.

The problem in Penetanguishene is that there aren't enough people to support a giant suburb composed of high-rise apartment buildings, and at any rate, there is no place to put such a development.

Some of the objections received by the board were concerned with such things as traffic problems. These objections can be overcome by planning. As they say, where there's a will, there's a way, and access problems can be dealt with by improving the roads, installing sidewalks, or opening new roads.

The real problem lies with the other objections. Basically, the objectors don't like apartments. There's not much the planning board can do about that.

There weren't any objections to apartment buildings in general when the town's housing policy was adopted, at least none that we're aware of. Most people don't object to apartment buildings in general, although they may use that argument when one is proposed near their houses.

Let's face it. Apartment buildings are here to stay. Or at least they're somewhere to stay. There are many people who prefer apartment living for one reason or another. Some don't want to have to worry about gardening or home repairs. Others like the price. Others like the services — a swimming pool, sometimes a sauna or whirlpool. Some like the view.

Penetanguishene, despite the threat of high unemployment, is slated to grow in the next half century. Housing is already tight, and there is the possibility that some companies may not be willing to locate in Penetanguishene, because there is no place for whatever staff may have to be imported to live.

Judging by the drawings and plans for the proposed apartment, the rent is not likely to be so low as to attract welfare recipients from the city. More likely, it will attract professionals, single people or couples who make a good living in the area but don't want a house.

Those objections which deal specifically with problems which would be created if the complex were built should get serious consideration from planning board. If they are insurmountable, then perhaps consideration should be given to scrapping the whole project. After all a building can always be built in the town's subdivision, Rolling Sands Estates.

But those objections which concern the validity of apartment living in general should be dealt with differently. The town has come out in favour of having a certain amount of apartment type accommodation available. Unless it is willing to reconsider the whole housing policy, it would do well to ignore complaints dealing with whether the town should have apartments at all.

In the end, if the town decides not to allow apartment buildings anywhere near anyone who doesn't like them, it won't have any apartment buildings. Apartment living is a valid alternative lifestyle, and one for which there is a demand. They don't have to be ugly, although it is certainly easier to build a box than to build an attractive building. The Pin proposal appears, from the drawings, to be a cut above the usual boxes built in Toronto.

Whether or not the Pin proposal is eventually given the go-ahead, the people of Penetanguishene will have to face the fact that somewhere, sometime, an apartment building will go up in town. And given the state of development of the municipality, chances are that it will be built near existing houses.



The lonely shore

Letters to the editor

Disagrees with editorial

Dear Editor,

Your recent editorial criticizing Simcoe County Council for its non support of the Simcoe Rescue Squad lacks justification.

County and municipal councils, in fact all levels of government are frequently condemned for not exercising spending restraint which inevitably pushes up taxes.

Politicians are accused of giving in to demands that tend to make them look good in voters' eyes. In other words, financing their re-election with the municipal budget. This is a particularly common occurrence when the "cause" is something that inspires sympathetic outbursts from the public and the media.

The point of this comment is not to condemn the members of the Rescue Squad who are undoubtedly sincere in their objectives. However there are a number of unanswered questions about the Squad that surely puzzled council as it has some of the public.

Should not local councils be brought in at the planning stages to be consulted on the need of such a service?

Who determined the inventory of equipment to be purchased which appears to be extremely costly?

What should council's spending priorities be between: education and enforcement to preventing accidents; and a service to clean-up the mess after the fact?

It seems unfortunate at this late date that

even though County financial support was a goal several months ago the legal and accounting services and organizational expertise within the county administration were not sought out in the very early stages of the project.

One essential requirement in considering a venture of this type would be valid statistical evidence that (a) there is a need, and (b) that the proposed organization would be capable of responding effectively to the need. The research offered, while I am not questioning its authenticity, seems to be provided by supporters of the squad and may lack objectivity required before a public commitment could be supported.

There are hundreds of projects that are worthy of public support, but it is literally impossible to finance them all and keep taxes at a level that wouldn't drive people off their property. Any elected official knows only too well, once committed to a venture like this, it can become a nightmare of expense to municipal administrations.

While I as much as anyone would like to see the public provided with all the services it needs and wants, I congratulate County Council for what is so seldom seen these days. That is a good display of good, sound, responsible government.

Yours truly,
Ron Jones.

Police and citizens praised

Dear Sir,

On behalf of George Pound of Port McNicoll and relatives a word of thanks and appreciation would like to be expressed to all the people who took part in the search for his wife, Hannah, who had been missing from her home for 13 hours.

A special thanks to Staff Sergeant Doolittle of Midland who organized the search, and at least nine officers of the O.P.P. who helped in the rescue, and who thought of looking in the unusual places, as she was located near the beach, but hidden in the underbrush.

A real community spirit was seen—many men and women from Port McNicoll whom we don't know by name, those who offered

coffee and sandwiches to the searchers, those 17 members of the congregation of the Jehovah's Witnesses, of which Mrs. Pound was a member, seven of whom took part in the actual search with the O.P.P., through the bush for many hours, as well as Mrs. Judy Essensa of Port McNicoll, who was the first one to find Mrs. Pound.

She had been searching with her son since 7:00 a.m. that day.

Mrs. Pound is now in the hospital in Midland recuperating from her ordeal. Thank you one and all.

May Blais
Port McNicoll

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There's nothing common about the cold

by Shirley Whittington

Unemployment, the sinking dollar, the energy crisis—right now this country has more troubles than Montreal has houses for sale. But none of these woes will bring the country to its knees.

The common cold will. Right now, I don't know anyone who isn't actively involved with a cold. Everyone I meet is either suffering, getting over or incubating one.

Locally cough syrup is outselling Creme de menthe, and fashionable hostesses are holding Neo-Citran-and-cheese parties. Meanwhile there is a nation-wide epidemic of broken fingernails as people try to extract cold capsules from those cunning little foil packages.

So many tiny time capsules are exploding in the stomachs of Canadians that the eighteen-hour girdle is negotiating for a new contract.

Actually, the common cold is only common

until you get one. Then it becomes the most uncommon, the most spectacularly inconvenient malady on earth. For husbands, especially, the common cold becomes a cosmic complaint. They lie abed, surrounded by Kleenex boxes, patent medicines, heating pads and crumpled newspapers, and demand to know why they aren't feeling better.

Medical people say there is really no instant cure for the common cold, but my mother never really believed this. She put her faith in mustard, and even now the smell of Keene's powdered mustard makes me wince.

On the days when I came home with a bark and a sniffle, she'd mix up an evil yellow paste and smear it between two layers of flannel. This, she would slap on my chest.

It felt cold at first, but gradually the warmth would seep through and I'd begin to cry for mercy. Mother would peel the plaster off, and pronounce, "There! That should break your cold up."

It did more than break my cold up. It

stunted my growth. For years, my chest and waist measurements were identical. On Halloween, I used to wrap myself with a red ribbon and go out as a barber pole.

At that, I was lucky. I have a friend whose mother used to make her soak her feet in a mustard bath at the first sign of a cold. She grew up healthy, that friend, but she never wears sandals because her toes look like a package of cocktail wieners.

An aunt of mine had an effective remedy for midnight coughers. She used to sneak up on them, and clap an ice-cold cloth on their chests. The victim was invariably shocked into semi-consciousness, and the cough subsided.

I don't know how to account for this current epidemic of colds, but I'm sure all this wet weather has something to do with it. That, and the fact that people never wear galoshes anymore.

Younger readers may not know what a galosh is. It is not a French Canadian horse-drawn cart, nor is it something to smoke or

eat. A galosh is a high, waterproof overshoe, and nobody wears them except very elderly ladies, whom you will notice do not suffer overly much from the common cold.

Today, people put their shoes on in the morning, truck through puddles and slush all day, and take their shoes off when they go to bed. The idea of wearing something over the shoe to keep it (and the foot) dry is as foreign to today's young people as the moustache cup.

Galoshes are old hat (or old shoe) and as a result, people are getting their feet wet and catching colds. Then they go around licking each other's popsicles, and kissing, and the germs spread faster than bad news.

I think this country would get back on its feet again if people started wearing galoshes. The wet head is dead, but the wet foot is deadlier. Buckle up Canada! We may yet avert disaster.

Anyway, a politician who puts his foot in his mouth while wearing galoshes will wind up spitting buckles instead of platitudes.

The future — it just isn't what it used to be

by Bill Smiley

Boy, I get sick of the news sometimes, don't you? Unemployment and inflation are up. Housing is scarce and mighty expensive. The idiots in Ulster are still blowing each other up. The various pipeline debates go on and on. And everybody is scared stiff that Quebec will separate. Boring, boring, boring. It becomes difficult to remain a positive, concerned citizen of this country of ours when the daily news is nothing but bad. Madness and senseless violence and fear of involvement seem to be all about us.

It's highly doubtful that any Canadian hockey club can beat the Russians. Toronto Argonauts and Toronto Blue Jays are the worst teams in their respective leagues. My friends are getting old and sick. I have to have a tooth extracted tomorrow. And the bricks on my house are crumbling, just like my teeth. Just try to keep a stiff upper lip when you haven't any teeth with which to stiffen it.

Canadian women are living six and a half years more than Canadian men. Juvenile delinquency is increasing at the rate of 6.3 per cent annually. And my buritis is playing hell with my shoulder.

Taxes in Canada are higher than they are in Britain. Two guys trying to fly the Atlantic

in a balloon ditched in the sea near Iceland. And some poor turkey, fishing in the Niagara River, was drowned when his tackle-box fell in and he jumped after it. He probably had a mickey of rye in it.

Another big (really big) cabinet minister resigns from the government. George Chuvalo, at 40, wants one last fight. A CBC drama shows Alberta and Ottawa getting a royal screwing from U.S.-based oil companies.

And my wife wants to buy a whole lot of new furniture for the living room, despite the fact that the stuff we have is only 30 years old, and perfectly good, if you like leaning lamps and rump-spring chairs.

We've got enough natural gas to last us for years, but we won't be able to afford it. The weather is absolutely rotten. So is my car, which is about to disintegrate in a cloud of rust-dust, should anyone give it a kick.

In Quebec, the English-speaking are taking a hosing, while in the rest of the country, various guys called Goyer, Chretien, Lalonde and Trudeau are telling us what to think. And I never did get the stain on my picnic table.

Nothing much wrong with the big banks, of course. There never is. Why, one of them has slashed its interest rate on loans for new cars from 13.5 to 12.5 interest. Quelle benevolence!

Who needs it when the price of cars has gone up about six per cent? If you see a car going by you some time in the next year, and a body falls through the bottom, that'll be me, running my old car until it disintegrates.

However, there's an out. I can buy a Turbo Commander executive jet that will Fly Above The Weather, for only \$160,000.00. Trade or finance. I think I might have to finance that one.

Ottawa recently floated a bond issue of one billion dollars with remarkable ease. Authorities are "enthralled" with the ease with which the bonds were sold. Why not, they say, cut personal taxes and cover the enlarged deficit with increased borrowing? Why not, indeed? They only have a debt now of six and a half billion dollars. Peanuts.

What in the name of all that is weird has happened to this country in the last three decades? We came out of World War II with a proud war record and fourth in the world in gross national product. We had a surging economy, a vibrant industrial health, and all those natural resources. We were united and free and strong. The future was rosy.

Thirty odd years later, we can't sell our products because our prices are too high. We have one of the worst records in the world for industrial and civil strikes. Our postal

system is rotten. Our railways don't carry passengers. Factories are closing down right and left. The Maritimes are a disaster area. And Quebec is practically dictating its own terms, with a shattered Dominion in the offing.

Maybe we came too quickly out of the national short pants and into the overalls. Maybe we got greedy and lazy and soft. Maybe we had third-rate leadership that sold out our water and our energy and our other natural resources for interim political prestige.

Whatever happened, we have something very close to a national disaster on our hands. Our dollar is weak. Our young people have little faith in the future. Our middle-aged are suspicious and cynical. Our system is riddled with the worst aspects of bureaucracy.

Thirty years ago, I'd have said to any of my many friends from the Commonwealth: Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Rhodesia, "Come to Canada; that's where the future is; greatest country in the world."

I'd have difficulty in pronouncing those words today. I could say we have the best unemployment premiums in the world, great health plans. But there's not much room here now to build a future. Pity.