

Friday comment

New legislation sound, but new problem rises

The Ontario Legislature is expected this week to pass a Private Member's Bill which would raise the legal drinking age in the province from 18 years to 19 years. As a result, persons now 18 will lose their right to drink.

The move is definitely a step in the right direction. Since the legal drinking age was lowered to 18 in 1975, various agencies, both private and governmental, have noted an alarming increase in teenage alcoholism and alcohol related traffic accidents.

The move indicates too, that the Davis government simply made a mistake when it lowered the drinking age. The fact that it has allowed a free vote on the question also indicates that it realizes its mistake.

For a government to admit a mistake is one thing. That it take measures to alleviate any problems caused by its mistake is another, perhaps equally important aspect to the question.

A local hotel manager has noted the need for such restitutive measures with respect to the drinking question. He has pointed out that since the lowering of the drinking age, his establishment has been frequented to a

large extent by patrons in their upper teens. The bar for them represents not so much a place to drink, but a place to go to on a Friday or Saturday night.

Now these people will no longer have such establishments to frequent. The manager expressed fear that his former 18-year-old patrons, by now used to drinking in a social situation, will start to do their drinking in the streets, or in cars.

His fear is justified. Why? Because beyond drinking in bars, there is little else in the area for late teens to do.

It is up to the Ontario Government to realize that the removal of drinking privileges will create such a vacuum, especially in smaller areas such as the Midland region.

It has fulfilled only half its responsibility if it simply makes it illegal for those under 19 to drink. The other half will be fulfilled if it realizes that by correcting its original mistake, a need will have developed for the creation and sponsoring of outlets such as dances and youth centres, which can function for persons in their late teens as practical and attractive alternatives to bars.

Letters to the editor

Readers perturbed by 'downtown' petition

Dear Sir:

If nothing else, following political and economic developments in the Town of Midland provides one the opportunity to exercise the deep and craggy recesses of the mind normally reserved for logic.

We are amazed to read that: the circulation of a petition limiting the region of the B.I.A. is not to be construed as disapproval of the concept. "...it just doesn't affect us and we don't want to contribute to it..." is, essentially what they are saying.

We are tempted to draw parallels. Could one circulate a petition (referendum) saying, "we like Canada, it's just that it doesn't include us, so we would rather not be in it?"

Or maybe we can look toward our historical precedents. "Yea I think a new barn would be nice but; I can't help, it's not my barn and doesn't effect me."

The fact of the matter is Midland is in trouble, not the crisis kind of trouble

but, the gnawing, creeping, debilitating kind of trouble, that leaves a community lame before anyone noticed the limp.

What we need is a community spirit and resolve to determine what the problems are and a plan to systematically correct them.

What we don't need is factionalized and fragmented community with each section determining what is good for it, and then; going it alone.

What effects the Town Centre affects the enterprise of Elizabeth Street, and; what affects the industrial community impacts the commercial and professional community.

I for one think the attitude conveyed by the petition is ill-conceived, ill-timed and counter productive.

The question now is, what next?

Yours truly
Thomas W. Lembo
John C. Edwards

'Legalized executions' won't solve real problem

Dear Editor:

The hysterical clamour for a return to the death penalty for crimes of first-degree murder being made by certain politicians, appears to be the only contribution they have made thus far, in dealing with Canada's severe unemployment problem. Undoubtedly, the return to the primitive and barbaric practice of legalized executions would enlist the services of a few unemployed hangmen.

Their simplistic 'deterrent' approach in dealing with capital offences has been tried since the beginning of time and was a statistical failure. At one period in English history, 170 criminal offences were punishable by death. The offences ranged from pick-pocketing to murder. Notwithstanding the severity of the punishment, the 'deterrent' factor wasn't anymore effective than it is today.

Executions by statute, have, on a number of occasions, resulted in tragic miscarriages of justice. No law is flawless; no judge or jury is infallible. One fact is certain, however, when the hangman's noose is tightened around the victim's neck and the trap-door is sprung, society collectively and legally reaches the point of no return.

Thomas Jefferson, foremost American statesman and Third President of the United States, held that man is the most important resource in the universe. Assuming Jefferson's premise is valid, would it not be more logical to remove capital offenders from the mainstream of society and

utilize their talents and energies in a meaningful manner such as paying for their offences by working in the service of the state for 20 or 30 years on a host of public projects begging for attention? In my view, society not only debases itself, but is short-changed when those convicted of capital crimes are summarily relegated to 6 feet of clay in some remote cemetery.

If legislators are seriously concerned about crime, they should address themselves to the sociological evils of unemployment, drug abuse, rampant alcoholism, child battering and the super-sexual and crime oriented television bombardment of youngsters in their most impressive years.

George Bernard Shaw, noted dramatist and critic, is credited with having said: "North America has gone from barbarism to decadence without going through civilization." The restoration of the death penalty would indeed confirm Shaw's conclusion.

According to leading authorities in the fields of social science, psychology and criminology, practically all crime is a manifestation of unknown hereditary abnormalities aggravated by the environmental effects of the social and economic ills that beset our present day society. Until we discard the band-aid remedies in dealing with these problems, the causes and effects will remain substantially unchanged.

Sincerely yours,
William J. Ogilvie,
Deputy Reeve of the Town of Midland.

Downtown: the downtown core has experienced a flurry of activity in recent months

by Chris Knowles

As one downtown merchant puts it—"the more activity in the downtown core, the more jobs."

The quote is attributed to a businessman who has more than a passing interest in the job situation in Midland.

Mayor Moreland Lynn, when he's not at town hall, can be found at Huronia Office Services on King Street, a shop he's owned for seven years.

He pointed out the area stretching from Elmvale to Penetanguishene houses a labour force of approximately 15,400 workers. "Ten percent," he adds, "work in the downtown core."

So when Bayshore Bowling Lanes decides to expand their facilities or 'Mad' Murray Mostyn opens up a new shop, the mayor is happy, downtown merchants are happy and Midland benefits.

"Everytime there's a change made or a new business arrives in town, it tends to generate a certain amount of em-

more attractive."

And parking is a problem...there's not enough of it and then there's the meters on top of that."

One of the most popular spots on the main street, Bayshore Bowling Lanes, received a complete facelift and has just recently opened again for business.

The facility has multiplied from eight to 12 lanes and larger windows and siding are being added to enhance the building's appearance.

Tavern possibility

Owner Vincent Salvatore has plans for the basement if Midland town council's approval is granted.

A 'disco' is in Salvatore's future plans, but a town bylaw stipulates he must supply his own parking, something that Salvatore doesn't have.

Salvatore says if approval is given shortly, his disco could be operational by spring.

Last summer E.G. Mink Insurance Agency moved away from King Street and into a house on Hugel Avenue. Its spot was quickly grabbed up by the Beauty Stop.

Right next door, Mather's Budget Shop took over the location

vacated by the Stripe Store.

P.H. Jory Ltd., a drug store just up King from Mather's, and the Beauty Stop, had been in the Jory family from 1915 until September of this year. Alex Kowalski purchased the business and has to this point, made no changes.

A fire on Dominion bank is also going on computer in the near future.

Plans for the old bank location are being kept under wraps.

The small shop once utilized as a submarine sandwich outlet has been purchased by the G and M Shoppe and will be used as an office for the ladies' wear outlet and their

Chapelle cites a need for more space in explaining the graphic studio's relocation from above Walter Dean Real Estate on top of Municipal Savings and Loan.

"The future of the business is looking rather bright," says Bing.

Almost twice as much space in the new location will be advantageous in Graphicteam's plans for expanded services.

General improvement

Other businesses along King Street have decided to spruce up their existing shops rather than incur the expense of switching to new and perhaps larger premises.

The Midland Grill Restaurant closed down for a month and when they re-opened for business the interior and exterior of the building had received a complete face-lift and the Chinese Food restaurant was born.

Bold Buyers, a tile, wallpaper and hardware shop knocked out their front wall, installed a large window and tiled the front of their store.

60 years. Clarke Edwards has been involved in the shop for 40 of those.

"We have been offered space in the malls," he says, "but I feel very strongly about the downtown area."

"We've got to go ahead with the malls," Edwards says, adding that beautification of the downtown with planters and 61 trees was the first step.

"Sure people complain about the planters but next summer it is going to look really good."

Edwards gives an ominous warning: "If the downtown core deteriorates the town will be ruined."

Mayor Lynn says co-operation between downtown merchants is the key.

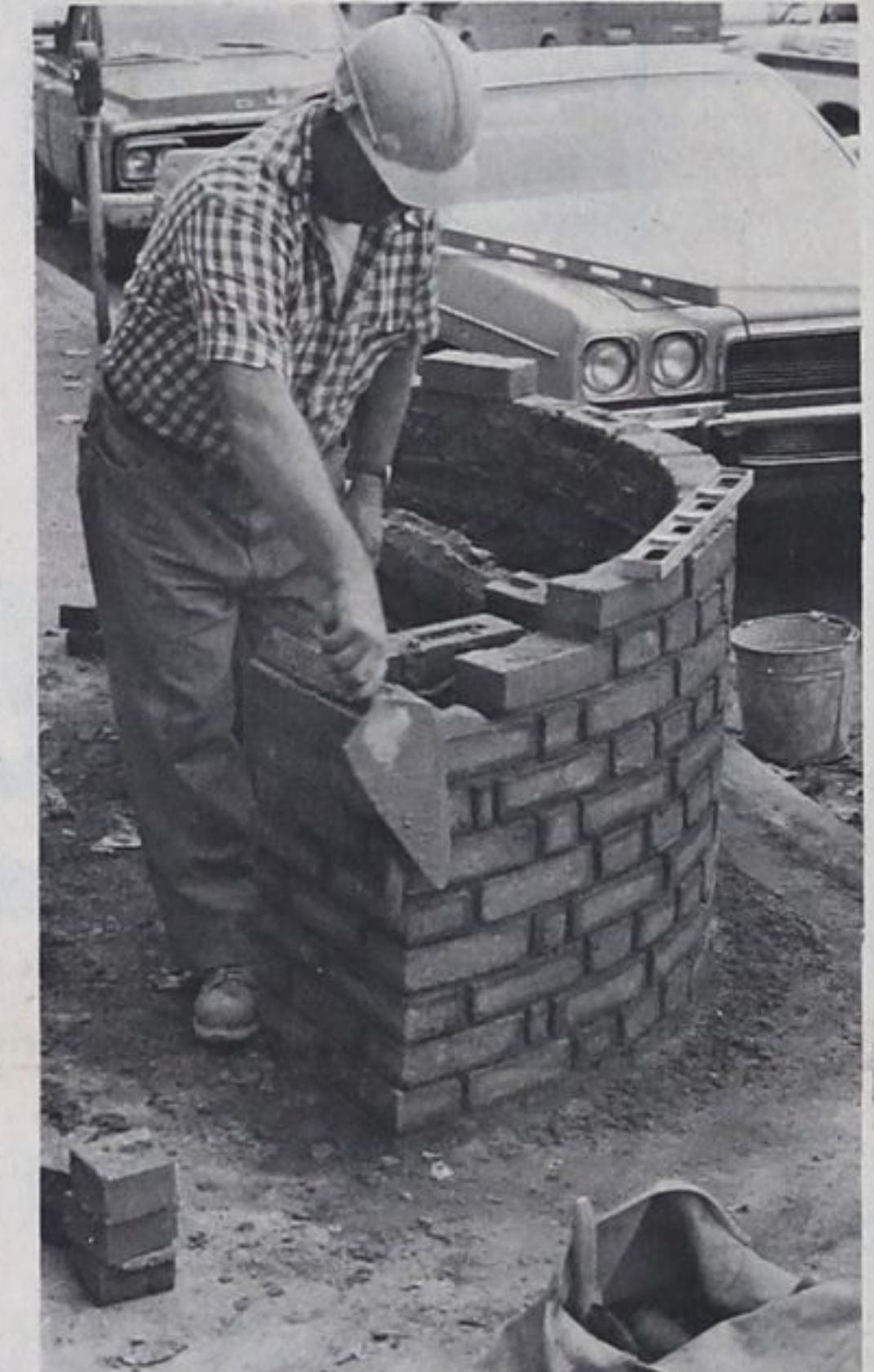
"First of all, you have to build a climate of co-operation, enthusiasm and pride."

Lynn uses as an analogy of the often floundering—Toronto football team.

"Like the Argos," he says. "They have a lot of



Mayor Lynn in downtown shop



New planters...

quarters due to the shuffle. Did Hoefig ever consider renting a larger shop in the Huronia Mall?

"No not really," he says. "I depend mainly on

Elmvale branch stores—Watson's Ladies Wear and Elmvale Men and Boys.

Mostyn moves

'Mad' Murray Mostyn is active as well. It wasn't enough that he had the most talked about store on the main street among the younger set, now he has the most visual (?) shop on Yonge Street.

Mostyn was part operator of the clothes outlet on King Street for 12 years. His brother Harold has taken over this business and Murray moved to Curves Ahead on Yonge Street.

How's business?

"Business in general is slightly down," he answers. "With my new business it takes three to five years to get established. With the 'Mad Murray' name I'm hoping it takes me six months to a year."

Mostyn is wrestling with the idea of expanding to the third floor of his shop to hold more inventory.

Bob and Larry's Men's Wear shop will be closing out their King Street location after Christmas and operating solely from The Captain's Quarters in the Huronia Mall. The identity of the business moving into the vacated King Street premises is "top secret."

Graphicteam's Bing



... and over 60 new trees

One of King Street's veterans, Edwards Specialty Shop, re-did the facade of their store.

Edwards has been operating in Midland for

fine stars but until they start working as a team, then they're losing a tremendous amount of effectiveness and strength."

Possible change in drinking age has students up in arms, but local authorities think it's fine

by Dave Wilson

Local reaction is mixed to the impending raise in Ontario's legal drinking age.

At the moment of publication, the Ontario Legislature is voting on a private members Bill that would raise the legal drinking age to 19 years, and would strip Ontario residents now 18 of their

even higher, perhaps to 20 or 21 years.

In a series of interviews conducted by this newspaper at Midland Secondary School, students voiced objections to the new age limit along two general lines: it is wrong to give citizens a right, and then remove it from them; the new legislation is, practically speaking, unenforceable—youths who have become used to drinking as a social activity will continue to consume alcohol, illegally if necessary.

Contradiction?

With regard to the first of these general objections, students of a legal drinking age, or approaching it, feel that the new legislation, which still allows 18-year-olds to vote and hold public office, is a seeming contradiction.

Cindy Kelly, who is 18, stated the case in a nutshell.

"What we can't understand is why they think we're old enough to vote but not to drink", she said.

"I don't see how they have the right to give someone a right then take it away. Eighteen-year-olds are thought of as adults. If there was a war, 18-year-olds would be expected to fight—why can't we drink?" she questioned.

The students interpret the proposed legislation as more than an indication of a simple wish to raise the drinking age.

"It's not so much that they are raising the drinking age, as that they are telling us 'you are an adult', and then saying that you aren't", explained 18-year-old Wendy Dupuis.

Bill Hackney, a 17-year-old grade 12 student at the school, feels that the removal of the right for 18-year-olds to drink may have its long term political effects. "It will make a lot of people like me, near 18, really mad", he said. "I think you might see this in the next elections."

Besides objecting to the age hike on philosophical grounds, students are in

want liquor, kids will just get their friends to buy it for them."

Another MSS student, Karen Sauve, 17, explained that "when you're

MSS principal William Brown said that he agreed with the desire of legislators to get alcohol out of the high schools. But, he added that "if they want to stop high school drinking, they should pick an age that is least likely to be in high school."

"I think the changing of the legal drinking age from 18 to 19 will have very little effect. One year doesn't make any difference", he commented.

Greater change needed

Mr. Brown feels that a more radical change in drinking laws is required if alcohol abuse, teenage or otherwise, is to be curbed.

"I feel that there is a need for a regulation making a person who gives another person alcohol in order to make him drunk liable for the latter's behaviour", he argued.

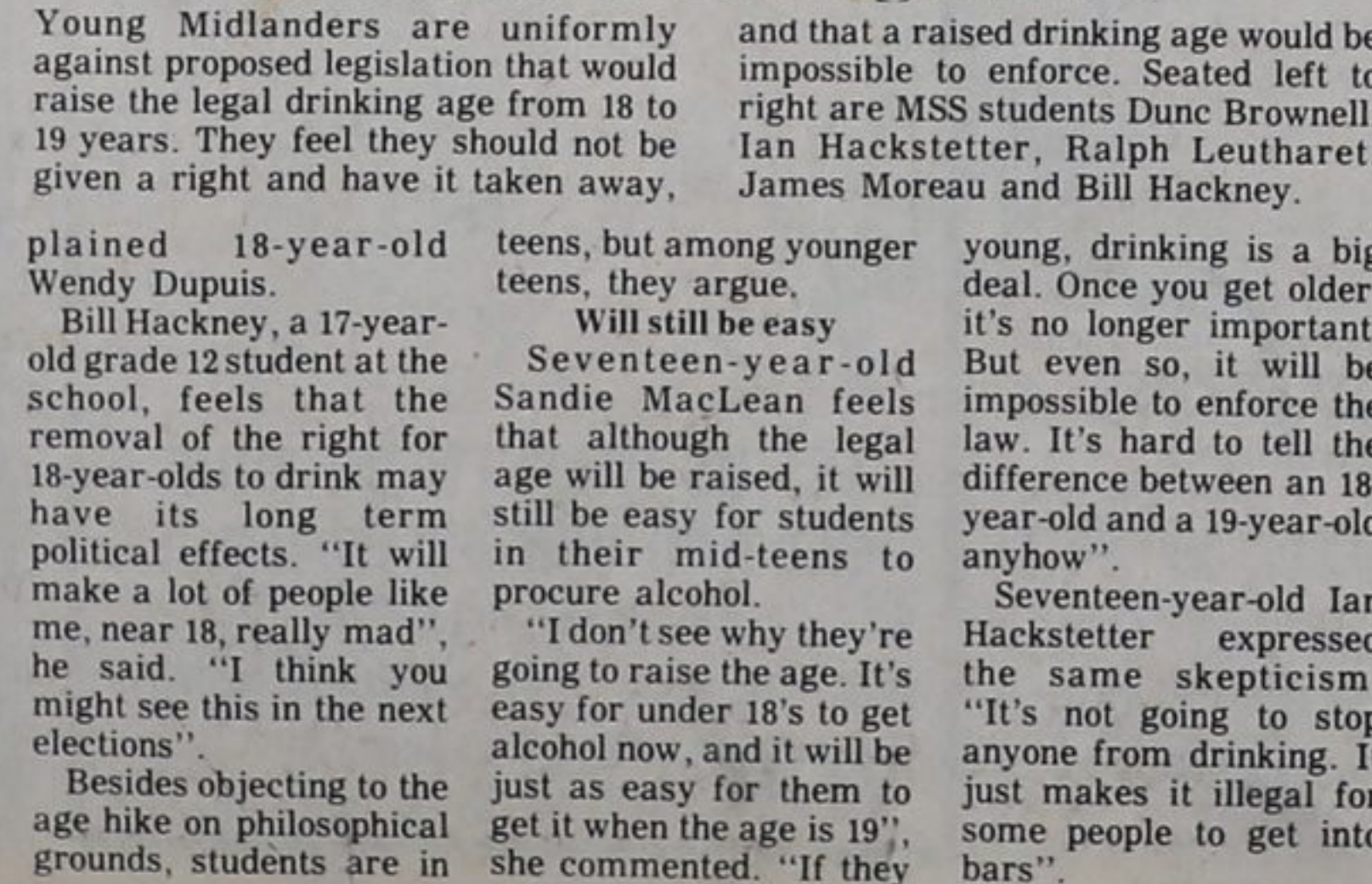
Mr. Brown said that MSS has not experienced any significant degrees of alcohol abuse because regulations in this area at the school are strict. He explained that at school dances, for instance, no person is admitted who is under the influence of alcohol, even if that person simply has alcohol on his or her breath.

If a student has been drinking during school hours, he or she is sent home, told to explain the reason for their dismissal to their parents, who are then required to contact

the school.

In extreme cases of intoxication, Mr. Brown said, the school simply releases the student to the police.

It is a widely held view that bar keepers and hotel operators would shun any raising of the drinking age. At least for the manager of one popular local bar, this view



Concerned about legislation

Young Midlanders are uniformly against proposed legislation that would raise the legal drinking age from 18 to 19 years. They feel they should not be given a right and have it taken away,

plained 18-year-old Wendy Dupuis.

Bill Hackney, a 17-year-old grade 12 student at the school, feels that the removal of the right for 18-year-olds to drink may have its long term political effects. "It will make a lot of people like me, near 18, really mad", he said. "I think you might see this in the next elections."

Besides objecting to the age hike on philosophical grounds, students are in

teen, but among younger teens, they argue.

Will still be easy

Seventeen-year-old Sandie MacLean feels that although the legal age will be raised, it will still be easy for students in their mid-teens to procure alcohol.

"I don't see why they're going to raise the age. It's easy for under 18's to get alcohol now, and it will be just as easy for them to get it when the age is 19", she commented. "If they

couldn't be further from the truth. Al Lennox, who manages the Commodore Hotel in Penetanguishene, believes that his business will actually increase as a result of the proposed new drinking age.

Under 18's are problems

"It's the under 18's who pass for legal drinkers that cause trouble in the bars", he said. "I think that these disturbances have tended to frighten off adults who would

The Friday Times and Friday Citizen

Published every Friday morning by Markle Community Newspapers Limited at Box 609, 521 Bay Street, Midland, Ontario / 526-2283 Box 429, 75 Main Street, Penetanguishene, Ontario / 549-2012

Victor Wilson, general manager
Bill Schiller, managing editor
David Ross, Penetang editor
Victor Mlodecki, advertising manager

The Friday Times and Friday Citizen are distributed free each Friday to households in Midland and Penetanguishene 20c per copy at newsstands

Markle Community Newspapers Limited also publish The Midland Times, Penetanguishene Citizen and Elmvalle Lance each Wednesday in the Huronia market.