



Taking a break

Cross country skiers take a brief moment to enjoy the winter wonderland out at the Lafontaine cross country ski trails. In the past three years, since the trails were made, business has boomed out at Lafontaine. This year more than

5,000 paying skiers have tested their skills on the 20 km. network of trails. Rumour has it if the cross country boom continues, expansion of the facility may be in the offing for the near future.

Staff photo

Friday comment

Thanks to chief for long service

It's been said that the policeman's lot is not a happy one. He's always expected to be there when we need him and very often, as those of us who acquire the occasional speeding ticket can attest, there when you least expect or wish to see him. And as we curse silently, while the strokes of his pen in the ticket book make our wallets a little lighter, we forget that he's really there to protect us for ourselves.

Working shifts, rattling doors in the middle of the night, never knowing what to expect when the call comes to go to an accident or a disturbance. We've passed it all off on the men in blue and for the most part, turned our backs. That's why we want to congratulate Midland Police Chief Ernest Bates who, Wednesday, celebrated his 25th anniversary on the force. And thank him and men like him for seeing a duty, all too many of us would ignore, and getting it done.

Help Heart Fund

It's February and that means it's Heart Month. To many of us, it is regarded as another week or month designated for yet another charity. But to many others who have lived through the effects of heart disease, it is the most important month of the year. The statistics tell the story. We take risks every day. We take risks when we get behind the wheel of an automobile, or when we light up a cigarette or when we have that one too many for the road. But heart disease still ranks as the number one medical killer in North

America. If we are to establish a better quality of life for ourselves and generations to come, these diseases must be dealt with in the same manner we are attempting to deal with pollution, overpopulation and starvation in the world. We can do our part for ourselves by watching what we eat and what we do to our bodies in day-to-day living. But the research must go on. Research to find ways of successfully treating and preventing a disease that could strike any one of us at any time. We urge our readers to support the Heart Fund canvassers when they call.

Program on lifestyles

The Huronia Branch of the Canadian Red Cross is closing in on its series of programs titled "Healthy Lifestyles in Huronia" to be held at Midland Secondary School February 21 to 23. The series will look at the way we live through our health practices, our family lives, our social habits and personal

styles. It will also serve to point out the strengths and weaknesses in our lifestyles. The series will be conducted by a host of medical and social specialists who will touch on medical health, dental health, nutrition, drugs, fitness, personal

relations, child rearing, recreation, aging, stress and community development. The program, which is a community co-operative venture, is unique in Canada. It will be offered on three dates, so everyone can participate. All series programs get underway at 7 p.m.

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Lafontaine skiers have outgrown basement

Three years ago when people wanted to use the Lafontaine Cross Country ski trails they would drive to Victor Moreau's home in Lafontaine and use his basement to wax-up, warm-up and take off from.

Since then, the number of avid cross country skiers has outgrown Vic Moreau's basement and a chalet has been constructed to handle the flow of skiers.

In the meantime, the Lafontaine Parks and Recreation Department has had to scramble to keep up with the ever-increasing demands of cross country skiers.

According to Cyrille Marchand, manager of the ski trails, as well as building a chalet, the number of skis for hire had to be doubled this year. Last year, 25 skis were enough to ensure that most people who wanted to rent could. This year 70 pairs of skis wouldn't be enough to meet the demand on some weekends, says Marchand.

Since the trails opened for this year's season on December 7, 1977, 5,000 paying skiers have travelled the beautiful Lafontaine trails. Last weekend, 600 people used the trails which Marchand claims could handle 1,000 without being too crowded.

The Lafontaine Cross Country ski trails, which are situated just three miles east of Lafontaine, have a network of 20 km of groomed trails suited to anyone's cross country skiing expertise. The trails are managed and partially funded by the parks and recreation department. Canada Works has also provided a grant for funding.

Mr. Marchand sees cross country skiing as a boom that isn't over yet.

"The parks and recreation board never felt there would be a boom like this. If it keeps going and we have the means, we will have to expand," he says.

Mr. Marchand claims that when they opened the

trails three years ago about 10 per cent of the local people had cross country skis. He says he suspects that about 50 per cent have their own skis now and if this trend continues they may have to improve and expand their network of trails in the future years.

As far as rentals are concerned, Mr. Marchand says, they have 57 pairs of skis for rental now and expects to need 100 pairs by next winter.

Although the trails get a lot of use by local people, the out-of-town clientele is also picking up this year. Mr. Marchand says guests from Colorado, Washington, Montreal and Windsor have signed their guest book. With a smile on his face, he says that those he questioned said "Lafontaine had the nicest trails they've ever skied on."

Lafontaine has four separate trails. Each one is designed for skiers of varying expertise. The longest is a 12-mile jaunt with a small cozy cabin at the half-way mark. The shortest is a half mile ski over fairly level terrain for those who are on skis for the first time.

The trails wind through forests, pine plantations, swamps and open fields.

None of the hills are steep and treacherous with the exception of one, which is marked with a "danger" sign at the top. The scenery is out of this world.

Mr. Marchand says the best ski trails are one-third level, one third uphill and one-third downhill. He says the trails at Lafontaine, which were mostly designed by Victor Moreau, are pretty close to this combination.

The trails run over three concessions of Tiny township. The first leg between the 16th and 17th concessions is owned and leased to the parks and recreation department by Victor Moreau. The chalet and parking lot sit on his property.

The land between the 17th and 18th concessions is owned by an individual who has given permission to the department to use it, according to Mr. Marchand. The rest of the land is owned by the county and generously loaned to the Lafontaine Cross Country ski trails. It is on this land that the cabin, an old loggers or hermits home, sits.

One of the more interesting and unique things that goes on out at Lafontaine is the

moonlight skis once a month on the night of the full moon. The trip is led by someone from the parks and recreation board and goes from the chalet to the cabin and back.

The future of Lafontaine Ski trails looks good if the present boom continues. Next year says Mr. Marchand, they hope to have someone giving lessons during the week. They would also like to get a school program going. He claims that this

year, he has been swamped with calls from people wanting to bring groups out. Monday the principal of a school in Hamilton, called wanting to bring some children up for a day of skiing.

A membership at Lafontaine costs you only \$10. If you want a family membership which applies to couples with no children as well as families, the cost is \$15. Memberships ensure you free skiing whenever the trails are open, plus

guarantee that you will be invited along on the moonlight skis.

A day pass to use the trails is only \$1. If you want to rent skis \$6. will get you a complete outfit for the entire day. The skis are all prewaxed by the people working in the chalet.

The trails are open daily from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Parking is provided at the chalet. The chalet provides a place to warm-up, grab a snack and buy or rent skis.

Development board forming

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"Possibly the development board could publish an area brochure—somewhat like Midland has," he said.

In brief, the board would be a working group to promote the peninsula area.

Ideas to develop the peninsula area have been brought forth in the past, but little action has been taken on them according to Mr. Ufford.

"There hasn't been much done to implement the suggestions contained in the Simcoe-Georgian Report, that's why we have to take action," he said.

The Simcoe-Georgian Report was brought out recently by the provincial government, and it contains a number of suggestions on how to improve the peninsula area.

The idea of a development board has been met with general agreement to date, but

there are going to be many problems.

Mr. Ufford stressed that the board will have to work very closely with the municipalities in the area, to avoid duplication, and to achieve maximum efficiency.

"We mustn't get into a situation where a representative of the board goes to Toronto to encourage an industry to move to this area, and a representative of the municipality does the same thing," he said.

With the co-operation and approval of the area municipalities, and the TTPPB, the Peninsula Development Board could be an important step in improving conditions in the Tiny-Tay Peninsula area, according to Mr. Ufford.

"It's long overdue, and there's general agreement about the idea in principle, but the mechanics are going to be difficult to work out," he said.

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