

# Town eyes \$490,000 grant arena expansion could benefit from funds

by Murray Moore

Penetanguishene will apply for a job creation grant of \$490,000 before the end of the month, Mayor Ron Bellisle says.

Approval of the application could mean the start this year of the renovation of, and of the construction of an addition to, the town arena.

The present plan is for a start on the renovation and construction in the spring of 1984. The estimated cost at present of the renovation and construction is \$560,000.

However, if the town does not get the money it will apply for, and if no other grants are obtained that could be used to help pay the cost of the arena renovation and construction, by the spring of 1984, the work would have to be put back, the mayor says. The town couldn't afford to put so much money of its own into one project, he says.

The town has to date applied for a total of \$90,000 of job creation funds for a number of other projects, and to date about \$50,000 has

been granted. Job creation money seems to be available now, Mayor Bellisle says, and so the town will try to take advantage of the present opportunity.

At present, the building of an addition to, and renovation of, the town arena, is part of the town's five-year plan. When the project was announced in February by Terry Dahmer, the chairman of the ad hoc arena expansion committee, the schedule called for money to be obtained through grants and fundraising. Renovation and building was to start next spring. Groups which use the arena have been asked to raise money to be put towards the cost of the work. One of the fundraising ideas is a \$1,000 draw. The winning ticket will be drawn at a dance, on May 14, which is also a fundraising event.

A new arena would cost over \$1 million and possibly as much as \$3 million, says the mayor. A realistic expectation is that the town will have its present arena for another 10

or 20 years, he thinks.

"We have to live with what we've got. A lot of people will say that (spending \$560,000 on renovation and an addition) will be putting good money after bad money. (In recent years money has been spent on the arena sprinkler systems, and on other improvements) "But I think we have to live with what we've got."

Other projects within the town have a priority, too, such as the placing of sewers in the north end, the mayor noted, adding that while the arena's facilities are not perfect, that the arena can be used as it is.

If the town were to receive the \$490,000 it will be requesting, and if all of that money was spent on designated workers, the cost to the town of the work at the arena would be \$97,600. A qualification of the job creation grant which the town is seeking is that the workers hired be people who are on welfare, or people whose eligibility for unemployment

cheques has expired 10 weeks or more ago.

If a non-subsidized worker could not be found for each job, the town would have to hire a worker at his regular rate. If the project proceeds with the help of job creation grant money, the town will be the contractor for the project. Normally, on a construction project for the town, contractors bid for the right to do the work, and the winning contractor is responsible for the details, such as hiring.

An estimated 55 jobs and 1,226 work weeks will result from the planned renovation and construction at the arena, town staff have calculated.

Job creation projects have been popular with the provincial and federal governments in recent months, but recent statements suggest that the funding governments' priorities are shifting, and that job creation is being phased out.



**The Friday Citizen**  
Community Newspaper

Vol. 7, No. 11, Folio 22

Friday, March 18, 1983

Penetanguishene, Ontario

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Conflagration  
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landmark

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## INQUEST Jury releases findings

by MURRAY MOORE

The coroner's jury in Midland investigating the death last Sept. 13 in a cell of Ward B of the Oak Ridge division of the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre yesterday recommended that not more than one attendant be absent from a ward at any one time. The jury noted that on the morning during which May hung himself, two of Ward B's four attendants were outside the ward. The two absent attendants were escorting another Ward B patient.

The jury also recommended that all open radiators be covered. May hung himself with two towels from a radiator fixed in a wall of his cell.

A third recommendation was that

communications in Oak Ridge be improved "by using a paging system to alert staff in emergency situations." Staff last Sept. 13 were alerted by telephone.

The jury's fourth recommendation was that when an attendant is absent from his ward, that housekeeping not be done, but deferred to a later time or day.

William May of North York, the father of 23-year-old Mitchell May, was the only witness called yesterday. May read a letter which Mitchell May wrote addressed jointly to himself and his son's lawyer, a letter written by his son to his mother, and a letter written by his son to his brother Stuart. The dead man

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## Oil removal crew

Employees of Comco of Barrie on Wednesday near the stern of the freighter

Beechglan, at work skimming diesel fuel from the surface of Midland Bay.

## Spring arrives early here

Spring arrived earlier than had been expected this year. Despite the fact that it makes its official presence felt next Monday, the spring-like weather we have all been enjoying of late promises to continue here in the Heart of Huronia.

## Interest in program to be gauged

Residents of Penetanguishene will be asked to answer a questionnaire concerned with the amount of interest in the town for a revived

community school program.

A community school program offering both physical activities, such as badminton, and educational courses, was once offered, but was taken over by the Simcoe County Board of Education.

A result of the takeover by the SCBE is that residents of the town who want to take a course must go to Midland to do so. The survey by the town will seek to determine how much support exists and for which activities.

## CITIZEN BRIEFLY

### RC board trustees meet

Next scheduled meeting of the Simcoe County Roman Catholic Separate School Board is on April 6 commencing at 8 p.m.

### Air Plus flights start at doorstep

Business people from this area flying on Nordair airplanes can be transported to the Toronto International Airport and back from

their doorstep, as part of the airline's Air Plus service.

Nordair says that the extra service is provided for the same price as that of a regular return economy ticket.

Penetang-Midland Coach Lines Ltd. is the local company which will provide transportation to and from the airport in conjunction with Nordair. The Air Plus Bus package may be purchased from any travel agency in the area. Travellers can use the air plus package between Toronto and Montreal, Ottawa, Pittsburgh, Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay, Dryden, and Winnipeg.