



# MHC workers protest lack of action on contract

Dozens of employees at the Mental Health Centre represented by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) spent their lunch break yesterday afternoon protesting against their employer, the Ontario Ministry of Health.

During the noon hour, members of OPSEU Local 329 carried placards at the Church Street entrance to the hospital grounds. Regional division employees are represented by Local 329. About a hundred yards away, at the entrance to the Oak Ridge division, Oak Ridge workers

represented by OPSEU 307 staged a similar demonstration.

The non-management workers are unhappy about the fact they have not signed a new wage contract with the government since the end of 1983. The public workers are not permitted to strike.

Local 307 president, Garry Lenehan, said the demonstration was intended to highlight concerns over wages, lack of benefits agreements, staff rights and working conditions. He said also that the Oak Ridge union members seek wage parity with a first class

Ontario Provincial Police constable. Lenehan said the local's latest contract ran out Jan. 1. Local 329 is headed by Maurice Brunelle.

The Mental Health Centre demonstration was timed to coincide with a larger demonstration by OPSEU psychiatric workers at the Ministry of Health in Toronto.

In a press release, OPSEU notes that the government has offered increases of 2.2 percent and is not negotiating. The government seeks to settle a wage package by arbitration. The union says there are no

cost of living allowances in the contract. Workers' wages at the Mental Health Centre are falling behind other public sector employees wages, the union says.

"We are frustrated and tired of mediocrity in our wages, benefits and other areas of our employment," the union paper states.

During yesterday's demonstration at MHC, Simcoe East NDP candidate Fayne Bullen addressed the OPSEU employees, supported their cause and noted none of the other riding candidates who were invited to be on hand showed up.



At landfill site entrance

Green Party members plant crosses and toss flowers at the front gate of the Pauze landfill site near Perkinsfield on Sunday afternoon.

# All-candidates forum offered last word for contenders

Put a Tory, a Grit, an NDP'er and a ram-bunctious independent candidate together on the same stage and the sparks are bound to fly, which is what happened Monday night at ESPSS when the Simcoe Centre candidates running in tomorrow's provincial election gathered for an all-candidates meeting.

Progressive Conservative candidate Earl Rowe was clearly the man on the hot seat as the three other candidates took swipes at the provincial Tories' record. The other candidates at the debate

sponsored by the Rotary Club of Penetanguishene were Liberal Ross Whiteside, New Democrat Paul Wessinger and independent Green candidate Steven Kaasgaard.

As anyone who was at the debate or who heard it broadcast live on CKMP could tell you, Kaasgaard provided a considerable measure of comic relief throughout the night.

The debate was moderated and kept running smoothly by Penetanguishene Mayor Ron Bellisle. About 90

persons attended and many of them lined up at two mikes to ask questions. The meeting ran over the scheduled time by about half an hour.

Wessinger's campaign coordinator, Mark Vincer said after the session that few votes are won or lost during such all-candidates encounters and one sensed after it was over that people enjoyed the evening, but didn't single out one candidate as having outshined the others. The winner, though, in the attention grabbing category was,

clearly, Kaasgaard. He blew up several balloons during his six-minute opening speech and frequently regaled the crowd. The other candidates declined his offer to blow up balloons, including Rowe who cleverly said "We don't have enough hot air."

In his opening statement, Wessinger said the NDP provided the best opportunity for Simcoe Centre voters to "dislodge" the Tories from Queen's Park. They deserved dislodging, Wessinger said, because of their

sorry record on issues of unemployment, waste management, and tax policies. "We need a minority government," he said. Wessinger said most of the new jobs the Tories boast of creating in the last few years are, in fact, only part-time positions. He also attacked the Tories for high OHIP premiums, Ontario Hydro's \$22 billion debt and expenditures on self-promoting government advertising.

Rowe said the PCs seek a mandate to responsibly manage the government of the

province. He attacked the opposition parties for making expensive promises and for making "wild" and unfounded charges against the Tories. It's not an election that comes down to the opposition stringing out a bunch of "cute lines," he maintained.

The government's place is not to be in the business of direct job creation, rather it is proper for it to provide incentives for new jobs, he said. Rowe noted that last year the government reduced the provincial deficit while holding taxes to the same level. The policies the Conservatives support - and the policies the Tories oppose - are reason enough to re-elect the Conservatives, Rowe said.

Liberal Ross Whiteside attacked the government's record on waste management, job creation, the way the government handled extension of Roman Catholic school funding and the economy. "The Tory record, on the whole, is a disgrace," he said. The words "dismal," "stagnant," "black mark," "unforgivable," and, again, "disgrace," cropped up in his speech in reference to government deed and misdeeds. Whiteside said the Liberals have programs to better manage toxic wastes, unemployment, and other problems which the Tories have failed to deal with adequately.

Kaasgaard stressed that the Greens believe in a grass roots ap-

proach to different areas of community life and that citizens should have direct control over decision-making. Between puffs on several balloons which he blew up, Kaasgaard explained that if he is elected, he will sign a resignation form so that he could be replaced by someone else if he takes an autocratic turn in performing his duties. It is a concept explored by the original Greens.

All candidates were permitted three minutes in which to make rebuttals before the floor was opened to questioners. William Ogilvie questioned the candidates about their views on gag bylaws which, he said, fetter the rights of citizens to approach municipal councils when they are enacted. The candidates opposed them.

Leisje Lancia asked about toxic wastes. Whiteside said he was against having the Pauze landfill site's permit to accept wastes extended by three years. Wessinger said the Pauze site should be cleaned up, and not just closed. Rowe said a provincial government report lays to rest fears that toxic contaminants from the site will reach Georgian Bay. He said a Tory government would continue to explore incineration as a means of waste disposal. Noting that he had gone to jail for chaining himself to the gate at the front of the site, Kaasgaard said "we don't inherit the earth from our parents, we borrow it from our children."



One of these men will be new MPP

Independent Green candidate Steven Kaasgaard has the floor at Ecole Secondaire Penetanguishene Secondary School during Monday night's all-candidates meeting. On the far left is Progressive Conservative candidate Earl Rowe. On Kaasgaard's other side is New Democratic Party

candidate Paul Wessinger. On the far right is Liberal candidate Ross Whiteside. Kaasgaard blew up several balloons to demonstrate that accidentally blowing up a balloon is somewhat akin to accidentally having a nuclear power plant blow up.