

Community comes together

December 24, 1986 will go down in the history books as more than just the day that a raging inferno destroyed St. Margaret's Church and devastated the small Town of Midland.

For many, Christmas Eve Day, 1986, will be remembered as a time that Christians and Atheists alike stretched out a hand and opened their hearts to give physical and moral support at a time when all seemed lost.

Although the congregation of St. Margaret's couldn't celebrate the festive mass in its beautiful church, the true meaning of Christmas - both on personal and corporate levels - came through. As God promised Israel, when you go through the fire you will not be burned, so He protected the parish. As in all things for those who love God, He blessed them - and the larger community - with the true meaning of Christmas: the gift of Christ, the perfect demonstration of God's love for mankind.

And more than the parish members received this gift. Many outside that community of faith gave in ways that showed a deeper concern, compassion and love. Christmas really could not have been more beautifully celebrated, as we consider how the communities inside Midland and Penetanguishene and the surrounding areas banded together to help the congregation deal with the shocking reality.

A lot was at risk for the congregation and for the firefighters. Thankfully, the firemen had enough courage to go inside the burning building to attempt to save some things the parish valued - such as statues, the chalice, the relic and altar decorations. These will be things treasured even more, as reminders of the blaze and of the rebuilding that will take place.

Looking beyond the site of the blaze, preparations for Christmas mass were underway at St. Theresa's. Again, people worked together, despite their sense of loss and disappointment, and made something unique. Others came to donate pointsettias to decorate the auditorium, to add warmth and colour, an air of celebration.

Really, not all who deserve to be commended can be named. Everyone played a part in the rebuilding somehow, and many more will continue to do so. That's what a community is all about. That's Christmas.

Letters

Kramer: public misled

Dear Editor:

Your recent editorial titled "Tiny should look in own backyard" has simply and explicitly explained exactly what has transpired regarding the dumpsite selection process in Tiny Township.

The public has been misled into believing that they were choosing the dumpsite. The advertisement of December 5th, placed by the Environmental Advisory Committee, read "Public Invited to Choose Tiny Township's New Landfill Site" when Tiny had already selected Perkinsfield (Site E) as their preferred site. It would appear that the meeting of December 13th was called for the purpose of receiving public endorsement of Site E.

Tiny Township and their lawyers are now trying to blame the media for reporting statements made by their own consultant. This same consultant was forced to publicly retract his statements "mistakenly" made at the previous meeting.

Tiny Township credibility is questionable and the media should be complimented for accurately reporting events as they occurred. In this way taxpayers, who were unable to attend the meetings, are kept informed of what is really going on.

Sincerely,
Marlene Kramer
Tiny Ratepayers Against Pollution

In appreciation

Dear Editor:

As pastor of St. Margaret's parish I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all those who assisted us, in any way, when our Church was on fire.

We thank God especially that no one was hurt. We thank also the firemen who so orderly and courageously did everything they could to save as much as they did. The police department and the ambulance attendants are to be commended for their consistent vigil.

We thank also MacDonald's restaurant and the Salvation Army for bringing food and

refreshments to those on the job. We are deeply grateful for the many different churches that responded by offering their churches for our Christmas celebrations. We are very fortunate to have our own highschool auditorium to use as temporary church facilities.

With your continued encouragement and prayers, St. Margaret's Church will soon be rebuilt. The parishioners of St. Margaret's thank you all and may God bless you abundantly.

Rev. A. VanderVechte

Viewpoint

The 1986 Nieuwhof Awards

1986 has been a fascinating year. It has given us much entertainment on the federal and provincial levels, as well as some wonderful theatre to the south of the border. The end of the year is also the time where people in positions, like myself, go through the year and try and relate the highlights in some sort of interesting manner. Well, my year end synopsis takes the form of an awards presentation. These are not awards arrived at by a panel of expert judges, nor are they arrived at by extensive balloting. I make no apologies. These awards are completely fixed. I've created the awards, named the nominees, and selected the final winners.

The recipients are people who have contributed at least a small bit to the Canadian or American experience over the past year. And now, for my coup on the real awards industry.

The "Contribution to the Northern Lifestyle of Criminals Award" goes to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, for building the Drummondville prison on Quebec's north shore. Now, criminals from across Quebec will be able to develop a northern lifestyle of their very own, thanks to the placement of this prison 'way up there'. This will likely also cause the crime rate to drop by several per cent. Would you commit a crime knowing that you would be banished to Port Cartier?

David Peterson is the recipient of the 1986 "Bill Davis Is Alive and Kicking at Queen's Park Award", for his wonderfully bland performances in the legislature. Peterson is able to stop any controversy with a minimum of five minutes of baffle-gab. He is learning the

painstaking art of how to keep your voice at a constant monotone. And he is also learning how to be perfectly casual and boring in the most difficult of circumstances. It's rumoured next year he'll move to Brampton.

Lloyd Axworthy is the recipient of the "Now I Can Be Liberal Leader Too Award". Lloyd won this award right after John Turner won 76 per cent of the vote of the leadership review in Ottawa. Lloyd had always wanted to be Liberal Leader, and when Jean Chretien was shut out of the leadership with the review vote, Lloyd got the opportunity to begin building an underground leadership campaign of his very own. Watch Lloyd use this award in the upcoming years to try to become our Prime Minister. Good luck Lloyd, you may need more than the award.

The "I Can't Believe They Work For Me Award" goes to Ronald Reagan and his aides, in recognition of the fact that his aides ran mini-Presidency without Reagan. It seems that Oliver North, John Poindexter, Donald Regan and all the other hard nosed White House staff and advisors failed to realize that they themselves were not elected president. Meanwhile, Ronald Reagan's hands off approach to his job did not pan out the way he thought it would. Instead of allowing his advisers to work with him, his advisers worked in spite of him. No Ronald, we can't believe they worked for you either.

The "My Wife and I Aren't Talking Award" goes to Sinclair Stevens, to salute the apparent lack of communication between him and his spouse. This award was sprung from Steven's oscar winning performance on the witness stand at his conflict of interest trial,

during which he revealed that he and his wife didn't talk about a multi-million dollar loan that drifted her way. Not exactly pillow talk, I assume.

Tony Lupsella and David Ramsay are the recipients of the "Let's Jump Aboard a Bandwagon Because Our Time Might Come Award". These are the two NDP caucus members who joined the provincial Liberal party in 1986. Apparently realizing that the provincial NDP was mired in the abyss after signing the accord with the Grits, these two men decided to jump aboard the Liberal train where they could get a) more easily re-elected and b) a raise when they received cabinet appointments. What does ideology mean anyway?

The "What Do Ya Mean Your Opposin' My Policies Award" goes to John Crosbie, for the many times he expressed indignation at opposition claims that he was wrong. Crosbie has once again shown Canadians that he honestly believes that anything he or his government does is right. Every time the opposition opens its mouth, Crosbie feels obliged to respond by calling those who beg to differ "insensitive slime-sucking scumbags". I'm sure if they would have realized that Crosbie and his colleagues were infallible, they would have kept their mouths shut.

John Nunziata is the recipient of the "Oppose Everything; To Everything There Should Be Opposition Award". He is probably the main reason that John Crosbie won the above award. John Nunziata is likely the only man in the liberal caucus who really does believe that conservatives are born

Carey Nieuwhof

genetically evil. He has no tolerance for anything that does not bear a liberal signature. The partisan in John Nunziata brings out the partisan in John Crosbie. If there was a best supporting actor category...

The "My Throat Doesn't Matter But What if it Did Award" belongs to none other than John Turner, who proved that even if you gaggle and cackle and hum and hah you can lead a federal party. Congratulations on disproving that old myth.

The "Back to Shawinigan Award" goes to Jean Chretien, who won this distinction when John Turner won the above award and Lloyd Axworthy won his.

The "Non-Existent Award" for 1986 belongs to Jeanne Sauve, the Governor-General who no one has seen since Brian Mulroney became Prime Minister. Where is she? Has Rideau Hall swallowed her? Has she been banished to the Senate? Maybe 1987 will bring her out into public more than twice.

And now, for the most prestigious award for 1986, the "Next Prime Minister Award" goes to Knowlton Nash. Now here's a man who makes it sound like all the news he reads is cheery. To Knowlton, everything can be broken down into three easy to understand sentences - the perfect formula for a successful Prime Minister. Could you imagine the grimmest announcement possible being made by Knowlton in a cheery three line delivery? Would that not end our national woes? So, Knowlton for Prime Minister. He's read the news for years, he should know it all now. We just have to wait to see if he'll accept.

Letters

The Penetanguishene Citizen welcomes Letters to the Editor. They must be legible, signed (by hand), and carry the writer's address and telephone number for verification. Pen names are not allowed and anonymous letters will not be published. Letters published by this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of this newspaper, its publisher or editor.

Penetanguishene Citizen

Published by Bayweb Limited every Tuesday at
74 Main Street, Penetanguishene, Ontario 549-2012
Second Class Mail Registration Number 2327
Yearly subscription rate \$34.80

Publisher: Andrew Markle
Manager: Judy French
Editor: Laurie Watt



Member



CNA Member