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Merry Christmas

To All Our Readers - from Management and Staff



Welfare Destroys Incentive

Some people would be better off on welfare than to be working. In some instances people in York Region have even been advised to quit their jobs and seek public assistance.

This was brought to light at a meeting of York Regional Council on December 9 when Richmond Hill Councillor Donald Plaxton cited the case of a man in his municipality who is suffering from emphysema and unable to work. He needs a constant companion, but because his wife works he is not entitled to public assistance to pay for a companion, nor is he eligible for a disability pension that would meet the cost.

He hated to bring the matter up in open council, said Plaxton, but efforts to get help through welfare or social service departments had been unsuccessful. The best suggestion he could get was that the man be put in a nursing home. Or his wife could quit work and look after him. This would mean the family would have to go on welfare.

The man in question, he said, had been paying taxes in the region for about 25 years. His family is almost grown and his home almost paid for. He does not need nursing care — just someone to be in the house with him while the family are at work and at school.

His condition is such, said Plaxton, that sudden shortness of breath could prove fatal before he could get aid. He could get someone to stay in the house, to make an emergency phone call if necessary, at a cost of \$5 a day, but this was more than he could afford. It was not a matter of a fulltime housekeeper, just an "adult babysitter."

As things are, he said, it is possible that the man's wife could come home one day and find him dead on the floor.

The man has been kicked around from pillar to post, said Plaxton. "Surely something can be done."

Georgina Mayor Dr. George Burrows, chairman of the region's health and social service committee admitted it is a very difficult situation. A provincial disability pension is based on the family earnings. A husband and wife are assessed as a team. "It is often cheaper for the wife to stop work."

The same applies for recipients of mothers' allowance, he said. If a mother who is sole support of the family earns more than the maximum allowed by legislation her allowance is reduced.

"It is an unfortunate situation," Dr. Burrows admitted. "It destroys incentive."

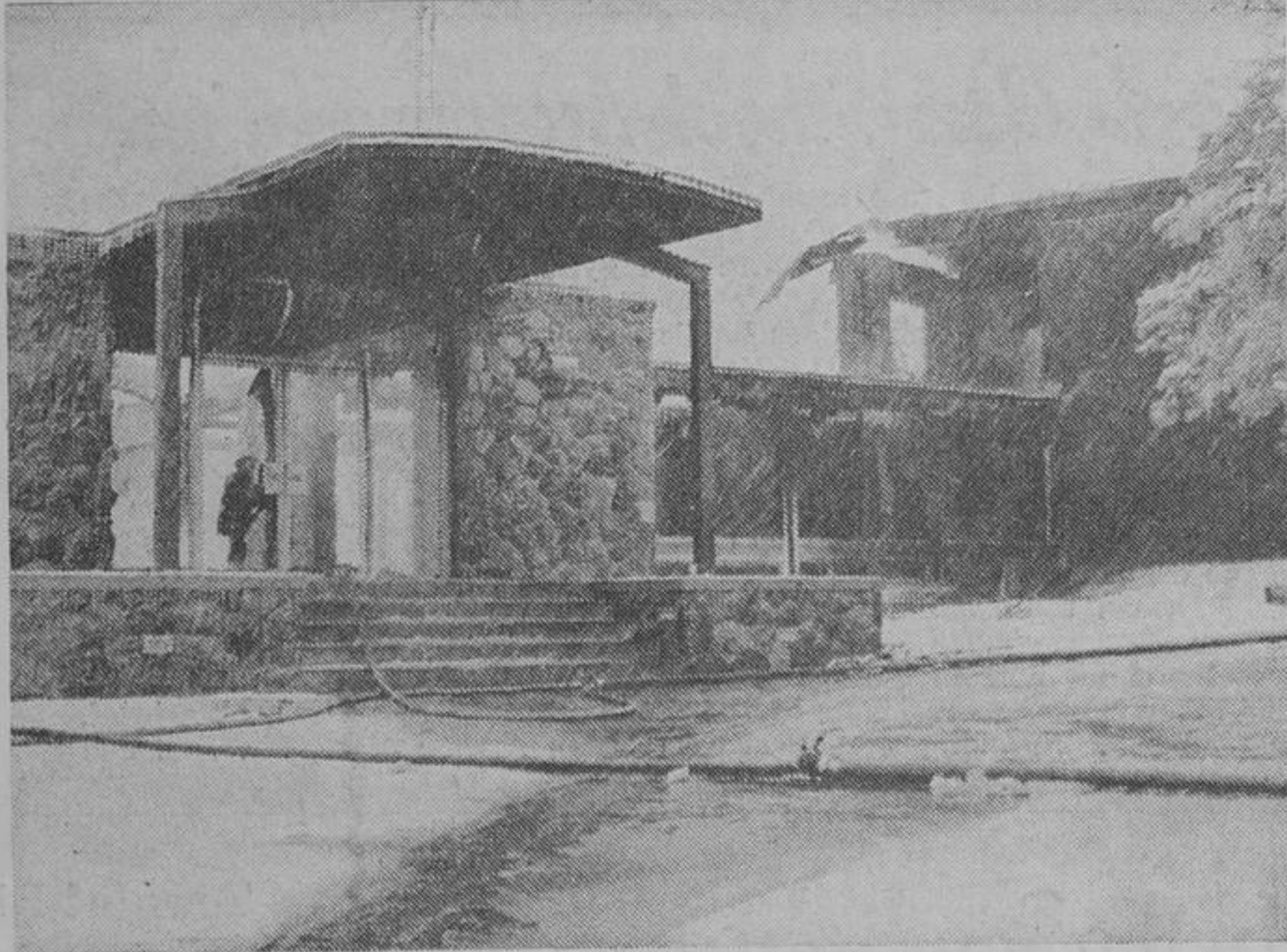
Councillor Gordon Hill, also of Richmond Hill, spoke of a situation that had come to his attention. It concerned a man who has been operating a successful business. When he was hospitalized for open heart surgery his wife went to work, but the family income was drastically reduced. During the man's long convalescence the financial situation had become critical.

Now, said Rowe, although they are in "dire straits," the family is still not eligible for public assistance.

Dr. Burrows suggested that the only answer to such a situation is a guaranteed annual income which will make it possible for people to receive sufficient assistance to tide them over family emergencies and yet earn enough to maintain their dignity as individuals.

Provincial rules and regulations govern the conditions and amounts of welfare assistance, said Burrows.

Councillor Plaxton agreed that it was beyond the jurisdiction of the region. He said there are many cases of hardship, however, because rules cannot be bent, people are discouraged from trying to help themselves. He asked for a more humane approach to welfare.



The Thornhill Golf and Country Club building at 7994 Yonge Street is shown early Sunday morning as firefighters battled a \$1,000,000 blaze. The curling rink at the south end of the building and the lower floor of lockers at the north end were saved. The business offices weren't heavily damaged.

A firefighter is shown at the door of the main entrance working in snow and sleet. The other photograph taken through a window beside the entrance shows firemen working inside and the beams of the building still standing.



(Photos by Dave Barbour)

\$1,000,000 Thornhill Club Fire

By HAL BLAINE

The Thornhill Golf and Country Club main building at 7994 Yonge Street in the Thornhill area of Vaughan Town was destroyed early Sunday morning in a \$1,000,000 fire.

In October a \$2,000,000 fire destroyed the Tam O'Shanter club in Scarborough. The Ontario Fire Marshall has been called in to investigate this second big blaze.

Club Manager George Barber estimated fire damage to the Thornhill Club at \$1,000,000. Vaughan Fire Chief James Davidson said damage was in excess of \$250,000. He said no official insurance appraisal is yet available. The building was fully insured, according to Manager Barber.

Club President Donald Catalano said there is no doubt the club will be rebuilt. The 12-man board of directors of the 1,470-member curling, golf and social club were scheduled to meet Monday night to make plans for rebuilding the club.

Fire Chief Davidson said five pumper trucks, two aerial ladder trucks and a rescue truck were on hand as 50 firefighters fought the blaze to a standstill and saved part of the building. A Markham Town fire truck from the new Thornhill station served at the fire for the first hour or so.

Vaughan Fire Department received the alarm from the York Regional Police at 5:02 a.m. The fire was under control in an hour. Firefighters worked the scene at 1:36 p.m. after leaving for 8 1/2 hours in fairly wet weather.

The fire chief said the department's two aerial ladder

trucks did a good job and to a large extent were responsible for the saving of part of the building.

Firemen were also able to save the office area at the front of the building from complete destruction. Golf on the club's 130-acre course is expected to continue as usual next year.

This was the club's second fire. The golf pro shop burned in 1953. About 70 employees lost their place of work just before Christmas in the big blaze.

The club's membership includes Municipal Affairs Minister Dalton Bales, Toronto Mayor William Dennison, York Regional Councillors Donald Plaxton and James Jongeneel, and CFRB Radio Station Operations Manager William Baker who lives right across the road from the club.

MARKHAM ALARM

Markham Town Fire Chief Myrl Smith said his department received an alarm from a Bell Telephone operator and his men were first at the fire, coming from the new Markham Thornhill Fire Hall just opened on John Street east of Bayview Avenue. He said the alarm was turned in by the golf club's course superintendent and ice maker Dave Gourlay at 5 a.m.

Fire Chief Smith felt the fire had been burning unseen for three or four hours, since flames were coming through the roof when his men arrived. Yonge Street is the boundary line between the town of Vaughan and Markham.

The Vaughan Fire Department has been protecting the Markham side of Thornhill until the recent opening of a new Markham Fire Hall in Thornhill. Vaughan's fire protection for the Markham side of Thornhill is scheduled to terminate at the end of the year.

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Consider Estimates Oak Ridges Fire Hall

A fire hall for the northern section of Richmond Hill may become a reality next year if it can be built under the provincial and federal winter works incentive programs. Town council's fire, traffic, transportation and parking committee (Chairman Louis Wainwright) recommended and it was approved by town council December 13 that Fire Chief Alf Stong submit estimated costs for a fire hall to the treasurer for consideration by council's finance committee.

The winter works incentive program provides a subsidy of 79% on labor costs on site up to May 3, 1972.

When Councillor Andy Chateauvert charged that the portion of town east of the railway track needed a fire hall because of the constant threat of it

Report Waits For Year Doubles Region's Roads

A year old report that will more than double the number of miles under regional jurisdiction was received and approved by York Regional Council on December 9.

There were objections from some members about the order of priority given to some roads and to the fact that traffic counts on which the report is based had been made several years ago.

The interim report on road needs prepared by Don Mills Consulting Engineers A. D. Margison and Associates Limited was presented to York County Council in November, 1970 but was deferred for consideration by the new regional council.

Service rating was based on the volume of traffic using the roads, alignment, type, width and condition of the surface, width of the shoulder, adequacy of base and surface, operating speed, capacity and level of service, drainage and maintenance demands.

The lengthy report included inventory and cost estimates, construction needs, present and projected costs of construction and maintenance, inventory of machinery, and numerous tables and plates showing the existing road system in the region, 1968 traffic count, land use plan, road classification plans and plan of construction needs as determined in 1969.

Ratings were for construction needs now, within the next five years, within the next ten years and no construction needs.

Markham Councillor James Jongeneel objected that recommendations in the report were based on 1968 traffic counts. Traffic patterns and needs change in three years, said Jongeneel. "Are we adopting these priorities if we adopt this report?" he asked.

In effect, yes, said Chief Administrator John Rettie. "We are adopting priorities established by examining every mile of road in the system."

"These are technical, not political priorities," Rettie continued. "It will be necessary to update the report each year."

It was necessary to determine some order of priority,

Dangerous Rabies Situation Continuing

There is a bad, very dangerous rabies situation of serious proportions in Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Markham including Thornhill, King Township, Aurora and Whitechurch-Stouffville, says James Ryan of Canine Control. Ryan is dog catcher and animal control officer for Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill.

"People don't realize the danger. It's just as dangerous to humans as it is to animals," says Ryan.

"The easiest way to bring rabies into your home right now is to let your dog or cat run loose where you can't watch it. Exposure to a sick animal could mean your pet could develop rabies as much as six months from now. There needn't be any noticeable physical injury," says Ryan.



COUNCILLOR JONGENEEL

Traffic Count Too Old

"Ghost" Christmas Cards

Several Richmond Hill residents have been plagued by persons selling "ghost" Christmas cards, according to York Regional Police.

Identified young woman has been taking orders for cards and is reporting a deposit of no cards are subsequently delivered.

Police advise all citizens to refuse to pay a deposit in such cases.

Travelways Buses Join In GO Transit Service

Two of the three commuter transit services connecting the Richmond Hill area to downtown Metro are being united next year to provide a combined service with the same tickets.

GO Transit Director William Howard announced this week that Trailways (Travelways) of Canada bus services between Richmond Hill and Toronto will become part of the GO Transit system January 3.

As of that date only the Toronto Transit Commission's buses will continue to be operated separately from GO Transit out of Richmond Hill.

The present Trailways buses connecting Richmond Hill and Toronto via Bayview Avenue on January 3 will start using the Richmond Hill GO Transit terminal.

GO Transit Director Howard says this change will mean the number of bus trips between the Richmond Hill GO station and Toronto will be increased by almost 50 percent.

Trailways (Travelways) President Larry Needler told "The Liberal" this week the number of buses actually operating in

Few GO Buses December 27

Regular GO Transit bus service will be maintained throughout Richmond Hill on Christmas Eve but holiday schedules will be in effect on the Monday after Christmas.

Regular schedules will be maintained on the Monday following New Year's Day, says GO Transit in a press release this week.

New timetables showing minor adjustments in GO Transit-Gray Coach schedules will be available before the end of the month at all GO bus terminals.

Markham Day Care Centre Planned For Union Villa

Markham Town Council is hoping to make use of provincial subsidies to build a day care centre in Unionville.

Meeting in committee on December 7, council approved a proposal for its special day care committee chaired by Thornhill Councillor Robert Adams. The proposal was for a centre to be built on the Union Villa site.

The committee was set up by council in November when it was learned that the province has set aside \$10 million for building new day care centres throughout Ontario.

The site was recommended by Councillor Keith Kennedy, chairman of the Unionville Home Society. The front part of the seven-acre site on Highway 7 is occupied by Union Villa Home for the Aged.

When the society started to plan, said Kennedy, it did not intend that the land be committed for facilities for senior citizens only. The plan drawn up more than five years ago had included a day care centre, but funds have not been available to go ahead with this phase of the program.

Questionnaires circulated in the area, said Kennedy, indicate that at least 55 children need day care, and as the area builds up, the need will increase.

In an interview Kennedy told "The Liberal" there are many reasons for using the Union Villa site. The land is already owned by the municipality. It is located on a main artery where it will be convenient for many people outside the immediate community.

Cost can be reduced, said Kennedy, because it would not be necessary to build a large kitchen for meal preparation in the day care centre. A covered walkway could be built from the Villa to the centre and all food prepared in one location. The Villa kitchen is large enough to serve both buildings.

The two could share other major services, said Kennedy, but these will have to be worked out if the plan is approved at regional level.

He said there is already a preliminary design prepared by the regional health and social services committee for construction of a day care centre on the York Manor property in Newmarket. If the same plan is adapted to the Unionville site, he said, cost will be reduced.

While the province is prepared to pay 100 percent of cost for land acquisition, construction and furnishing of centres up to the end of May, 1972, said Kennedy, a lot of time can be saved if land and plans are ready to go.

In his letter to municipal

OWNERS TO EVERYBODY

"We will take everybody with a straying animal we find to court until the danger subsides," says Ryan. "This is for their own good. With the rabies situation well known now, letting dogs run at large is completely irresponsible. Our job is to protect people, whether or not they own a dog."

"Even if your pet has regular rabies shots, it isn't safe to let the pet run loose. The vaccine isn't 100% effective. It only works in about nine cases out of 10. To think a vaccinated dog is safe is a mistaken idea. If it is exposed to rabies it must be quarantined for three months," says Ryan. Pets can be vaccinated by any veterinarian.

Rabies is all around, really, says Ryan. One of the big problems this year is that several species of wild animal has been hit. Usually only one type of animal is involved at any one time. The worst carriers of rabies are foxes and skunks.

"For every one wild animal you see die, there's another nine you don't see. People should be extremely careful for the next two or three months. It's going to take a long time for the rabies situation to recede to normal levels. Children should be warned they shouldn't touch any strange animal that doesn't run away, says Ryan. Enforcement of animal control regulations or acts strangely, or appears sick," says Ryan.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to build it on a two-acre site west of York Manor Home for the Aged. Parents who can afford to pay for day care would be required to pay. Those who cannot would be subsidized by the region, and 80 percent of the subsidy will be recoverable from the province.

Councillor Kennedy said it is his understanding that the preliminary plan for the centre in Newmarket for modular design with removable or expandable units, could be used in Unionville, cutting overall costs for a building.

The first municipality operated day care centre in the region opened in Richmond Hill in 1969 and was subsidized by the town. With the advent of the regional government in January, the centre came under regional jurisdiction.

(Continued on Page 3)