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Appoint Ray Gemmill Ward 3 Councillor

The tragedy of the accidental death of Charles Stewart has left his seat at Richmond Hill Council table vacant and the other members of council with an important decision to be made.

There are two methods of filling the vacant Ward 3 chair — by holding another election or by appointment.

We believe that a decision to hold another election would only delay the filling of the seat unnecessarily and deprive voters in Ward 3 of direct representation on council. From past experience we can foresee only a small percentage of the voters turning out to a winter election. On a previous occasion in such an election (to fill a vacancy on the school board when no candidate qualified in Ward 1) a mere three percent of the eligible voters visited the polls.



RAY GEMMILL

Either Rail Transit Or Ottawa's Excuse

Urged on by citizen demand here in York Region, the province several years ago studied the potential of railroad lines for commuter service to Metro. At that time the studies pointed to the Canadian National line through Richmond Hill and Thornhill as the best to pick.

The province set out to bring about the service but drew back when it faced what were found to be prohibitive financial charges by federal Crown agency, Canadian National Railroad. So we recently saw the start of GO bus service as the best available alternative.

But the potential for rail service is still there and the public demand for it keeps growing. Earlier this year Thornhill citizens voiced their hopes for rail commuter service through Thornhill. This was when Markham Town held a public hearing before starting its local transit system. Last year public demand brought the federal government to the point of operating an experimental service through Maple. The merits of the results continue to be argued.

It was with pleased surprise, then, that we noted last week's reports of federal reconsideration for the Richmond Hill rail commuter service to Union Station with stops at Thornlea, Finch

We commend Mayor William Lazenby and Regional Councillor Lois Hancey for their expressed willingness to act on behalf of these voters, and we know they will do everything possible if contacted, but both are very busy people fulfilling the duties of their own senior offices, so there should be as little delay as possible in selecting a successor for Mr. Stewart.

Council may appoint the unsuccessful candidate in the last election, but is not required to do so. Ray Gemmill of 227 Ruggles Avenue South sought election in Ward 3 in December 1972 and polled 546 votes to Mr. Stewart's 568. We believe that Mr. Gemmill should be appointed to the vacant seat, since he has expressed an interest in serving his fellow residents of that area and since he is a resident of the ward.

The precedent for this type of appointment has already been set in the Regional Municipality of York. Aurora Council has already appointed the top two unsuccessful candidates in last December's election for council to fill vacant seats and Vaughan Council has appointed the top unsuccessful council candidate to fill a vacancy.

We are aware that members of council are anxious to know the feeling of the electors in Ward 3 on this issue and suggest that our readers let any of the other eight members know how they feel before the first of the year, when they will have to make their decision.

Avenue and York Mills Road. The responsible minister in the Trudeau Cabinet, Transport's Jean Marchand, says he is seriously considering the paying of some of the costs of launching our long awaited rail commuter service.

No doubt this is a result of growing citizen demand and the recent pilgrimage to Ottawa of Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey and Provincial Transport Minister Gordon Carton.

The Trudeau Government must provide this and other Metro Toronto areas with rail commuter service or be able to prove Ottawa isn't discriminating against us in favor of the Montreal urban area. Montreal has 108 commuter train services compared to Toronto's six operated by Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railroads. Canadian National, the federally owned and regulated rail operator, subsidized Montreal rail commuters in the amount of \$2,400,000 last year.

We want the Trudeau Government to give us the rail commuter service proven to be needed here. If we don't get it, there certainly has to be a better explanation than heretofore forthcoming. Otherwise we are convinced it is obvious where the blame for this area's lack of commuter rail service must lie.



(By Ethel Snow and Estelle Barker)

Presbyterian Church, Richmond Hill

The Presbyterian Church in Richmond Hill is one of the earliest Presbyterian Churches in the York Region. A frame church was erected as early as 1821 on land donated by James Miles, a popular and public-minded citizen of the area.

The building became a reality through the co-operation and diligence of all the villagers regardless of their faith. Upon completion it was shared by various denominations.

Rev. William Jenkins was the first minister, who was well known for his missionary work in the surrounding countryside and who served the church for twenty-six years. It was a long way to Rev. Jenkins' Church at Richmond Hill, but for many years the young people of surrounding areas went in pairs, quartettes and sextettes and were generally all married before the party returned.

The church sketched was built in 1880 under the ministry of Rev. Isaac Campbell.

In the Spotlight



By DIANA COOK

Interest Should Start In Own Ward

Are the democracies of the West an historical aberration? Is the idea of one man, one vote, the rule of law and the lawmaker as representative of those who elected him a thing of the past? These questions may seem very theoretical compared to the concrete problems which beset us so overwhelmingly today, but the answer that each of us makes will determine the survival of our political system.

Too few of us, caught up in our daily routines and responsibilities, can find the time to take an active interest in how we are governed — many are not even actively affiliated with any political party. Are we entitled to hope for the survival of democracy, if, at best, we manage to "make it to the polls every four years?"

Although it may not be feasible to read Hansard, listen to debates at Queen's Park, or, for most of us, to find the time to attend local or regional council meetings, where then do we find a place for involvement?

The most convenient and the most immediate place to begin is in your ward association. Regardless of age or occupation, if you reside in this town at this time, then you are responsible for its present and its future. Your judgment of how fast we grow or how quickly we strangle in our own traffic should be made, along with your neighbors, and that judgment must then be made known to those who represent us.

If it seems like a chore to stop and consider, to take an evening a month to meet with a group of your neighbors on your street, just ask a Greek or a Chilean what they would give for the privilege.

If you are interested in becoming part of your local ward's ratepayers association, Helpmate Information, (884-2727) has provided this list of active members from each ward whom you may contact: Derek Evelyn (884-1286), 148 Pemberton Road for Ward 6 North; Steven Zukotynsky, 40 Maryvale Crescent, Thornhill, for Ward 6 South; Doug Dison, Gormley Sideroad, RR 1, Richmond Hill; and Mrs. Anne Gold, Laxdale House, Gormley for Ward 5; as well as Gordon Rowe of Oak Ridges and Michael Cote, from BAIF. Gordon Mackenzie, 305 Richmond Street, Richmond Hill, is the representative for Ward 4. Helpmate had no names from Wards 1, 2 or 3.

Conversationalist French Program At Seneca King

People planning to travel to Quebec or France, or just wanting to learn French for personal satisfaction, can now sign up for daytime classes at Seneca College's King Campus in January.

The classes will meet twice a week — beginners will meet from 10 am to 12 noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Intermediate classes are scheduled for Mondays and Wednesdays from 12 noon to 2 p.m. There will also be evening classes for beginners on Monday and Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:30 pm and for intermediates on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Everyone registering in the conversationalist French program at Seneca King is tested so that they may get maximum benefit from their classes.

Under direction of Katherine Kells, who holds both an MA and bachelor of education degree in French, the

Schools Open To Parents Under New Education Act

Parents wishing to visit the schools, their children attend and trustees who wish to get inside schools in their own board area will soon no longer have to wait for an invitation or seek permission from the principal.

The new Consolidated Education Act, which was given first reading in the Legislature this month, is more a refinement of five acts, than an introduction of major policy change, said Education Minister Thomas Wells in introducing the new Act.

The consolidation, he said, removes duplication, ambiguities and obsolete references in the five acts it will replace: the Ministry of Education Act, the Schools Administration Act, the Public Schools Act, the Separate Schools Act and the Secondary School and Board of Education Act. It will be less complex and therefore much easier to use.

In it, parents and trustees will be designated as school visitors and will be able to

visit a school at any time. This designation was previously limited to clergymen and members of the Legislature.

The constitutional position and special identity of the Roman Catholic Schools has been retained in the consolidation, says Mr. Wells. It requires that, to be eligible for election as a Roman Catholic School Board trustee a person must be a resident of the region of the board for which he is seeking election, and he must be a separate school elector.

In a news release to the press, Mr. Wells said that between now and the next session of the Legislature — after the Christmas break — the Ministry will welcome comments and suggestions about the new act before it is given second and third reading and thus becomes law.

At the same time, the act will also be given thorough study by the Legislature's Standing Committee on Social Development.

Advisory Group Makes Protest Change In Rezoning Procedure

A strong protest against any changes in administrative procedure to speed up zoning bylaw applications which may affect the ability of the public to present their views on such applications has been lodged with the clerk of the municipality by the Citizens' Advisory Board to the Planning Committee of Richmond Hill Council. The protest bears the signature of Co-Chairman Pat Bedford, Marylo Graham and Buster Vermeulen.

The protest cites the case of Zadrevac and the Town of Brampton heard in the Divisional Court of Ontario June 26 last year, which brought the ruling that natural justice requires a municipal council to give notice and hold a hearing over a matter affecting the rights of ratepayers.

It further noted that the report of the Select Committee on the Municipal Board, 1972, recommended that amendments should be made in the appropriate statute to require all municipalities to involve the public in local decision-making by these means:

• Before a council finally determines an issue involving planning or capital expenditure its intentions to do so should be made known in a public notice written in plain language.

• At the same time the municipality should release all relevant information and reports.

• Before the issue is voted on, ratepayers should have a full opportunity not only to present their views but also to obtain full information from the municipality at a public hearing.

The Citizens' Advisory Group therefore request that the council's planning committee recommend that the town council adopt the recommendations of the select committee and make no changes in administrative procedures that are not in keeping with those recommendations.

Some weeks ago, Planning Director Hesse Rimon recommended to council that to speed up the handling of bylaws for rezoning, council

give three readings and send the bylaw on to the Minister for consideration at the same time as it is circulated to the concerned ratepayers (within 400 feet). Comments and objections of these ratepayers along with council's comments on them would be forwarded to the Minister. The circulation after a third reading is required by the Municipal Act.

Regional Councillor Lois Hancey proposed an amendment that the bylaw be circulated after the second reading by council for comments and objections. That these would be analyzed and considered prior to the third reading and the required circulation. This amendment carried and the matter was referred to the planning committee to come up with the proper wording for the motion.

FOR ASSISTANCE WITH GOVERNMENT MATTERS CALL
DON DEACON MPP
965-5806 - 832-2555
884-5837 - 887-5901

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND OTHERS
In the Estate of
Mary Jane Wickens,
deceased

All persons having claims against the Estate of Mary Jane Wickens, late of the Town of Richmond Hill who died on or about the 1st day of August, 1972 are hereby notified to send particulars of same to the undersigned on or before the 3rd day of January, 1974 after which date the Estate will be distributed, with regard only to the claims of which the undersigned shall then have notice, and the undersigned will not be liable to any person whose claim they shall not then have notice. DATED at Richmond Hill the 18th of December, 1973 (Executor or Administrator) Annie Gray and Lilly Gray, Executors by Their Solicitor(s), Plaxton and Mann, 116 Yonge Street North, Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Some weeks ago, Planning Director Hesse Rimon recommended to council that to speed up the handling of bylaws for rezoning, council

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Newmarket residents: 895-1581. If long distance, dial Zenith 31200 (toll-free).

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Worlds of Women, Tuesdays 9:15 - 11:45 a.m., \$30
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THORNHILL
Thornhill United Church, Dudley Avenue
Worlds of Women, Wednesdays, 9:15 - 11:45 a.m., \$30
The Changing Family, Wednesdays, 1:15 - 3:15 p.m., \$12
Nutrition for Today's Family, Fridays, 9 - 12 a.m., \$30
Basic Bookkeeping, Fridays, 1 - 4 p.m., \$30

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Letters to the Editors

APARTMENT DWELLERS NOT SECOND CLASS

Dear Mr. Editor—
When my landlord crowns the top of my Christmas Tree in my apartment lobby with a harsh reminder sign regarding rents due (the sign appeared December 1 for December rents). I think, I know, it is time to register protest regarding callous, degrading treatment of apartment building tenants. And also as an aside, to point out, that to the building owner, the "crowning star" is rent.

High on my list for human dignity and the willingness for all people regardless of position or wealth to communicate, when mutual matters arise.
I resent the fact that the owner of my apartment building is a "shadow figure" — carefully protected by the superintendent and property manager. As an "out-in-the-open" president of a company, I am prepared at all times to represent my company—I do not hide. I accept the responsibilities of my position.

As apartment living becomes an economic and "herefore social necessity it is important that guide-rules

Call It Flag Day

(Ottawa Citizen)

The real reason for a statutory holiday in mid-February is simply to have a break during the long period between New Year's Day and Good Friday. What the work ethic being but it is, a holiday for its own sake can't be publicly admitted. Hence the House of Commons Justice Committee will recommend that the holiday be named after someone or something.

The likeliest candidate is Flag Day, to be observed on the first Monday after February 15, when Canada's flag was first raised in 1965. The name is supported both by Liberals and New Democrats on the committee, and could provide an occasion for patriotic rhetoric as well as a day off work. This is a powerful combination.
If it weren't for the work ethic, we could give the real reason for the holiday by calling it something like winter break. But flag day will do.

SUTTON — Whitefish, lake trout and shallowwater ciscoe will be spawning on the gravelly shoals of Lake Simcoe this month. Short days and windy, cold evenings stimulate spawning. It is estimated about 100,000 adult whitefish should be spawning.

BRUCE PIERCE, Apartment 506, 7471 Yonge Street, Thornhill.