

Unwarranted conclusions are drawn from pupil testing report

Dear Mr. Editor:

On October 15 a report on the standardized testing program was made to The York County Board of Education. It would appear some unwarranted conclusions are being drawn from this report. My concern is that the resultant unjustified criticism of teachers and programs may discourage good teachers who deserve appreciation for their efforts and that it may hurt students who will be the losers if this testing program is abandoned.

Let me set the record straight. Measured against Canada wide norms established in 1973, York County students in grade 8 exceeded the average level of achievement in vocabulary, reading

comprehension, and in mathematics problem solving. They were slightly below the Canada wide average in mathematics concepts.

The figures show York County students with one exception, and that by the narrowest possible margin, equal or exceed the norms. In some cases the difference is quite dramatic, representing a half year of learning. It is especially interesting to note that in math concepts, where our grade 8 students measure slightly below average, our grade 6 students show the best performance. Several years ago the York County board began a special in-service program for teachers to improve the mathematics programs in our schools.

The confusion arose because when the October 15 report was made the 1973 norms were not available and York County results were compared with norms established in 1966. The fact is that grade 8 students throughout Canada now appear to be achieving less well on these particular tests than grade 8 students did seven years ago.

But before anyone panics about this, let me point out many students who seven years ago would have been isolated in special education classes are now integrated into the regular grade 8 classes. In addition as the practice of "failing" students has fallen into disfavor, all over North America the average age of grade 8 students has decreased.

Grade 8 students taking the tests in 1973 had relatively fewer years of schooling than did their counterparts in 1966. Under these circumstances this change in achievement

levels is not surprising. Our teachers are competent. They use the results of these tests to identify areas of the program where remedial or review teaching appears to be needed. Negative comment of the type we have heard in the last few weeks can only discourage them.

MERNA COLBOURNE, Chairman, York County Board of Education.

King City pays off \$80,000 arena loan

The two-year-old \$80,000 loan for construction of the King City Community Centre will be wiped out December 3 when King City Lions Club President presents a cheque for \$8,500 to the King City Community Funds Limited.

The \$80,000 loan was undertaken by residents of the village and surrounding district as their contribution toward construction of the centre.



(Photo by Susan Samila)

YWCA yoga class at Hillcrest

Richmond Hill YWCA-sponsored yoga classes are proving popular with women who want to learn the art of relaxing mind and body while they limber up and shape up. Classes meet weekly at Charles Howitt Public School and Hillcrest Mall. Pictured above

is the Hillcrest group which meets each Thursday from 10 to 11:30 am with instructor, Howard Halpern. There are still a few openings in this class. For information call 'Y' program director Gwen Halliday at 884-4811.

Letters

Apparent teacher conflict of interest could be road to ending existing rifts

An open letter to the Regional Councillors of the York Regional Council, Newmarket, Ontario.

Re: Financial Aid to Family Life Centres.

Dear Sir: The Marriage Guidance Council of the United Church of Canada would like to commend the Regional Council for providing interim financing for the four Family Life Centres, from September to the end of December 1974 "up to an amount" not exceeding \$41,410.

At the same time we are

concerned by the report that this financial assistance will cease after that date and we are greatly disturbed by a statement made by Richmond Hill Mayor William Lazenby, as reported in the regional papers, that the interim financing is "a graceful amount of time in which they (the centres) can bow out and close up their operation."

The Marriage Guidance Council of the United Church of Canada has provided financial as well as other support to the York Region Family Life Centres

from their inception.

The financial assistance has been in the form of "seed money" and on a receding scale, until centres have become established and receive local financial support.

It was our understanding that this would be the case in York Region.

The existence of the Centres in the York Region is well justified by their growth, which is evidenced both by the demand for them by the public, i.e. an increase in clients, and the expansion of services offered.

We, therefore, think that it would be irresponsible if at this point the Family Life Centres of the York Region would have to "bow out and close up their operation."

As financial difficulties are often at the root of marriage and family breakdowns it can hardly be expected that the total cost of such services can be borne by the clients themselves.

We believe that the healthy functioning of our society is built on the healthy functioning of families, and that therefore governments should do everything within their power to provide services that support the maintaining of marriage and family life.

We therefore would urge the Regional and Municipal

Councils to reconsider its decision and give continued financial support to the Family Life Centres.

REV. GLEN MATTINSON, Chairman, Marriage Guidance Council, The United Church of Canada

REV. F. W. SCHMIDT, Executive Secretary, Marriage Guidance Council, The United Church of Canada

Those election time rumors

Dear Mr. Editor: I am interested in the municipal elections and the different candidates.

However, I was deeply alarmed this week when I heard a story prevalent in my area that Gord Rowe was really only interested in the deaf and no other handicapped.

What utter rubbish! It shows the depth of despair that people will resort to.

Gord Rowe as everyone knows has championed all the handicapped causes, and most especially the retarded children.

I can speak with first hand knowledge because I have a mentally handicapped daughter, Linda, who attends Thornhaven School in Richmond Hill.

May my wife and I wish Gord Rowe, good luck and good health to continue his good work in the interest of the whole community. EDWARD POIRIER, Douglas Road, Oak Ridges

King council cuts pay increase plans

A bylaw elevating the salaries of King Township Mayor Margaret Britnell to \$7,000 and that of her councillors to \$4,000 wasn't defeated last week.

But then it wasn't passed either.

No one wanted to move the necessary bylaw or second it.

The bylaw was then shelved until after the election when it will be brought up again and likely passed by the new council.

Before election

That was the line of attack proposed at a previous meeting when Councillor Bill Long proposed the increase, stating at the same time it should be done before the December election and not after it.

Said Long: "Ratepayers are always criticizing councils for deciding to raise salaries following an election, thereby providing them with no opportunity to express their opinions."

"In this way we give the

ratepayer the chance to show by ballot if he thinks we're worth the increase or not. If not, he can choose someone else he deems more worthy of the increase."

Cites inflation Long cited inflation along with the workload as his main reasons for recommending an increase.

He suggested the mayor's salary be raised from its present \$6,000 to \$8,000; councillors from \$3,200 to \$4,800.

After considerable

discussion, council lowered the figure to \$7,000 for the

mayor and \$4,000 for councillors and requested a bylaw be prepared, given two readings in the next meeting, and then left to the new council to handle the third reading.

Poppy campaigners thank generous people

Dear Mr. Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity through your media to express my heartfelt thanks to the Town of Richmond Hill. Thanks for the courteous manner in which industry, small business and the merchants received the sales personnel while they canvassed on our wreath sales and their generous contribution to a most worthy cause, the Poppy Fund of Branch 375, Royal Canadian Legion.

The people of Richmond Hill so nobly responded to our Poppy Taggers on November 7, 8 and 9 with

their contributions and pleasant words.

This combination helped our Poppy Fund raise \$4,700 hundred dollars of which all but the expenses of \$218 will go to aid veterans and their families of the Richmond Hill area, in much less envious position than ourselves.

On behalf of our branch, our poppy committee and those veterans who need our help, I again say, "Thank You, Richmond Hill."

WILLIAM POLLARD, Chairman, Poppy Committee, Branch 375, Royal Canadian Legion

Should reconsider financial aid to Region's family life centres

Dear Mr. Editor:

I'm surprised at the statements which have been made recently in your newspaper about possible conflict of interest which will arise if teachers are elected as school board trustees.

I have just spent two days at a labor symposium in Ottawa at which a small group of labor and management executives studied means to avoid strikes. We found one of the best examples of successful labor-management co-operation is to be found in Germany where inflation has recently been cut back to six percent and where work stoppages are almost unknown.

Labor leaders in that country, as well as executives, have told me a

major contributor to this remarkable situation is the legal requirement that each union local has two voting members on each company's board of directors. These union representatives have access to all the company's financial and other records and are thus in a position to know the potential effect of changes in wages and other working conditions.

The more I study the rift that has developed between our county boards of education in Ontario and our teachers, the more I believe it is because our teachers are not part of the "action" as they were when we had school sections and small municipal boards of education.

I don't remember charges of conflict of interest being

made during those years when teachers played a major role in helping trustees decide how our education dollars would be spent.

It might be wise to introduce legislation which requires some direct employee representation on all boards in this province, including our board of education. In the latter case it might bridge the deep rift which has developed since 1968 when Mr. Davis, then Minister of Education, imposed the county board system on us. In the meantime, I don't think the education of our children and the handling of our tax dollars would suffer if we choose to elect someone who might help bridge the gap. DON DEACON, MLA, York Centre

Concerning the election campaign

Dear Mr. Editor: The other evening on the television election coverage, Councillor Low Wainwright stated he had been retired for 1 1/2 years and he could work as a full time regional councillor.

However, his record of attendance, according to Richmond Hill administration office, is far below that of Councillors Hancey and Rowe.

His explanation of this differential was so pathetic, I am convinced the town of Richmond Hill needs Wainwright, part or full time, like a hole in the head.

Forward with Hancey and Rowe! BOB McCOLL, 9940 Bayview, Apartment 202, Richmond Hill

Tribute to York Regional Police

Dear Mr. Editor:

In these days when the daily papers seem to be filled with criticism of the police, I would like to say something in their praise.

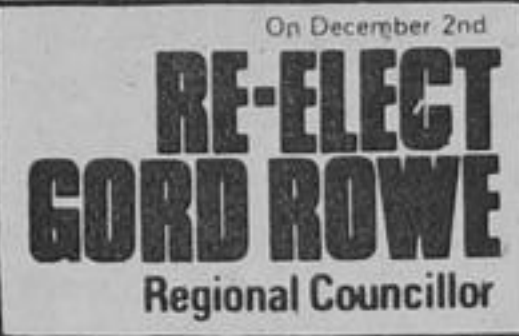
Recently PC, David Smalley of 28 Division York Regional Police was assigned to find our 84-year-old senile grandmother who wandered out of the house at 6:30 am.

When he found her, within minutes of the call, he assessed her mental condition and treated her with tact and compassion. We

found him to be an intelligent and very "nice" person.

May I take this opportunity to commend PC Smalley on being a perfect gentleman in a difficult situation.

GABE ELBERT, Rockport Crescent, Richmond Hill.



Our annual oh my gosh it's almost next year clearance sale.

You know how birthdays and anniversaries have a way of sneaking up on you. Well it's no different when you're selling cars. 1975 is almost here and we still have a few '74's taking up valuable space we'd like to use for our '75 models. The best cure for that is to make you a deal so incredible, that you'll just have to take one home with you. We promise you one thing: When you get a load of how much you can save on a '74 Renault if you come in right now, you'll say, "Oh my gosh, really?"



Renault 12 Sedan



Renault 12 Station Wagon

These Renaults feature: Front-wheel drive, Front disc brakes, Independent front suspension, Rack-and-pinion steering.



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IF YOU THINK THE PEOPLE MUST PARTICIPATE IN DECISION MAKING YOU HAVE A LOT IN COMMON WITH:

LORNA JACKSON

AND

JIM CAMERON

VOTE



MARY HONEY BROWN, 160 Essex Avenue, Richmond Hill