



lynda's lashes

The Liberal

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PUBLISHER J.G. VAN KAMPEN

EDITOR HAROLD BLAINE

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Need the 'will' for open space

Remember last summer when a regional-provincial task force found all levels of government lack the will to go out and grab the public open space land reserves so terribly needed here?

That the point of no return was almost passed?

Remember? We'd all better remember!

The place to give birth to that will to action in government is right here.

The time to do it is now, when the local government elections are just over and the municipal councillors have a fresh, new mandate.

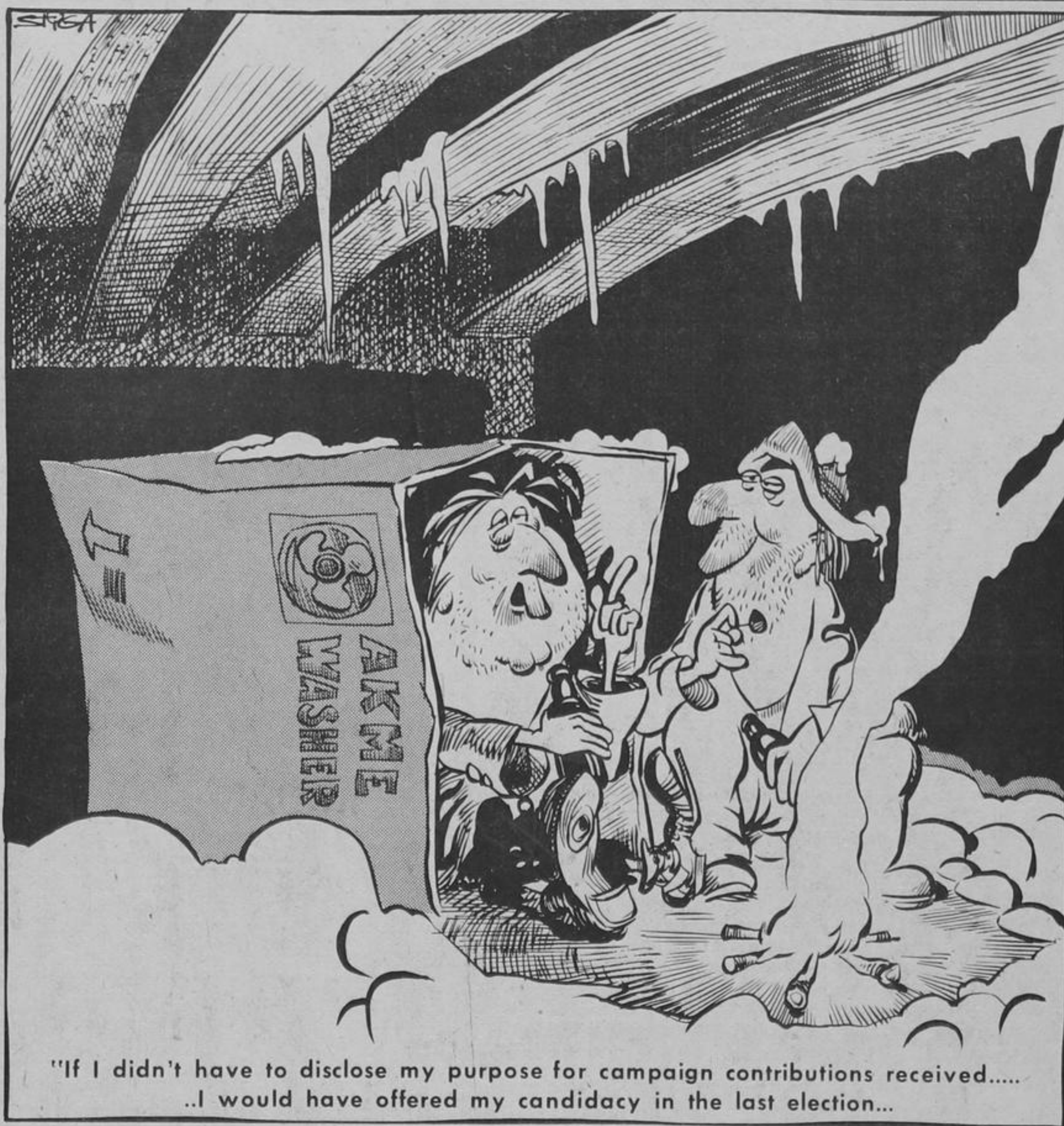
Our town, township and regional councils haven't been doing a fraction of what they must do.

What they can do is only a fraction of what must be done.

They must also lead forward, and even drive forward, the provincial and federal authorities.

Our municipalities must shoulder their responsibility. This is the first, hardest and most important job facing our newly elected councils.

They must not fail. The humanity of the living conditions in our communities over the coming centuries is at stake.



TCHL coach works harder

Fifteen months ago when I first started working for The Liberal I did the Thornhill Community Hockey League scores for Fred Simpson, the sports editor.

I was intrigued enough with the mammoth all-volunteer-run house league to ask Fred if I could do an article on it.

I talked to a lot of men who'd gotten involved with the league and given up nights and weekends to be coaches and conveners.

Most, but not all, of them got their initiation into it when their sons began to play hockey. Some just got involved because they enjoy it.

Impressive coach

I was very impressed with a 20-year-old named Ken Milton who coaches the team my son belongs to.

And a year and a bit later, I'm even more impressed.

When I did the article the team was losing badly. Right down there in the cellar.

But Ken, who'd told me he also spent several evenings a week studying hockey strategy and figuring out his lines, didn't take the easy way out.

Good sportsmanship

He never taught the boys to body check so hard they'd get the quick wins. He spent hours and the weeks and months teaching them the skills that make you good at the game. Pass, pass, pass. Skate, skate, skate.

They stayed cellar-dwellers for two years then gradually began to win.

By the end of last season they'd won the Markham Mayor's Trophy. So far this year they're in first place. Inevitably with a team that's had 28 goals and only seven scored against them, they've had to give up a couple of their better players in exchange for boys who aren't yet really good.

Coaching magic

But it's a funny thing. The new players, after only a few weeks of practice, are learning to skate and pass the puck, too.

You can almost see them gaining in confidence and starting to fit themselves in with their new team!

It's not every 12-year-old who has the courage to take out a player by skating him into the boards.

But every one of them can feel good about getting his limbs to do what he wants them to, or take pride in a pass that goes to the right spot so a teammate gets a shot on the goal.

Best lesson

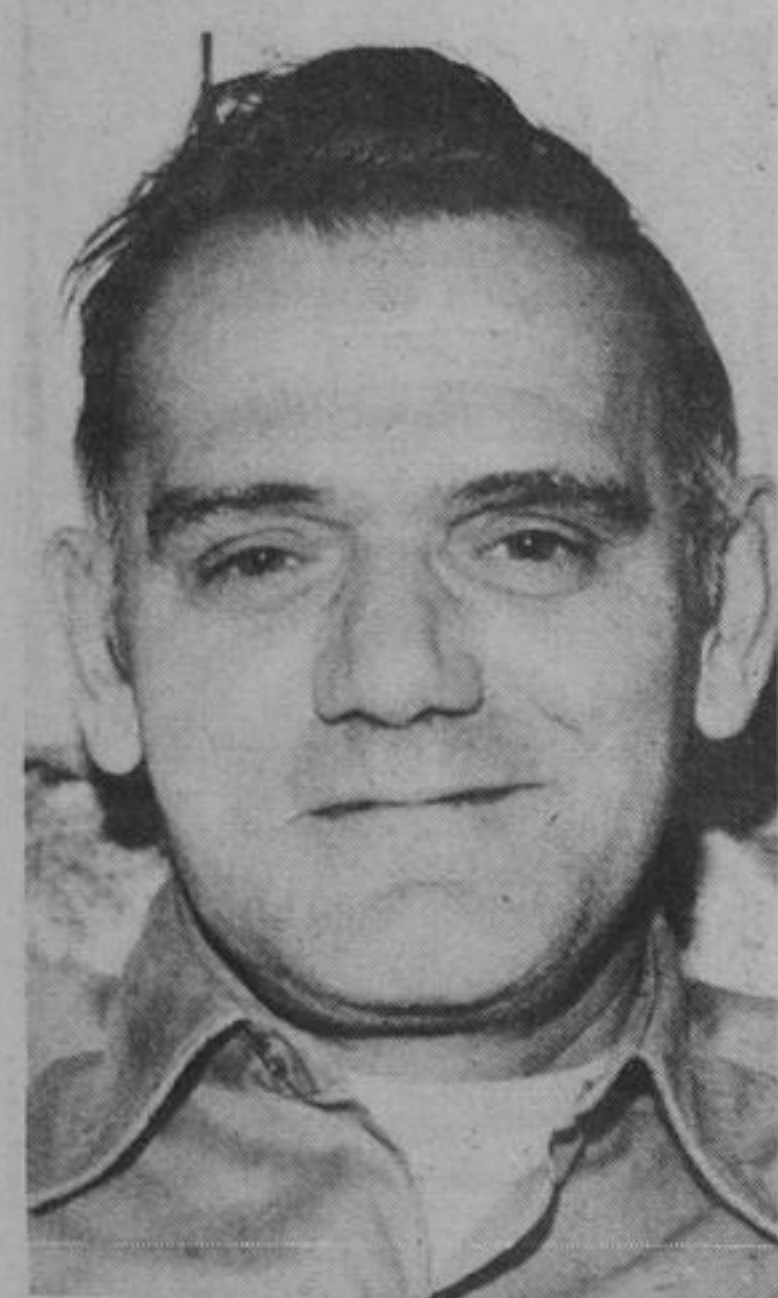
But the most valuable lesson these boys have learned under Ken's tutelage is that nothing really worthwhile is ever learned in a day.

It takes time, patience and stick-to-it-iveness.

And since kids usually learn by example, it's likely they'll remember what they learned in hockey and apply it to situations in later life.

No shortcuts, no cheap tricks or gimmicks, no easy answers.

Letters 'Bull' from businessman



William Worsfield... waiting for word

Dear editor:

In reading the letters you received and printed in the paper Dec. 1, there was one outstanding to my eye.

This was the Guest Spot written by Harold Mills and I quote "Hill in Bloody Mess!"

How a man like Harold Mills who is supposed to be a leading businessman in the Hill for many years can write such bull--- is beyond me.

He says, again I quote "There seems to be a lot of nit-picking." Isn't there always in any election?

He also said he was confused because of the figures that our mayor and mayoralty candidate Gordon Rowe were quoting. Mills asks whose figures should we believe?

My answer to this is when he finds out I hope he lets me and the rest of the taxpayers know.

He then goes on to talk about regional council taking over our police and fire departments.

The people of Richmond Hill, always had an excellent police department even when it was called town under the leadership of Chief R.P. Robbins.

Our fire protection isn't any different now than it was 20 years ago.

Our fire station is on the west side

with train tracks between east and west.

He then goes on to say that maybe the region should also take over the roads in our community because it was observed they sanded and then plowed 10 minutes later and then sanded again — the taxpayers are paying double.

My reply to this, Mr. Mills is that it sure would make one wonder how you got to be a leading businessman.

I travel our province to other cities every day, leaving Richmond Hill.

I can tell you there are times when you are praying for sanders and plows.

They sand when the roads get slippery, they plow when the snow gets deep or drifts and they sand again after they plow because the roads get slippery after plowing.

But of course, for a person like you, Mr. Mills, that doesn't even have to drive to work, just sit in an office pushing a pencil, you wouldn't understand anyway.

Mr. Mills then goes on to say it makes him wonder why more hasn't been done on Yonge Street, why don't we have more parking, this town is in a bloody mess — that fresh ideas are needed and could not possibly do worse.

I say the town has been in a bloody mess for longer than two years.

It has probably taken Dave Schiller and the rest of our council a year-and-a-

half to clean up the bloody mess that was left to them.

I too, Mr. Mills, have been a citizen and a taxpayer in Richmond Hill for over 20 years.

I don't see how Mr. Rowe can improve everything overnight anymore than what Dave Schiller can.

I am also thanking God that Mr. Harold Mills isn't running for any office after reading your Guest Spot.

I, for one, voted for Schiller last time and I am not switching.

WILLIAM WORSFIELD,
405 Centre St. E.,
Richmond Hill, Ont.



Judy Bunker... more to life

More entertainment please

Dear editor:

I opened my Liberal today and found a pleasant surprise.

A whole new section number "D" and headed entertainment.

Being a theatre fanatic, I have always turned to the last page of your paper first, to read about the local theatrical activities.

But alas! The whole section was devoted to politics. I discovered that out of the five pages of newspaper in the

section, only five articles pertaining to the arts could be found.

This was equivalent to the one page we were getting before.

Please, there is more to life than bad news, politics, deaths and taxes.

Let's add some spice to our newspaper. The world is dull enough as it is.

JUDY BUNKER,
190 May Ave.,
Richmond Hill, Ont.

Sarcastic 'claptrap' from Prof. Shephard

Dear editor:

I would like to respond in part to the letter of English Professor Ron Shephard of the Toronto University education faculty printed in The Liberal Nov. 24.

The comments of the said pedagogue about Regional Viewpoint columnist Jim Irving's so-called "myopic view of education" appear to display a high degree of sarcastic "claptrap".

Or could we call them just plain running-off-at-the-mouth?

Certainly they don't contribute to any positive understanding of the "basics".

No wonder the education system is looked upon with dismay in many circles when professorial types of this ilk are entrusted with the training of future teachers.

When are they going to come down off their podiums and get back to reality?

As a trustee candidate I have been much concerned about the lack of standards in our educational system.

Hopefully the new board of education will take very affirmative steps to rectify the situation throughout York Region.

I strongly favor a sound, basic core curriculum reinstated in our schools.

York Region could become the model for all Ontario in this regard.

In any case, my hat goes off to Jim Irving for his sincere, honest reporting on the educational scene in York County.

I respectfully submit that the cause of education is better served by the Jim Irving than by the Ron Shephards.

GLENN SULLIVAN,
45 Forest Park Cres.,
Thornhill, Ont.

Reader disappointed by editorial page

Dear editor:

I was most disappointed with the format of the editorial page in the Dec. 1 issue of The Liberal.

I found it totally irresponsible for The Liberal in the closing days of the election campaign to have allowed "The Guest Spot" Harold Mills to use The Guest Spot column to present a one-sided view of the election.

If The Liberal really intended to be unbiased, two viewpoints would have been more appropriate.

If, in fact, The Liberal's intent was to support one group of candidates, then surely you owed it to your readers to have made a clear editorial statement.

PENNY SPENCE,
284 Emerald Isle Ct.,
Richmond Hill, Ont.

Awards coverage excellent

Dear editor:

Would you please extend council's thanks to the members of your staff who gave such excellent coverage to this year's town of Richmond Hill Awards Night.

It will, I know, have added interest to

the evening for those attending as well as supplying information about the awards to the residents of the town.

DAVID SCHILLER
Mayor
Richmond Hill, Ont.

letters...

Letters to the editor are welcome and should be addressed to The Editor, The Liberal, PO Box 390, Richmond Hill, Ont., L4C 4Y6. The writer's full name and address must be included, and telephone number if it is unlisted. Unsigned letters cannot be considered for publication. The Liberal reserves the right to edit all contributions.

Vaughan's Armstrong great loss

Dear editor:

It is with regret I see Councillor Fred Armstrong retiring from local politics. Over the years this man has shown he is a very sincere person.

He has attended to all aspects of the needs of the people of Vaughan and Woodbridge as a former reeve and warden of the County of York.

The past six years have shown his merit as a member of Vaughan council.

Fred has always been a "grass roots" politician. His views and knowledge of Vaughan have always been respected by his fellow councillors and many friends.

I, personally, have gained a great deal of knowledge of Vaughan and Woodbridge from this great friend.

I can understand, as we all should, why Fred has retired. We will miss this man who has given his utmost for his community.

I say, "Thank you Fred." You will be hard to replace on our council.

JACK GILBERT,
Former councillor,
RR 1,
Woodbridge, Ont.

Professor picks nits

By Tom Davey

I almost split an infinitive laughing at professor Ron Shephard's attack on Jim Irving's column on the basics of education.

As one who has toiled in both newspaper newsrooms and the groves of academia, I feel my comments may be relevant.

The professor accuses Jim of myopia. Then he says thousands of intelligent educators across North America are trying to sort out what the basics really are.

As we have remedial reading going on in our universities right now, I too have little doubt our educators are trying to sort out the basics.

It is quite apparent from their present track record that something is lacking.

Nit picking

Then, in an attempt to show Jim himself lacks certain basics, the professor fine-tooth combs the column in question.

Unsurprisingly, he comes up with a few nits to pick on.

In a rather dazzling display of grammatical dexterity, he shows us Jim indulges in tautologies and omits words (such as "that") when prescribed by the archdeacon of the language himself, the great Fowler.

Well, I'll be the first to admit much of the writing done for newspapers seldom merits perpetuation in marble.

But, as someone once said, reporting is literature done in a hurry.

Sure there were grammatical flaws. Many of the ones cited, Ron, deserved your gentle rebukes.

Comparisons odious. But comparisons are said to be odious.



The guest spot

A topical column of opinion by our readers. Submissions should be no more than 600 words, typed preferably.

Measured against the daily output of a newspaper reporter, the average academic output must be scant even though their slogan is publish or perish.

On newspapers, there is rarely the opportunity for second thoughts. As Dick Beddoes once said, sometimes there isn't much time for first thoughts.

Reporters have to cover a wide variety of subjects, ranging from education to science.

They have to distil the complexities of municipal and regional budgets, cover difficult legal cases - (where it is very easy for writers themselves to transgress the law in their coverage) and, finally, make the sum of all these parts into an attractive, readable package.

Readers free

You see Ron, newspaper audiences are voluntary, not at all like the somewhat captive classroom audiences.

Then, too, reporters have to do all their own typing. In general, they lack the leisure to indulge in the copious drafting and rewriting — common in university publishing — until their work is innocent of

grammatical error. Getting back to basics, student illiteracy is a growing problem.

Other continents

On a recent trip to Australia I found the subject was frequently discussed in various newspaper articles.

Britain, too, thought by many to be a leader in education, now openly acknowledges a growing percentage of illiterates.

Where the situation defies logic is that it exists after unprecedented amounts of public funds have been lavished on education.

And, if the educational establishment cannot define what the basics are, may we begin with the three Rs?

Price of creativity

Attention has been diverted by attempts to generate creativity in students.

Few will quarrel with the need for creativity. As Voltaire said, "a child's mind is a fire to be kindled, not a vessel to be filled."

Even so, there is no point in reaching for the stars when the adjectival ultimate for rapture in our adolescents appears to be "Wow", a sound more in keeping with the canine species rather than the one that put men on the moon.

(Mr. Davey, a Bloomington Road resident and drama reviewer for The Liberal, is publications and science editor at the Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Toronto. He formerly was a reporter with newspapers, radio and television in England and Australia, as well as here in Canada. — Editor)