

regional viewpoint



By Jim Irving

By the time you read this, it will be all over. Those who have elected to keep us broke for another couple of years, will have accepted their congratulations and will be busy burning their election promises and telling their defeated opponents not to worry about those rumored law suits.

They know that they didn't mean it when they said Jones was "a senile tosspot, who would always operate under the table, because that's where he spent most of his time, anyway"; or that Smith's "only experience as an administrator was the time that she spent four years as a madam in Toronto; and even there she lost money."

Nervous twitch

At least, that's something the way it will go. Winners are supposed to be more or less gracious in winning; not that they always are, of course. Sometimes, when the vote is very close, and they start trying to figure out who voted for them and who voted against them, they can become a bit erratic in greeting those who come to their victory party afterwards, so that their on-and-off smile winds up as a nervous twitch before the night is over.

Losing, on the other hand, have been known to be quite nasty after it's all over; and usually are. And most of the time it's the press that's to blame for their defeat.

Tone of defeated

Mind you, the winners don't credit the press for their victories, either; it's usually a big team effort between God and their campaign workers.

So, although I'm not able to predict who's going to win in the various categories, I think I can predict the tone of reply from some of the defeated candidates throughout the region when asked to say a few words afterwards.

They should go something like this:

Candidate X — (Council) — Lookit, whatta ya cor around here now for? I didn't notice ya when I co used some publicity.

Post mortem for election

Candidate X — (Council) — Lookit, whatta ya coming around here now for? I didn't notice ya when I coulda used some publicity.

But, then I guess you were too busy over at our new councillor's headquarters to bother with little, old me, eh? Just because my curly hair's a little less — I mean, my hair's a little less curly now; and just because there's nothing socho about my — What? Okay, just because there's nothing macho about me; and, and, and — leave the sandwiches alone on the way out.

Vultures come

Candidate Z — (Council) — Well, well, the vultures come to claim the corpse. Sure you know how to operate that thing? (pointing to camera). Why a picture now, finally get to the Zs in your obit file? Probably be the first time anyone knew I was even running.

Candidate Y — (School Board — on phone) — Well, this is a surprise. Where did you get my phone number? I mean, I didn't think you even knew my name. I've never seen it in the paper before, so I don't know how you knew what section of the book to look it up in. The election? Well, I could say, why don't you wait until Wednesday and read about it in your paper. But then, there's been nothing in it about the election so far, so why should Wednesday be any different?

Next election

Candidate Q — (Mayor) — What brings you here? I already paid the carrier boy. Or are you collecting for the whole year?

Well, tell them I'm cancelling my subscription. Oh, and you might as well take this. What is it? It's my platform for next election. I thought that if I gave it to you early enough, you might get some of it in this time. So, I guess you're off to the mayor's victory party, eh? What is it: shrimps and frogs legs? He always did try to keep a jump ahead.

sharon's sunshine



By Sharon Brain

Are you thinking that this might be the year to buy the kids a puppy for Christmas?

Don't feel bad about admitting it. Lots of people get fairly demented ideas in the name of Christmas Spirit.

I think it's the cute pictures of a little puppy dangling in a Christmas stocking in front of the fireplace that really convinces many of us. It is a nice advertisement.

But have you ever stopped to think what the inside of that stocking must look like after it's held a squirming puppy for five hours?

Kids get up early enough as it is on Christmas morning. They don't need the cries of a barely weaned puppy to hasten their rising.

Problems, problems

Think of the problems you have in hiding a pair of mittens in the closet where the kids won't find them. How would you ever hide a puppy?

Actually, what happens is you find a long suffering friend to look after it for the week before Christmas.

Then on Christmas morning, after all the presents are opened, when the kids are sitting in front of a pile of toys six feet high with an "Is that all there is?" look on their faces, you stealthily leave the house.

Safe distance

You warm up the car and prepare for your 40 mile drive.

The friend you find to look after the puppy must live at least that far away. You couldn't wish a brand new puppy on someone who lived really close by.

Because they're probably never going to speak to you again.

You pick up the puppy and head back home, trying not to mind the fact you are the only person on the road in the whole county.

By the time you get back, the kids are fighting about whose Hot Wheels that is.

Living gifts mean trouble

They are too busy to pay much attention to a puppy who wants to throw up in the kitchen.

All in all, Christmas is not a good time for new pets.

New kitten

I've been spending a lot of time in our local pet store lately because we just got a kitten.

I go in there and gaze at the rows of cat shampoo and vitamin pills and cloth mice with bells on them.

I feel so overwhelmed with all the things I should buy that I leave without the kitty litter I went in for.

All around me there are people picking out pets to give for Christmas.

I would love to give them the benefit of my hard learned knowledge. But I know they won't believe me.

I wouldn't believe anyone when they told me not to buy my husband gerbils for Christmas.

Gerbils never

Actually, they told me not to buy gerbils anytime. But of course I ignored them.

I bought a lovely two-level cage and a barrel of gerbil food and a book on how to look after them.

Then I bought two of the cutest little gerbils you have ever seen.

By New Year's Day we had 14 of them.

When they disposed of the excess children in the rather gruesome manner that is natural to gerbils, I agreed that I was wrong.

Ruined Yule

Besides, it rather ruined Christmas morning when my husband unwrapped his gift.

His mother leaped up on the couch shrieking something about getting those rats out of her house.

If you really want to give someone a pet for Christmas, why not consider a turkey.

Already stuffed.

yesterdays



by mary dawson

Early struggle for highways

Highway legislation was inaugurated in Upper Canada in 1793 whereby the justices of the peace were appointed highway commissioners, wrote E. A. James in *The Liberal* in 1926.

Road overseers to act under the supervision of the commissioners, were elected at public meetings.

Their duties included supervision of all construction and repair work on roads and bridges.

They also supervised work done by landowners in accordance with the law which required all men living in parishes or townships to contribute up to a maximum of 12 days labor to the roads free each year.

Public labour

This was the beginning of "statutory labor".

With requirements modified from time to time to conform to altered conditions or changing sentiment, this was still in force in 1926 in certain areas of the County of York and other parts of Ontario.

The roads laid out and constructed by the militia were handed over to the townships for maintenance under the statute labor system.

As early as 1804 it was seen that without state aid they would never become passable for year-round traffic.

Grants started

Numerous grants were made for new construction and repair.

The grants were expended under the supervision of specially appointed commissioners.

The maintenance of the roads was then left to the townships.

As settlements developed, traffic on the principal roads became heavier.

Post-routes with regular coach service were becoming common and increasingly patronized.

Increased traffic

This increased traffic required a better type of road and many substantial and expensive bridges were

needed.

Maintenance by the residents failed to keep the roads in repair, so the next step was the building of toll roads.

When the roads reverted to municipalities, efforts were made from time to time to set up a county road system.

Local democracy

In 1899 a committee of York County council called a convention of municipal representatives in Ontario to consider the question.

The provincial Act for the Improvement of Public Highways passed in 1901.

Under the act the Ontario government agreed to bear one-third of the costs of construction and improvement of county highways systems.

In 1903 York County drafted a bylaw to set up a county system. This was submitted to the municipal councils.

More than a third of these disapproved, so the question was submitted to the ratepayers in 1904.

The verdict was decisively against the proposal. Richmond Hill, Aurora and Newmarket were the only municipalities voting in favor.

Finally approved

The matter than lay dormant for two years. It was brought up again in 1906, 1907 and 1908 before being approved.

The final resolution formed a county roads system in the southern portion.

It directed that financial assistance for improvement of leading highways be sought from the City of Toronto.

It was passed by county council in 1909.

GEM

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Due to an error on the part of GEM Dept. Stores:

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