



lynda's lashes

Rates unfair

Electric power rate increases announced this week by Ontario Hydro are hitting some local users unfairly.

This unfairness puts the spotlight on a problem which hasn't been cleaned up since regional government started six years ago.

That problem is the organization of electric power service and authority according to changed urban

Best Yule gift

What's the one gift you can give this holiday season that you don't have to pay for?

What's the one gift only you can give?

What's the one gift you already have plenty of, that could give you the opportunity to be a life saver?

The gift is blood, the most vital you can give. Share your health and holiday spirit with others.

Be a Red Cross blood donor this holiday season today from 2 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at King City United Church, or Friday at Bayview Secondary School from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

and municipal areas.

The province is leading a study and is working on the problem in this and other similar fast-changing areas.

But six years is far too long to let the matter drag on without action.

The Thornhill, Unionville and rural areas of Markham are being hit the hardest.

A Thornhill-Markham or Unionville resident with a 30,000 kilowatts-a-year all-electric home faces an annual bill \$141 higher than a Thornhill-Vaughan resident across Yonge Street.

The disparity will actually be \$281 a year for a few months, until Vaughan Hydro Commission raises its rates.

Smaller but similar differences exist within or between other towns and townships.

It's past the time when provincial leadership should have turned into action.



5 points for live Yule pet victory

By Lynda Nykor

The column last week by Sharon Brain brought back memories of Christmases past — especially of the one two years ago when Santa brought us a dog.

But, Sharon, I really do have to set you straight on a few points.

Number one: never buy a puppy and hang it from the mantle in a sock. That's DUMB!

What you do instead is find a dog that, when it puts its front paws on your shoulders, is a head taller than anyone else you know.

This definitely eliminates any thought of putting it in a sock.

Fringe benefits

It also gets you lots of fringe benefits, because the people you're getting it from bought it when it was 4" by 2" and they didn't know it would get to be 6' 8".

They're so delighted you'll give it a home they'll keep it till late Christmas Eve for you.

They'll promise to get all its shots, won't take a penny for it, and will throw in all bowls, bones, collars and leashes.

The prospect of being able to go back to using all of their four-room townhouse themselves, and not having to lease the lawn in a single bound each morning, has them giddy with delight.

Extra advantages

Secondly, you must make sure you have a household of company Christmas Eve when you go to collect said animal.

The cries of consternation from your guests effectively cover the noise of bringing the dog in.

The barking sounds can be explained to the children in terms of a guest who's one or two over his limit.

Number three: you have to know how to hide a dog till the next morning.

No big deal. You just sit up with it all night in a room with a strong lock.

Then make yourself sound very firm and cross when it make too much noise chewing up the furniture.

Deathly pale

Number four: You think your mother screamed and leaped when she saw your gerbils? At least they didn't follow her up onto the couch.

I bet she didn't turn that deadly shade of white, either.

The trick is to keep smiling and pretend everything's normal. After all, you can't go out and get something different at 6:30 Christmas morning.

And fifth, make sure you don't own a cat if you're getting a dog, or vice versa.

This is the main cause of families running up and down the street in pyjamas and slippers at 7 o'clock Christmas morning.

The chase is quite an impressive sight, though.

Once is enough

Actually, with a blanket of dog hair over everything for the 715th consecutive morning, a four-gallon bowl taking up a corner I'd love to put a plant in, and muddy paw prints in my kitchen floor, I wonder if there are a few points about the subject I may have missed.

Like your suggestion of buying a turkey instead.

Still, the dog has this skinny and these big floppy ears we can't resist.

As my husband says, she's the only one in the house who never talks back.

But I'm with you — this year it's strictly skates and goalie nets and a new pair of Lee cords. Once was definitely enough.

Letters Election coverage fine

Dear editor:

As an involved citizen of Vaughan, I wanted to congratulate you and your staff on the fine coverage your paper gave of the Dec. 6 elections.

In particular, the Dec. 1 article by Denise Romberg "Vaughan Split on Development" was probably the best piece of local political analysis in any of the York Region weeklies — and I read them all! Ms. Romberg laid out the issues unemotionally, factually and without bias, something that is at

times, all too rare, particularly during an election.

And now the people have spoken. What did they say?

In my opinion, the people have given the council a clear mandate to proceed with development — but cautiously.

All members of the previous council who had carried forward and initiated substantial development proposals were returned to office.

Councillors Cameron and Jackson, who were considered by many to be

anti-development, were returned with fewer votes than senior councillors and even newcomer Di Giannantonio.

That indicates to me the people want Cameron and Jackson there to watch development proposals carefully and see that they will protect present communities, creating attractive and livable new neighborhoods.

In other words, a balance has been achieved on council that will ensure development proceeds, but that all facets of it are examined and exposed

to view.

As far as the Maple theme park is concerned, it is evident that whatever the fears of the people of Maple, these were not shared by residents across the town.

Voters have told council members they must work for the greatest good for the greatest number even if this means going against the wishes of a small number of residents, i.e. the people of Maple.

(It was of course, never clearly demonstrated "the people" of Maple generally, oppose the park. For instance, no all-candidates meeting was requested for Maple.)

All this is not to say strenuous efforts must not be made to see Maple residents are shielded to the greatest possible extent from any possible ill effects of their proximity to the park.

It goes without saying too, that all residents of the town should be protected from any extraneous costs associated with the park.

I think we can trust our new council to accept responsibility for both these concerns.

I would also like to congratulate the people of Vaughan for coming out to the polls in larger numbers than for many years.

The percentage of voters (46 per cent I am told) is still abysmally low, however, and makes one wonder whether people really do believe in democracy.

In any event it is hoped those who did not vote realize they have no moral

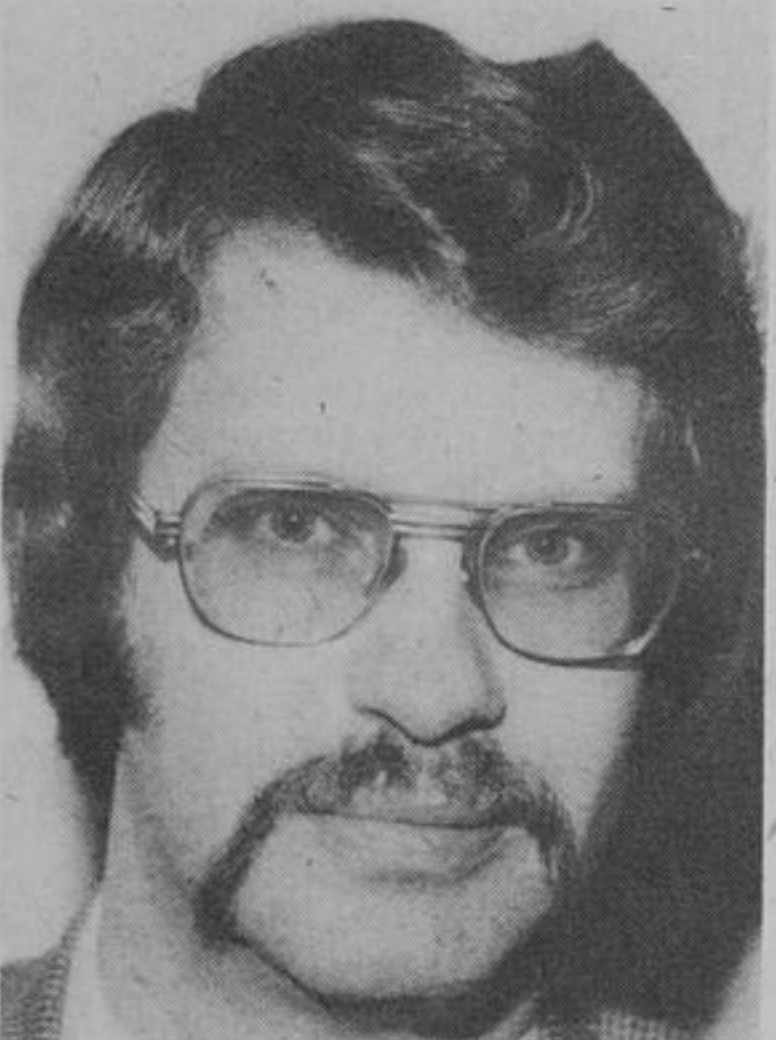
of "ineffectiveness".

At the annual conference of the Ontario Educational Research Council, Dec. 3-4, evaluation of students' progress, reading clinics, mathematics studies, modern languages education and many other studies in "the basics" were reported.

The most recurrent topic, however, was values education, with four papers presented by Ontario researchers.

The point clearly is that, regardless of the support for values education in the York Region, interest in and support of values education is both deep and wide across Ontario.

BRIAN BURNHAM, Chief research officer, York County board of education, Aurora, Ont.



Brian Burnham ... readers misled

The ministry has also placed a contract for further values education developmental work with the Halton board of education.

(That board has requested permission to use in its work the important considerations survey, a measure of moral reasoning power developed in 1974-76 in York County under a ministry grant.)

The ministry has also taken out an option on the publishing rights of the values education program guide developed in the Haldimand-Norfolk Region.

Also, the ministry is just now distributing to schools their new publication, The Reflective Approach to Values Education, "a product of extensive research, designed to stimulate community discussion," as a recent official release describes it.

Dr. Clive Beck and Dr. Edmund Sullivan of OISE are the authors of this work.

The last paragraph of The Liberal's article, attributing to Dr. Beck the statement "moral dilemma and group consensus discussions were not effective," is also in error.

Published studies by Beck and Sullivan, as well as those by this board, have shown just the opposite.

These methods have been shown to be at least as effective as presently used alternatives.

In studies with older students these methods have been found to increase learners' abilities to deal with difficult values questions.

In all fairness, researchers have said time and again that no single, short program is a foolproof method of producing moral behavior or complex valuing processes.

This caution seems to be what is often picked up and misrepresented as proof

3 school story errors

Dear editor:

The article "Values education loses moral support" (Nov. 24) contains three errors which might seriously mislead your readers.

I'm sure you will want them to be able to assess the actions of their elected officials on the basis of correct information.

The first sentence of the article says "Education Minister Thomas Wells recently withdrew all financial support from the values education programs in Ontario schools and Monday night York County board of education withdrew its moral support."

There are two errors here. As the rest of the article shows, the board did not withdraw "moral support."

Actually the board authorized a new values education committee, authorized a meeting with the minister "for the purpose of clarifying the interpretation of values education policy," and called for a moratorium on certain teaching methods until the board had adopted values education teaching guidelines.

The other error is that the ministry of education has increased rather than withdrawn its financial support of values education programs in Ontario schools.

The ministry continues its support, through the field centres of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, of pilot programs in co-operation with many school boards (e.g., Peterborough, Sudbury, London, Lakehead).

The ministry also continues its support of research by the OISE Moral Education Project centred in Toronto. Through its grants-in-aids of educational research the ministry recently funded values education projects in Scarborough.

Top student mistake made

Dear editor:

At the Richmond Hill High School commencement Charles Painter was named a top student.

A subsequent checking of marks reveals that on the best six subjects (the normal Year 5 Program) Karen Whillans obtained one more mark than Charles.

On behalf of the York County board of education I wish publicly to apologize to these two excellent students for any embarrassment this error may have caused either of them.

They both have earned the highest commendation.

It is the intention of the board to award all prizes for being "top student" to each of these young people.

DOUG ALLEN, chairman, 191 Laverock Ave., Richmond Hill, Ont.

Voter stress negligible

By Richard Luxton

I remember reading an American survey conducted by a consumer research group studying the buying habits of the average consumer when purchasing a major item.

If my memory is faithful, the average person for example, spends an average of \$625 for a color television.

During his shopping search he spends approximately 7½ hours comparing models, features, etc.

He will travel 3½ miles, spend an average of \$3.25 on meals and beverages.

In addition he will pass through what is termed a "medium" stress period four days prior to the television purchase and continuing until 1½ days afterward.

(A maximum stress period occurs when making a decision on a new job or buying a new house.)

Shopper works hard

Further expand this example to purchases of a car, vacuum cleaner, store, electric carving knife, etc.

It's obvious that over a period of a year a large amount of time and energy is used up before the shopper spends his hard-earned money.

Or so one is led to believe.

The average homeowner in Richmond Hill pays \$700 per year in taxes.

About 34 per cent of this goes to the town, 15 per cent to the region and 51 per cent to public education.



The guest spot

A topical column of opinion by our readers. Submissions should be no more than 800 words. Typed preferably.

Unlike the financial commitment toward a color television, tax money is given automatically.

Citizen works little

In other words, once tax money is given there is no apparent concern as to who, how, why or when it is spent.

For all intents and purposes it is given "carte blanche", so it seems. My wife and I attended both candidate meetings under the auspices of the Citizen Advisory Group at Richmond Hill High School and Oak Ridges Public School.

At the first meeting I counted about 72 people and at the second meeting about 54.

Of this combined total, several candidates commented that 65 per cent to 75 per cent were already committed voters.

That leaves a maximum of 44 uncommitted voters attending.

Let me pursue this further, if I may.

There are 23,643 eligible voters in Richmond Hill.

That means only half a per cent of voters (uncommitted or otherwise) were interested in hearing or knowing the candidates.

Assuming this same trend occurred, the Hillcrest Mall meeting would also be badly attended.

Disruptive force

We ourselves didn't attend the Hillcrest meeting, for as concerned voters we felt we might become a disruptive force.

The turnout Dec. 6 was a disappointing 43.7 per cent. A minority elects for the majority.

Needless to say, I am concerned about the continuing apathy of Richmond Hill residents.

4 conclusions

I can only conclude that:

(1) The majority of residents are planning a mass exodus.

(2) Residents on the whole have achieved the euphoria of perfection, happiness, contentment, love and peace with their lot. They've effected an enviable philosophy of "I don't give a damn!" Or else they're thinking along the lines of "Don't bother me... I'm all right, thank you very much!"

(3) The piddling contribution of \$700 toward local taxes is a small price for my piece (sic) of mind.

Or 4) The mental stress of buying a new microwave oven this week is far too great. Therefore the importance of a mere local election is ill-timed and thus a downright inconvenience.

Optimism difficult

I try to remain optimistic, but it's very hard.

History has proven time and time again that the individual will eventually be forced to make a personal stand.

Unfortunately history has also shown that in many instances the stand often comes too late.

Then people say, "If I only knew then what I know now... I would have done things differently."

Nothing changes.

In fact, in retrospect, I doubt very much if there will be many comments about all this next week.

Self commitment

It would need a personal commitment. And we all seem to agree, apparently, on that point.

It isn't in the character of Richmond Hill residents to collectively have an opinion on their investment in their future.

So the adage lives on. "The people get the government they deserve."

Long live Richmond Hill!

(Richmond Hill citizen Luxton resides at 22 Poplar Grove in Oak Ridges postal area. — Editor.)