The Liberal

10395 Yonge Street, Richmond Hill L4C 4Y6 Ontario

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York Police give district motorists a Christmas present

When 6,097 spot checks result in only 15 impaired charges, the people of York Region must be doing something right.

The York Regional Police statistics for December, released Monday, mirror something we've been noticing over the holiday season: the days of the wa-hoo drunken driver seem to be coming to an end.

We've all had our holiday parties and enjoyed our share of drinks. But somewhere along the line there seems to be an increased sense of responsibility when it comes to hitting the road "under the influence".

And the figures certainly back up our feelings.

But not only has this holiday season shown us something positive about our fellow York Region residents, it's given us a different view of the men in blue.

Often pictured as trap setters and quota seekers, the York Regional Police came out of December looking pretty good.

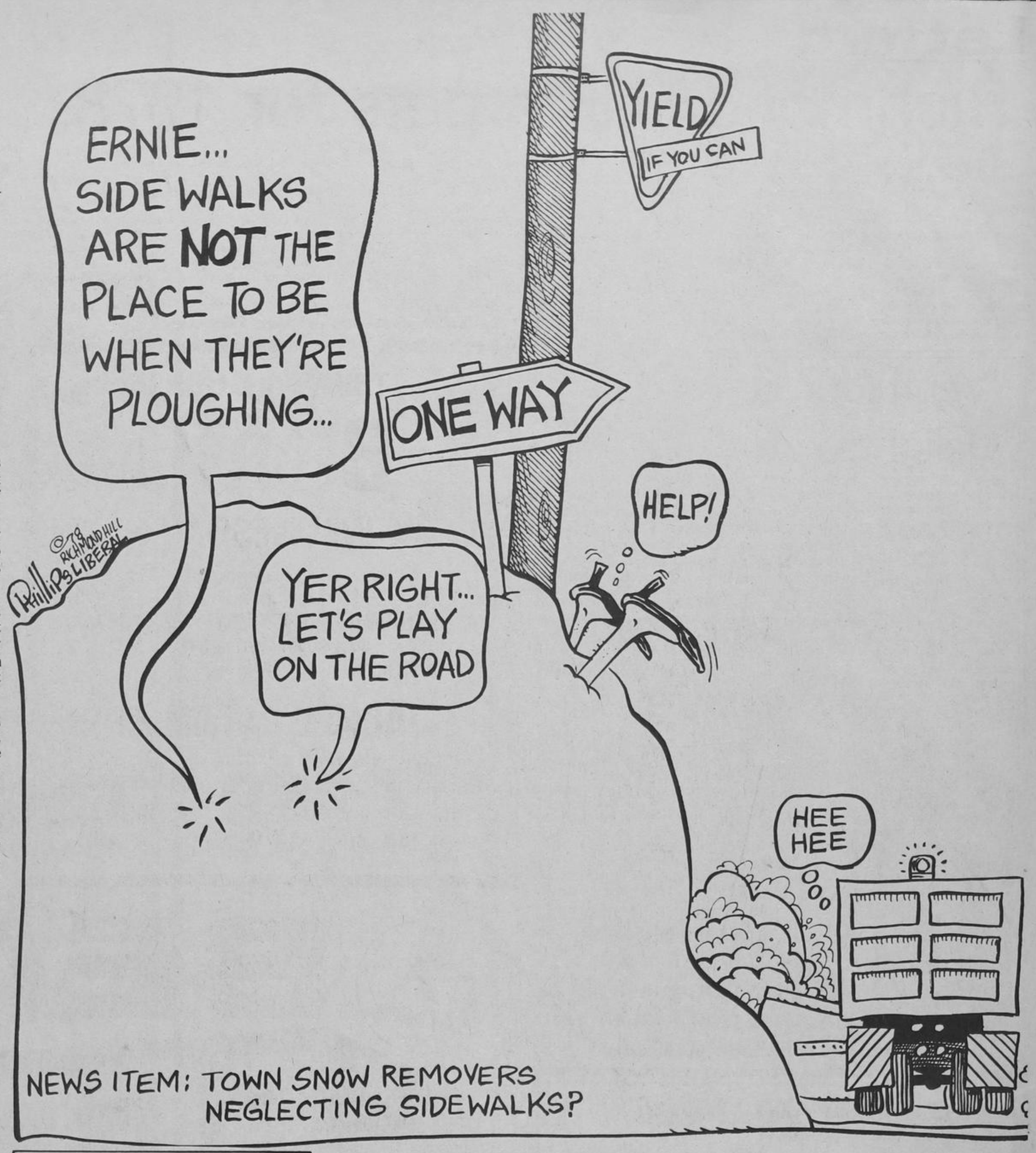
Of those 6,097 vehicles they stopped, they found 615 people who didn't have their seat belts fastened.

Now, we all know that's a pretty sure way to get a ticket but they didn't issue one. Instead, they issued 615 cautions, which hopefully got the point across but didn't cost the drivers a cent.

For other misdemeanors, which also usually carry a penalty, they issued only warnings once again.

In fact, only 29 charges, other than impaired were issued.

We'd like to thank the police for their Christmas gift of kindness to the people of the region. And as for the people, congratulations for a healthy, hopeful holiday attitude.



Letters

Police were doing their job, she says

In answer to Jack Ward's letter stating it's a shame the police caused a breakdown to the Christmas Concert at Oak Ridges Public School, may I say, please, Mr. Ward, put the blame where it belongs and not on the police.

No one needs "No Parking" signs to make them realize that parking on both sides of a street will cause driving and walking problems to others.

Especially on a side street during winter.

A good example of this you can find at our post office where there is a good parking lot for the cars but even in nice summer weather you will find the lazy, selfish driver who just has to park in the driveway causing tie ups and inconvenience to others who want to use the post office.

The "No Parking" sign there does not mean a thing to these people.

No, Mr. Ward, put the blame where it belongs and not on the police who are just doing their job.

Did you ever consider that by the police correcting that hazardous parking, they may have saved a child from being seriously hurt or killed?

Who would you blame then?

Most likely the police for letting such parking take place.

Margaret Davidson
35 Bond Crescent
Oak Ridges, Ont.

Prisoner is seeking penpals, friendship

I am presently incarcerated in the Correctional Medical and Reception Center at Columbus, Ohio.

I've been here and locked up for two years now and receive no mail.

It gets very lonely when you don't have any contact with the outside world.

It gets pretty depressing, too, when at mail call you never hear your name and number called.

So, I ask you, sir, if there is a way that I may get a letter in the personals of your newspaper where I may find pen pals and friendship through writing.

As this is the only freedom we have in prison, this would put a little more meaning and insight in this time that I have left to do.

If you can imagine prison life already, then you would know how lonely it does get when you don't have contact in the outside world and why I come to you to seek a little help that would truly be appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your time in reading my letter and your patience in helping me.

James T. Gatewood
146159
Box 511 C.M. & R.C.
Columbus, Ohio

Name "Vaseline" is a trademark

We are writing you regarding your Winter Camping column of November 30, 1977, appearing in The Liberal.

While we thank you for the mention of our product, we regret that the brand name reference is incorrect.

Properly used, our name should read "Vaseline" Petroleum Jelly, or if your policy forbids the use of brand name, then simply petroleum jelly.

The "Vaseline" trademark not only applies to wares of petroleum jelly, but also to hair tonic, "Intensive Care" Lotion, cream, baby powder, baby oil, bath beads, bath oil, to name a few of "Vaseline" brand products.

Your acknowledgement of this letter will be greatly appreciated.

J. Sobel,
Trademark Department,
Chesebrough-Pond's (Canada) Ltd.,
Markham.

ED. NOTE: To clarify what this is all about, The Liberal used the word "Vaseline" but failed to capitalize the "V" and add Petroleum Jelly. Like "Thermos" and "Ski-doo" and hundreds of other words, "Vaseline" has become a household word, and we tend to forget the trademark rules. We're sorry.

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AUDITED PAID CIRCULATION ABC

By Bob Rice

Robbie a good police chief

For the past month or so there have been several articles in the paper regarding possible misconduct by members of York Regional Police.

The York North Law Association has set up a committee to investigate reports of such happenings and in particular involving the way that young offenders are treated by some officers on the force.

On the other side of the fence, Chief Bruce Crawford has been reported to be cool to suggestions of a probe into the complaints but has indicated a willingness to co-operate with the members of the legal profession in the more informal atmosphere of a 'round-table' meeting.

I guess that it is just another sign of the times that such stories are becoming more commonplace on the front pages of our dailies and weeklies and surely this will not be the last of such ilk.

It certainly was a heck of a lot different when I was growing up in the Hill.

As a matter of fact, when our family moved north from the big city, Richmond Hill didn't even have a police force.

The first officer that I remember was 'Robbie' Robbins who was a member of the Ontario Provincial Police. Robbie was posted to protect our small population and, if I recall correctly, lived in a white frame house just west of Yonge Street on Centre.

The atmosphere of the village was small and protective with everyone looking out for each other and Constable Robbins was the hub of the wheel.

Most of the small problems were handled without the need of calling in the law but, when it was deemed necessary, a quick phone call or fleet-footed youth brought the man in blue to the scene.

ONE OF US

Most of us young people were in awe of Robbie. Through his visits to the school and his habit of taking time to say hello to anyone who crossed his path, he became as much a member of the community as had the rest of us.

Not that Robbie didn't command the respect of his office . . . to be sure. When one of us strayed just the slightest bit from the good ol' straight and narrow, a stern faced Constable Robbins would confront us with a lecture that would leave us shaking in our boots with a parched feeling in our throats.

If memory serves me correctly, there was an interval of time during which Robbie was replaced by another member of the OPP. I can't recall the duration of his absence but I do know that he was missed.

1957 was a big year for Richmond Hill. On January 1 we officially became a town, on July 1 our own radio station went on the air and, with our growth, came our own police force.

Being unwise in the ways of politics and government, I don't know if Robbie was asked to be Chief or if he was the successful candidate amongst many but, be that as it may, Constable R.P. Robbins was now Chief R.P. Robbins.

GOOD CHOICE

Having just passed into my teens, I, for one, was pleased with the selection. Some of the other members of the new force were Wes Berseth, Teddy Green, Gord Bacon, Ted O'Brien and Ken Sider. If I've forgotten some of the others I hope they will forgive me.

Snazzy new offices and cells were constructed in the bowels of the Municipal Building and new members were added to the payroll as the Town grew.

As teens in the early sixties we knew all of the police by name and, with one or two exceptions, had a good rapport with the men. Oh, there was the odd rap on the knuckles for taking a turn too quickly or maybe leaving a little bit too much rubber at the intersection of Centre and Yonge but, for the most part, we got along very well.

DISRESPECTFUL

In those years that brought direction to our lives we may have not always agreed with the laws of the land but we had respect for the job that these men had to do.

To call an officer 'cop' was slightly disrespectful and to us, a pig was something that lived on one of the nearby farms.

Maybe there is something wrong with the way that certain problems are handled by today's officers but on the other hand, I think there is also something wrong with the attitude that many of us, especially the youth, have toward the members of the force.

All that I wish to add to what I have just written is this . . . if what happened last Hallowe'en in Aurora had happened in this town back in the mid-fifties . . . we not only would have been looked down upon by the police but, more importantly, by our parents as well.

The ol' Millpond Philosopher once said . . . 'don't be in a hurry to lable others . . . until you deserve the label you want for yourself.'

Letter

Town doesn't need new firehall

Mr. Darcy McKeough
Treasurer of Ontario

Dear Mr. McKeough.

Regarding the difference (about $100) between municipal taxes per household, as defined in your letter to me of December 12, and taxes based on an average of taxpayers, as quoted in the Aurora newspaper, I see little point in arguing the matter.

You take and quote the lower of these two figures as being 'more useful'.

More useful for what?

I take the higher of these figures as being 'more actual', since it represents what I, and anyone else with whom I discuss taxes here, actually pays.

I am reading again in the Globe & Mail report (August 24) of your explicit and toughly worded warning to municipal leaders to restrain spending.

I notice in the letter of December 12 your verbal expressions of concern over municipal spending; and that you understand my concern about the burden of property taxes, especially on senior citizens.

The mayor and council of Aurora also go into this concern aria, or sacrament, from time to time.

Of course, they keep on spending.

They are busy just now pushing thro' a new firehall, which was planned and agreed upon in secret sessions.

With plans well advanced it was at last exposed to the dumbbells, the ones that get stuck with the bill.

This town needs a new firehall about as urgently as I need a brassiere. (Come up and see me some time.)

So I wrote my objection to the OMB, and in due course received their acknowledgement (October 17) thanking me for 'taking the trouble to write', and advising me to send an objection to the Aurora town clerk, which I did on October 21 (unacknowledged).

Now I read in the local press (December 21) — as best as I can understand the reporting — that the OMB has either approved the project, or just approved a capital expenditure of $400,000, the estimated cost of the proposed firehall.

Tenders are being prepared, architects plans have been approved.

At the moment there appears to be no firm decision as to whether this $400,000 is to be borrowed, appropriated from expected incoming lot levies, stolen, won in a lottery, — or removed forcibly by municipal grab-cranes from Aurorans' pockets.

Right now this town already owes about $3 million, half of which is for a so-called industrial park which remains very unindustrial — has done for four years, during which **NOTHING HAS BEEN PAID OFF THE LOAN.**

We also have a very unfinished library, the basement of which has looked like a gravel pit for the past two years.

I suppose the words 'restraint' and 'concern' now have totally different meanings to those given in my old dictionary.

But if this be not so, could you please tell me how, in present circumstances, the OMB (which is a division, organ, arm, or whatever, of your Ontario Conservative government which is preaching restraint), can approve this new and unnecessary spending of a further $400,000 of the monies of Aurora?

Assuming that the words 'restraint' and 'concern' have any meaning other than poppycock.

As a brief comment — not irrelevant — on the importance of people in Aurora as compared with the importance of buildings, our mayor stated recently (in answer to complaints) that the cost of keeping people's driveways free from plugging by municipal snowplows would be prohibitive.

Consequently, as some sort of Christmas gesture of goodwill, the municipal snowplows came, scraped the accumulated packed ice and snow from the streets, and threw it, like so much glacial moraine, two feet high in our driveways.

Being only discharged from hospital for abdominal surgery in mid-December, I had all the fun of enjoying myself right up to Boxing Day, whittling away at these concrete-like chunks.

And on December 23, 14 days after being closed by the last big storm, our sidewalks were at last plowed out, enabling the feeble old and thoughtless young to get back on them off the hazardous icy roads.

I suggest to you that if the OMB can do no better than it is now doing in imposing — or rather, not imposing — monetary restraint on the Good-time Charleys of municipal councils, your government, which has faltered twice in successive elections, may well fail in the next.

Sid H. Britton
84 Hillview
Aurora