

Students study sex comics in York

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As York Region parents ponder how they can have more say in a proposed sex education and family life program, school board chairman Don Cousens admits there have been some irregular teaching practices going on in high school classrooms.

According to a former trustee, at least one teacher at Stouffville High School got his or her hands on a set of American comic books and used them as reference material.

At the time, students were told not to mention they were even being used in the class.

The comics, "Ten Heavy Facts About Sex", "VD Clap Trap" and "How to Protect Yourself from becoming an Unwanted Parent", were written and drawn by a Syracuse, New York, professor.

"The comics basically support promiscuity," said Thornhill Trustee John Stephens. "They seem to vvy with the students to have sex before they're really ready for it."

The board has a formal policy for the acceptable use of textbooks and teaching aids. It is unlikely the three booklets would make the list of standard material, though.

"I have already asked Sam Chapman (Director of Education) to look into the use of non-approved publications or teaching methods," said Mr. Cousens.

About three years ago a similar practice was discovered in a North York high school.

Parents there demanded the books be barred from the class and had to approach the administration directly before anything was done.

In the known York Region incident, the principal of Stouffville High put an immediate stop to the use of the books once he found out what was happening.

The comics (called Zing Comix) take a light, almost farcical look at questions concerning sexual thoughts, intercourse, masturbation, homosexuality, birth control and general male-female attitudes towards sex.

Using caricatures that are generally unfair to the female anatomy, they also address themselves to some of the more moral and judgemental issues of sexual behavior.

In Ten Heavy Facts, under a section about abortion, the writer claims "it is more moral to have an abortion than to bring an unwanted child into the world." It also claims the operation needed for an abortion is "painless" but never describes what the process is or at what point a fertilized egg is recognized to be a human life.

The other two books concern themselves with counselling students on how not to get pregnant — the application of condoms, diaphragms, IUD's (intra-uterine device) and

spermicidal foams.

They also touch on how girls should handle boys who "want to go too far" — sexual appetites, perversions and how to avoid and identify venereal disease.

The curriculum committee has begun work on guidelines for the new family life — sex education program. However, fears of many community and parent groups that the recom-

mendations on sex passed by the board last November are too broad, are still being expressed. The use of such questionable materials is a case in point. "You couldn't really blame the

teacher who got caught at Stouffville," said former trustee Eric Baker. "The old guidelines were so vague they didn't actually say such methods were restricted."

The question is, will the committee and any outside help, be able to make the guidelines specific enough to rule out individual interpretation by teachers.

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Winter Carnival time brings the best in people, especially the carnival princesses. The five princesses from Langstaff Secondary

School are left to right: Debby Spenceley — Grade 11; Lesley Hoare — Grade 10; Lee Bromley — Grade 9; Carmen D'Agostino —

Grade 12 and Donna Francis — Grade 13. (Liberal Photo by Bruce Hogg).

Library renovation nearly complete

Cement blocks on skids outside the main branch of Richmond Hill Public Library are not the beginning of renovations, but rather the finishing touches.

The provincial government has recently put an emphasis on providing services to the handicapped and Wintario has supplied \$85,000 to the Richmond Hill Library to adapt the building so it might be used by those in wheelchairs.

Already ramps at the front entrance and a new door directly west of the main door have been installed.

By the end of February an elevator will be finished immediately east of the present circulation desk.

The pit for this elevator has been dug and cemented and the blocks out back are for the finishing block-work which will

begin this week.

This elevator will give the handicapped access to the lower level where the audio visual department, the Gordon MacLaren Auditorium and the washrooms are located.

Betty Rowland, Chief Librarian, said there is already a program working in conjunction with the York Central Association for the Mentally Retarded and she felt there is a definite need for access to the lower level.

Up to this time Richmond Hill's shut-in-service has provided books to many handicapped individuals who now look forward to using the building themselves.

A spring opening program is planned, said Ms. Rowland, when the library will invite all handicapped in the area, so they know the service is available.

Name returned to deceased

It appears SIN is out and names are in.

That was the decision by York Region's health and social services committee last week, on the insistence of Markham Regional Councillor Alma Walker.

The SIN (for Social Insurance Numbers) are used on reports coming to the committee regarding deaths or transfers from York Manor, the home for the aged owned and operated by the region.

"People should at least be listed as a name and not a

number when they die," Councillor Walker said. "They should have some dignity. When you die you should have a name."

Authority must be received from the committee and regional council for a release of assets for people who die while residents of York Manor.

The policy has been to use SIN to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

However, the committee agreed that names will be used on future reports involving deceased residents of York Manor.

Community Pulse

Git yerself a bed...

The women of the Block Parent Association challenge any woman's group to take part in the Annual Richmond Hill Winter Carnival Bed Race. Margaret Shaw, in charge of arrangements for Block Parents said their group is already getting ideas and plans together for the big event.

Carnival hockey begins

Yesterday was the first of 22 games in the Winter Carnival Primary School Hockey Competition. Seven public schools will compete and the final game will be played on Mill Pond February 10 during carnival weekend.

Hill carnival planning shifting into high gear

Buy a button to support the best family entertainment in town.

Marg Barrow, chairman of publicity for Richmond Hill Winter Carnival committee, said the traditional Ookpik is now on sale at

schools, banks and miscellaneous retail stores throughout Richmond Hill.

Carnival weekend, February 8, 9, 10 and 11, Richmond Hill's Rotarians will be selling the buttons at Mill Pond, the site of the

annual carnival.

This year the cost is an even \$1 and all money goes to support the 11th annual four-day event.

The little Ookpik buttons have been marked with a number this year that will

make the buyer eligible for prizes which Mrs. Barrow said might include a color television, a weekend at the Skyline Hotel or a CB radio.

At this time the carnival committee is negotiating details such as these and the

hundreds of others that are involved in an endeavor such as Richmond Hill's winter carnival.

A weekend of competition, races, endurance tests and just plain fun is being arranged.

Langstaff Public School may close

Langstaff Public School, which has been the site of an elementary school for 164 years, could close in June.

A special meeting January 18 at 8 p.m. has been called by the administration of the York County Board of Education to explain plans for the closing to parents.

School superintendent Ken McDonald will present the plan and Vaughan school trustees Jim Corcoran and Donald Cameron will attend.

Mrs. Pat Hartley a parent of Langstaff, said the closing has been fought off successfully once before and she is hoping that it can be done again.

She is a member of the committee of parents that is studying the problem of declining enrollments across Thornhill "but I'm not sure I want to be."

The enrollment at Langstaff with "more than 80 students" has shrunk to the point where grades

are doubled up under one teacher, but it has a library, gymnasium and large playing field.

Not only students from the Uplands subdivision, but also from the Boyle subdivision and Garden Avenue in Richvale, and from the Royal Orchard Boulevard area attend the school.

Mrs. Hartley said some parents from outside the area send their children to Langstaff because of the low pupil-teacher ratio and children like it because of the school spirit.

One of the earliest Thornhill Area Settlers, Nicholas Cober, donated land to build a school on Yonge Street in 1810 but the War of 1812 delayed construction until 1815. The original school was sold and moved to a new site in Vaughan in the 1880's to make way for a brick one in Thornhill.

The site has been used for public education longer than any other under the jurisdiction of the

county board.

Mrs. Hartley said that it was thought the school could be kept open to take students from the Thornhill-Vaughan development. But because the Thornhill-Vaughan plan has not started as quickly as expected, the school

has run out of time.

Thornhill Public School, and Baythorn Public School, both of which have enrollment problems, are slated to take students from Thornhill-Vaughan, according to the board's new plan.

Thornhill has the added advantage of bordering the planning area. The official plan change was approved by the province in September, 1977, to allow a development for 75,000 people, but not a single house has been started yet.

Children get chance to name new park

A recommendation that the proposed new 132-acre town park site at 18th Avenue and Leslie Street be named "Richmond Hill Green" failed to work up any enthusiasm at the parks and recreation committee meeting last week.

It was one of three names

bandied about by the committee with the other two, Richmond Hill Park and Richmond Park, also failing to arouse any local fervor. After some discussion it was decided to throw the naming of the new park out for grabs by asking the various schools to come up with some likely names

via their pupils in the form of a competition.

"We might as well let the children have a shot at it," commented Committee Chairman Mike Bernie as the naming of the park was deferred.

The "Richmond Hill Green" name was recommended by last year's committee.

Omitted was a fourth name offered as a possibility by the Richmond Hill Historical Society, Boynton Park.

It had been pointed out by the historical society that the site of the property had been in possession of the Boynton family for more than 100 years. The society emphasized it was not recommending the park be called "Boynton".

Monday afternoon in the council chamber

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Fledgling Councillor Dave Amos is in the process of doing a survey.

He is contacting people in his ward to ask their opinion of what time they would like council meetings held.

Personally, Councillor Amos said he felt one afternoon and one evening meeting each month would help many citizens gain access to their council.

"Giving people a choice is what democracy is all about," said Councillor Amos.

There is a very large segment of the population of the Town of Richmond Hill, said Councillor Amos, who cannot make evening meetings — people who are on shift work, senior citizens who do not care to walk on the streets at night, and students.

"Voter apathy starts at the high school level," commented Councillor Amos.

The Ward 1 councillor said he had contacted the clerk's department and found statistics that indicate the average attendance at council meetings by the public was 10 people and said he felt that was a sad comment that out of a population of 35,000 only 10 would attend.

He pointed out that with regular evening

meetings there were only two daytime committee meetings and 10 evening meetings involving both council and council committees.

If this was changed to one afternoon meeting each month it would only alter the situation to three afternoon meetings and nine evening meetings.

Councillor Amos said by having afternoon meetings council would gain accessibility to staff during business hours which would speed up matters.

He said he felt that sometimes decisions were deferred because there is no access to information in the evenings.

He said he had talked with the clerk's department about this point also and found that additional costs of maintaining staff at council meetings was about \$500 per year.

"An excellent opportunity to practice financial restraint," he said.

The councillor also felt that council members should not lose sight of the fact that councillors are compensated to offset time lost at their regular occupation.

He voiced the opinion that "no objections to time commitment were requested by any councillor during the recent election."

Confusion reigns.

The next Richmond Hill council meeting, scheduled to be held at 2:15 p.m. January 15 will now be held at 7:45 p.m. January 15, preceded by a one half hour question and answer period.

The time change is a result of a motion introduced by Councillor for Ward 3, John Birchall, reintroducing the issue of time for regular council meetings.

December 18, council passed a motion to hold half its regular meetings in the afternoon and half in the evening.

Mayor Dave Schiller, Councillor Birchall and councillors Duffy and Burnie voted against the time change saying they felt the decision "destroyed" public participation they had been working for during the past four years.

Councillor Birchall said he brought up the issue for review hoping to "maximize public input" and believing strongly the decision made by council in December was made "quickly and without deliberation".

The Ward 3 councillor said he had missed only one meeting in four years (due to a death in the family) but as it stands now there was a distinct possibility that in the future he and other members of council would have to miss other meetings because of commitments to business.

"This would eliminate representation on issues for the councillor's particular ward," he said.

By switching meetings to the afternoon,

said Councillor Birchall, at least three members of council would be forced to miss some important decisions.

In Councillor Birchall's opinion public participation and openness of government have increased by "leaps and bounds" in the past four years.

"When council's decisions were not in the individual's or group's favor, they knew they had been given a fair and open hearing," said Councillor Birchall.

He drew his fellow council member's attention particularly to the number of applicants for citizen committees in Richmond Hill, which was higher than ever before.

"People want to participate in their town government," he said. "And we want people to be involved in their town — don't we?"

After his address, Councillor Birchall received a rare round of applause from a number of supporters in the audience.

Councillor Birchall proposed a motion to reverse the decision of council but Councillor Gord Rowe asked the matter be deferred to the next meeting as the proposer of the original motion Lou Wainwright and Councillor Bill Corcoran who supported him were not present.

Both were holidaying in Florida.

Although the next meeting of council is slated to be an afternoon meeting, because of the technicality of the motion and because Councillor Birchall could not be present in the afternoon, the next meeting of council will be January 15 at night.

Andy hits the deck

Former Ward 1 councillor Andy Chateauvert made quite an impact last week in his first appearance as a member of the Richmond Hill Parks and Recreation Committee.

He fell out of his chair. Chateauvert was sitting near the edge of the slightly raised floor area of the council chambers when a leg of his chair slipped over it.

Down went the chair and Chateauvert with it. He jumped lithely to his feet and the meeting continued.