



What can we tell you? It simply hasn't been the year for Richmond Hill Works Department when it comes to clearing snow from ponds. The latest tractor dunking took place last

Tuesday at the Mill Pond, despite frigid temperatures and thick ice. It's the third in the series.

(Liberal photo by Bruce Hogg)

Separate school budget may increase \$3 million

Separate School ratepayers could be in for a bit of a shock if the first draft of the board's budget is any indication of what their final municipal tax bill will be.

It's still early to be talking about substantial rises in the mill rate but

because of increased costs, new schools and additions, inflation and declining support from the province, the board's preliminary budget has jumped to \$17.1 million from last year's final figure of \$14.4 million or about 15.8 per cent.

The largest chunk of

these funds (approximately 60 per cent) will be paid out in teacher salaries and fringe benefits. That's not unusual, but there are a number of figures that have changed this year, those necessary to calculate the board's ordinary expenditures and recognized extraordinary expenditures and ultimately the local levy to taxpayers.

The Ministry of Education has increased the ordinary expenditure per pupil from \$1,299 to \$1,409 at the elementary level. It now allows \$1,983 for every secondary student. The Separate board will get a bit of break since the ministry is also allowing it to give its Grades 9 and 10 students a weighting factor of 12.5 per cent — recognizing they should not be calculated with the rest of the elementary pupils. That factor was 10 per cent last year. This lets the board artificially increase its total enrolment to submit a longer list of recognized ordinary expenditures.

The other half of the equation comprises the equalized mill rate, which all school boards in Ontario must apply to their respective jurisdictions. Last year, the figure was 7.986 mills and when it was multiplied by the amount of assessment the board has obtained from surrounding properties (also equalized) a yield of the mill rate was obtained.

The province has increased the value of equalized mills five per cent to 8.406. In theory this means the board should be able to get a higher yield on its equalized assessment. However, the province has only increased its total general legislative grants by 4.27 per cent over last year. That translates to almost \$2.1 billion to Ontario school boards.

"Without changing the equalized mill rate, the cost to the taxpayers would increase an automatic 5.34 per cent because of reduced provincial support for

education," said Superintendent of Business Administration Ed Joyce.

To figure out how much of the board's costs will be footed by the province, you just subtract the yield of the mill rate from the total expenditure. There is also the question of extraordinary expenditures (debt charges, student transportation) but the board gets for those.

To get an idea of how the budget should change compared to last year, the ministry supported the Catholic board's costs to the tune of 53.4 per cent. In 1975, that level of support was 61.4 per cent. Considering that the last

budget was up over 8 per cent in total, one can see the likelihood of at least as much of an increase this year.

Ratepayers were tagged with an extra 1.19 mills (an extra \$1.19 for \$1,000 of assessment) last year, bringing the rate to 12.64 mills. The board managed to get \$2.3 million in taxes for its ordinary expenditures and the ministry made up another \$8.5 million in grants. There were also extraordinary expenditures of \$2.6 million.

The board's management committee began looking at the budget last night and will do so regularly until it pares it down to the level it can.

Some sculptures better than ever, this judge says

Five Richmond Hill families created snow sculptures in their yards for Richmond Hill Winter Carnival and one of the judges, Doug Allen, said three of the five were better than he had ever seen before.

The winner for the private citizen snow sculpture was a mother and son combination.

Eight-year-old Sean and his mother Marilyn Izzard of Bathurst Street created an eight-foot high replica of the carnival bullet — in full color.

"It all started when I was reading last week's

Liberal," said Mrs. Izzard, "and the idea was Kevin's"

(Kevin Izzard is Deputy Chief of Richmond Hill's Fire Department).

Mrs. Izzard said it took her and Sean at least 15 hours to construct the replica and then paint it with tempera paints.

The Begg family of Leisure Lane with a model of a polar bear and the Rasmussen family's ice castle on Trench Street received honourable mention.

In general, Mr. Allen said he was disappointed with the school snow sculpture entries made at Mill Pond.

"The quality and the quantity were both rather poor," he said.

Except Pleasantville Public School, whose effort Mr. Allen described as "tremendous".

Pleasantville was the winner of the public school contest with three entries, a frog, a turtle and a boat.

The high schools barely made enough entries to secure the number of prizes to be awarded. Winners are listed on page A-2.

The judge said these entries were "not bad, but nothing compared with what they could have been".

In future years Mr. Allen said he hoped the snow sculpture contest would be more organized and get more publicity before the season so that both schools and private citizens would start dreaming up ideas early.

35,000 chickens die in blaze

Nearly 35,000 chickens worth \$64,000 perished in a fire last Friday afternoon when their barn burned to the ground.

The building at Jane Street and Major Mackenzie Drive in Maple, is owned by Maple View Farms and leased to T.M. Spratt Limited, Hemmo Engelage, 45, who has a house on the adjacent property and managed the small chicken farm, said he was nearly overcome by smoke and flames.

"I was just walking inside when I realized the place was filled with

smoke. The fire spread like crazy because the shed is made of wood and plywood," he said.

He claimed it wasn't possible to save any of the birds and that he has no idea of how much damage was done. He now has no water supply because a tank inside the coop was also destroyed.

Mr. Engelage isn't sure what he'll do next, but he figures the company he works for will give him other responsibilities. He has lived in the house with his family at 10,150 Jane Street for four years.

Neighbors said the structure which was razed had been standing for 10 years.

It was insured and Mr. Engelage expected the insurance adjuster the same day.

Two large, vertical grain feeders next to the coop were undamaged thanks to the efforts of the

Vaughan Fire Department, who were able to extinguish the threatening flames quickly in -20 degree (Celsius) weather. Cause is believed to be faulty propane heaters.

Preliminary estimates of total loss from the destruction are put at \$100,000.

Charter Lions member, Kjell Styrmo, 78, dies

Kjell Styrmo, an Oak Ridges resident for 40 years, died Sunday, February 11, at his home in Oak Ridges.

Mr. Styrmo was born March 13, 1900, in Norway and came to Canada in 1925, where he married his wife, Agnes.

They were engaged in Norway and married in Toronto.

He worked in British Columbia before settling in Oak Ridges in 1938.

Kjell was a charter member of the Oak Ridges Lions when the organization was formed in April, 1950.

Through the years, he had 100 per cent attendance, except for his recent illness, and illness is the only exception for perfect attendance.

Mr. Styrmo was honored by the Masons and the Lions at special services.

His funeral is at 1:30 p.m. today from

Thompson's Funeral Home in Aurora.

He is survived by his

wife, Agnes and son Peter, who lives in Aurora.



KJELL STYRMO

CORL grant aids library

A grant from the Central Ontario Regional Library System has enabled the Richmond Hill Public Library to offer the community a wide range of special programs to celebrate the International Year of the Child.

Funding was assessed in the basis of one cent per capita making a total grant of \$350.

The year long program of activities and special events in all three

branches, Main Library, Richvale and Charles Connor, will include activities to suit children of all ages.

Events range from puppet shows and film festivals to turtle races and the excitingly creative, two day "Clay Play Workshop".

Pre-registration is necessary for some of the events, so please be sure to study your copy of the program listings which are inserted in your Liberal this week.

Police Briefs

HOT CAR IN ACCIDENT

On February 6 at 11:50 p.m. two men stole a car from the Colonial Chev-Olds car lot on Davis Drive in Newmarket. The car was driven north on Yonge Street in a dangerous manner and near Upper Canada Mall a motor vehicle collision occurred. The two men fled the scene.

Arrested and charged with theft over \$200, possession over \$200, dangerous driving and failing to remain is David Scott Powell, 17, of Marlin Court in Newmarket.

COTTAGE DAMAGED

Between February 1 and February 10 William McClintock's summer residence at Jane Street and King Sideroad was broken into.

The damage done to the kitchen and living room, including the removal of a stereo receiver was estimated at \$4,000.

JEWELRY, STEREO STOLEN

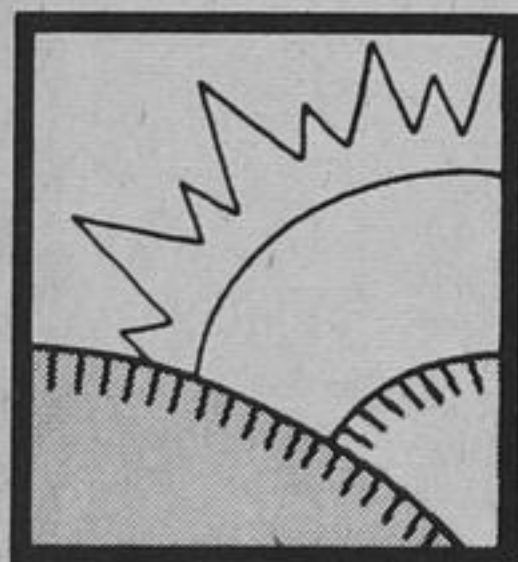
On February 8 Daniel Dridzic's house on Church Street in Richmond Hill was entered illegally through a bathroom window.

Stereo equipment, a television and assorted jewelry worth an estimated \$1,000 were removed. Police believe the suspect may be driving a gold two-door Buick.

WOODBIDGE MAN HEART VICTIM

At 12:30 p.m. on February 10 Johannes Sturkenbroom, 59, was found dead in the bedroom of his residence on Highway 7 in Woodbridge. He was pronounced dead at 2:10 p.m. by Dr. Devline, who determined the cause of death as a heart attack.

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