

# Once backed Elvis, Hill singer killed

A Richmond Hill man, who was once a back-up singer for Elvis Presley, was killed last Tuesday when the car he was driving flipped over several times off the Stouffville Road near the Sixth Concession.

Thirty-year-old Ed Wideman had been on his way to a show at the Four Seasons Hotel in Toronto to make some last-minute checks on sound equip-

ment for another man he sang with — Ronnie Prophet.

He sang bass for the Prophet group for four years on a CTV show called Grand Old Country.

Mr. Wideman owned Spectrum Audio and he did all the sound engineering for Prophet while he was on the road, at least when systems weren't pre-arranged, said Mr. Prophet.

"He was a fantastic singer, the

best bass singer in Canada. The group of us were just like brothers — I was very sorry to hear this had happened," he said.

Earl Reesor, 22, who was a passenger in the car, escaped with injuries and was admitted to Sunnybrook Medical Centre in critical condition.

Mr. Prophet plans to continue doing business with Spectrum Audio, which he figures will now

be run by Mrs. Wideman.

Mr. Wideman had also been the sound engineer for a regular country music show produced by CFGM, "Opry North". At one time, he sang for a gospel group called The Stamps.

He lived on Penwick Crescent, in Richvale and originally came from Stouffville.

The funeral was held Friday afternoon.



You too can produce a bunny just like this after taking a series of classes offered by the Richmond Hill Family Y. Roddick The Magician, otherwise known as Rod McLeish, a magician for 45

years, has offered his expertise to teach interested citizens at the Family Y centre. See the story, Page C-5. (Liberal photo by Bruce Hogg)

# THE RICHMOND HILL Liberal

A Metrospan Community Newspaper Wednesday, March 7, 1979 20 Cents 28 pages

## School board wants \$27 more from you

A special meeting of the York Board of Education Monday night made it clear this year's budget won't come in under its first draft level of \$86.1 million.

While that figure may sound high, the level of assessment has increased by 8.2 per cent so local ratepayers can expect an average jump of \$27 to \$32 in taxes for homes assessed at \$20,000.

The board, which made no cuts

during its initial collective look at the budget, decided on a democratic approach whereby each standing committee will be allowed input on levels of spending that affect their respective areas.

It was Finance Committee Chairman Don Cameron's idea to relegate responsibility for recommendations to each committee in hope that concrete proposals can be ready for

another special board session March 15.

The intent is to finalize the budget at the regular meeting of March 26 — the last possible date the board has before its requests to the Ministry of Education must be in.

After Director Sam Chapman outlined the basic features of the grant system and had staff explain the budgeting process and different accounts, trustees learned there are a number of items not yet included in the first draft.

Some of these expenditures must be made:

- trustees approved an increase in mileage allowances for board employees (13.5 cents — kilometre up to 8,000 kilometres and 12.5 cents over 8,000) which will cost 25,000;
- last year's salary budget deficit was \$378,000 since the board assumed contract settlements would be in at 6 per cent — elementary teachers got an average 8.2 per cent increase including increments. The net deficit this year is about \$180,000 and funds are being transferred to cover those costs;
- the ministry has handed down guidelines for an Early Identification program for special education, which must be in place next September — it won't provide additional grants for the program and so far, no funds have been put into the budget for any additional spending on special education;
- money had been isolated for maintenance and renovation of Thornhill Secondary School but the board, through a recommendation to the finance committee, earmarked \$250,000 specifically for that school so the money can't be spent elsewhere.

"I'm just a little bit concerned that some people are suggesting these items will be additions to the budget," said Thornhill Trustee John Stephens. "In my past experience we always had a number of drafts and with each one, the level of spending was reduced. At this point, it looks like we'll be increasing the budget."

Last year, the finance committee held four public meetings and invited input from local ratepayers to help reduce its expenditures. Two gruelling sessions were spent haggling over maintenance expenditures and the committee was able to pare \$750,000 off its original requests. Trustees received credit for "getting down to an acceptable level".

This year's draft, as instructed by the committee, was designed to show all reasonable costs

without reflecting inflated requests. Since the figures are about as low as they can get, the trick will be to juggle those areas of program and other functions to see which gets the benefits of additional funding.

Each committee has been asked to have recommendations ready for what will be a lengthy finance committee session March 14.

Taxpayers interested in seeing where their dollars are going have a good opportunity to see the process at work next Wednesday.

It will likely become the headquarters of the Richmond Hill Minor Soccer Club.

That was the situation Thursday night as the committee unanimously approved an application by the soccer club for

## Soccer club likely to assume station

Richmond Hill's old abandoned CNR railway station has a new lease on life as a result of last week's Parks and Recreation Committee meeting.

It will likely become the headquarters of the Richmond Hill Minor Soccer Club.

That was the situation Thursday night as the committee unanimously approved an application by the soccer club for

demolition by its Canadian National Railway owners.

Soccer representative Ed Kenny was one of two applicants for the structure located on Station Road off Centre Street East.

The other was by Dave Porter of the "Operation Catch-up" organization for youngsters having difficulty learning in a

traditional classroom setting. Their plan was to turn it into a restaurant.

Committee members liked both proposals but opted for the soccer club for what was termed more practical reasons.

The soccer proposition, if approved by council, would see the club paying for the cost of moving the station — estimated at \$5,000 — to the proposed major park site at 18th Avenue.

The club would also undertake the cost of refurbishing the structure while assuring the outside of it would retain its historical character.

**NOMINAL RENT**  
In return the town would sign a 10-year agreement with the club at a nominal annual fee of \$1.

Kenny said the building would be used for storing equipment, meetings, and as a display for its many trophies.

He told the committee that "the rapid growth of minor soccer in Richmond Hill makes it a vital necessity that we find ourselves permanent quarters. We feel this would be the ideal place." Cost would be financed in part by a fund-raising program.

Porter's proposal was to turn the station into a restaurant staffed by young people who would also be taught by specialized instructors in the art of cooking.

Councillor Al Duffy, while agreeing with the concept of the proposal, pointed out the lack of services on the site and the fact that actual development of the park could be five or six years away.

"You'd have to build your own services and that could be very expensive."

Porter indicated that enough "free" help would be available to make such a situation feasible.

**USE FARMHOUSE**  
Councillor Bill Corcoran suggested "maybe some consideration could be given to having such a restaurant in the old farmhouse which is located on the proposed town park site."

In the meanwhile the CNR has been contacted and requested to extend its offer until March 30 to give the town time to make a decision.

The final cost hasn't been set due to problems involved with moving the station, hydro hookup, heating system and necessary renovations to make the building useable.

Arrangements also have to be made by the town regarding permits to move the building, police escort and line clearance, if required, by Richmond Hill Hydro and Bell Canada.

## Our canine bylaws need more teeth, resident maintains

Canine control officer, Jim Ryan, came to council Monday night armed with suggestions for bylaw amendments to combat statements made by an angry resident.

John Ward of Oak Ridges, told council members that he did not feel the town's canine control bylaws, nor the service provided by Ryan's Animal Control Services, were sufficient.

Mr. Ward said dogs were running in packs through Oak Ridges, children had been bitten by dogs still running loose, there were no services available on weekends, and people were still driving into the municipality to abandon their dogs.

"One truck cannot serve the number of square miles in this municipality," he said.

The Oak Ridges resident said to follow up what he has seen he sat through court sessions where the judge dismissed charges made by the town against dog owners.

He suggested to council the problem was in the strength of the bylaw.

"There is nothing in the bylaw that will stand up," he said.

Mr. Ryan replied to Mr. Ward's accusations by saying he believes Richmond Hill has the best animal control service that council could supply at the same cost to residents.

The Canine Control Officer did offer constructive suggestions in the way of four amendments to the bylaw he saw necessary.

The definition of when a dog is "running at large" was number

one in importance, said Mr. Ryan.

At this time a dog is deemed to be running at large when found in a public place not in the company of a person. This rules out the possibility of picking up a reported stray on private property, the most common place dogs will be found.

Mr. Ryan suggested a dog should be deemed running at large when found any place other than the owner's property, meaning the officer could then pick up a dog on private property.

Although Mr. Ryan felt the second suggestion was a little far fetched he suggested the town find a way to change the attitude of the average justice of the peace toward charges under this bylaw.

High impounding fees were the next suggestion, following the example of adjoining municipalities. He said a fee of \$10 and \$4 for each day of confinement for the first offence, \$30 and \$4 each day the second time and \$50 and \$4 a day for a third offence would act as a deterrent to pet owners.

A leash law was the last recommendation from Mr. Ryan, who suggested a portion of the bylaw should say a dog is not under control if not held on a leash by a responsible person.

Mayor Dave Schiller thanked Mr. Ryan for his suggestions and asked him and Mr. Ward to attend a Bylaw Committee meeting to discuss how the situation could be best remedied.

## Town passes its budget ...almost

The Town of Richmond Hill's budget was passed last Monday night, but one item was removed and will remain as a contingency fund until the finance committee has a chance to review it.

Young Life of Canada, Richmond Hill branch, applied to the town for \$7,000 "to help young people in Richmond Hill build better lives" said the application, but were cut to \$5,000 on Budget Day, February 12.

Councillor Mike Burnie said he feels many other groups in Richmond Hill need financial help as well and \$5,000 was too great a sum to be given to one group that assists only 70 young people.

"I think we've made a bad decision," he said.

Council agreed to leave this amount in the budget, but to ask the finance committee of Richmond Hill to reconsider the situation, allowing Young Life representatives to be present at the review.



They're more than ready to do battle with the Richmond Hill Provincial Junior A Rams this Saturday in an exhibition game starting at 7:30 p.m. "They" being the above all star members of the Richmond Hill Town Hockey League. In the photo are Dave Carnell,

Ben Bourget, Jim Roffey, Bill Tomlin, Phil Wilson, Dave Berseth, Paul Bank, John Gropp, Hal Cameron, Errol Hook, Rod Chapman, Steve Wilson, Rod Hurlburt, Tony Roffey, Rick Collins, Jamie Gropp, Wayne Roffey. See story B-1. (Liberal Photo by Bruce Hogg).

## Fire losses decrease 68 per cent - report

Fire losses in the area served by the Richmond Hill Fire Department amounted to \$335,200 for 1978 — a decrease of 68 per cent over 1977.

Losses that year amounted to more than a million dollars.

There were no deaths attributed to fires and only four people suffered fire related injuries.

Smoke detectors caught the limelight in 1978, and possibly because of their popularity, apartment building fires decreased by 34 per cent and residential dwellings by 21 per cent.

Other types of fires were on the increase... bonfires were up 66 per cent; and commercial fires climbed by a whopping 90 per cent.

This information and statistics made up a good percentage of the Fire Department annual report to be presented tonight.

Also included were other types of calls handled by the fire department, and surprisingly;

vehicle accidents increased by 78 per cent; while vehicle fires decreased by 25 per cent.

Rescue calls were down by 33 per cent, and false alarms rose an alarming 90 per cent.

## Chief wants new pumper truck

Richmond Hill Fire Chief Bob Kennedy wants the town to foot the bill for a new pumper truck, and it could amount to well over \$50,000.

Tonight (March 7), Mr. Kennedy will approach the town's bylaws, procedures, fire and personnel committee with his request.

He has been asking for the new

pumper for more than two years now.

The 1979 capital budget for the Town of Richmond Hill was passed by council Monday night, and approval to obtain tenders for the pumper was included.

So, it looks as though the new pumper will become a reality, but not for more than a year, because that's how long it will take for the truck to be ready.

## Explosion injures man at plant

Investigations are continuing into what caused an explosion in an almost new pumping station on Bayview Avenue Monday morning.

A Markham Hydro employee is in Sunnybrook Hospital with a hairline fracture of the skull received in the blast.

Philip Hoover of Markham, was observing two linemen working in the station. He was hit by an eight-foot-by-three-foot metal door which blew off the metering unit in the station which exploded, said Markham Hydro Manager Ray Ewasiuk.

Mr. Hoover, a third-year apprentice, is going to be okay, said Mr. Ewasiuk, despite the skull fracture, a broken collar-bone and a shattered arm.

"It was one hell of an explosion," said the Hydro manager. The ministry of labor, Ontario Hydro and the Electrical Utilities Safety Association are all investigating, but it is still a mystery how the meter could explode with such force.

The Markham Hydro crew went to the station at the corner of Green Lane at 9:30 a.m. in answer to a trouble call. They found the power was off when they arrived.

A breaker switch had tripped. After checking everything thoroughly and finding nothing

that would cause the trip, they switched the power back on. Then the metering unit exploded.

The pumping station was built last year by Metropolitan Toronto for the Region of York.

## Community Pulse

### Keeping score

For those keeping track of attendance figures at council meetings in Richmond Hill, on Monday citizens outnumbered themselves.

Thirty-five interested residents, five members of delegations, two Citizens' Advisory Group members, and four members of town staff were present to watch the early more controversial issues — but the number adjourned to 11 members of the public before the meeting adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

### What a buck will buy

Buried at the bottom of its list of expenses, Helpmate Information recorded the following item: "Equipment and furnishings — \$1." We wondered if they paid to have a curtain cleaned, but learned that Rhelda Stockall, Helpmate's co-ordinator, doesn't miss a trick. She says: "I went to a government surplus store in the west end of Toronto, and for \$1, I bought two desks, seven chairs, and one filing cabinet." Shrewd shopping, Rhelda.