

Oak Ridges fire hall won't handle staffer

Not once would we even consider that anyone at the Richmond Hill Fire Department would record erroneous times when filling out a fire report, but because it's done by human hand, the department has no argument to dispute how long it takes to answer a fire call.

Such a problem cropped up last week when a house at Lake Wilcox burned. Neighbors said it took the fire department up to 20 minutes to get trucks to the scene.

The department's records say it took eight minutes.

This problem is magnified to the point where Richmond Hill Councillor Bill Corcoran wants to meet Fire Chief Bob Kennedy to discuss staffing the Oak Ridges fire hall with a full time person.

It could turn out to be the loneliest job in the world. The fire hall is just that... a hall. A garage. A place to park a truck.

It's not equipped to handle a person working there full time.

The argument is that a person in the Oak Ridges location could get to an area fire faster than trucks from the main Mackenzie Drive station.

Could be true, but what would he do when he arrived — all alone — at the scene of the blaze? Could he hook up and charge a hose? Could he carry ladders to the building? Would he enter a burning structure without a partner?

By the time a single individual could accomplish anything in the way of putting out the fire, a full load of fire fighters would be on the scene from the main station.

And it's unlikely it would take them 20 minutes to get there. Two Liberal reporters drove from the main hall to Lake Wilcox last week, obeying the speed limit and traffic signals, and the journey took fewer than 10 minutes.

Fire Chief Kennedy is in the unenviable position of showing a report that says it took eight minutes to arrive at the scene, but he is forced to depend only on the word of the person who filled in the report.

He simply can't prove what his records say, and because of that, a full time position could be created for a fire fighter in Oak Ridges that is not only impractical, but dangerous.



(Photo by Bruce Hogg)

ENERGY SAVERS

Richmond Hill Councillor Gord Rowe, owner of Cashway Lumber, said as far as he can see, people in this area are responding well to the

need to conserve energy. Quite a number are adding storm windows and additional insulation to their homes, he said.

Markham Fair

Jumping to get in.

This year's Markham Fair is going to open up smoking — 10 Skyhawks with smouldering canisters tied around their legs will take a 10,000-foot leap onto the grounds at noon on September 27.

No, this won't be the barbecued bird exhibit. The Skyhawks are also known as the Canadian Forces Parachute Demonstration Team and the free fall is the newest event of the 124th edition of the Markham Fair.

This year, the Fair Board has managed to get Eugene Whelan, former federal agriculture minister, to officially open the festivities. He is originally from Essex, Ontario, and is now agricultural and feed critic in the shadow cabinet.

Besides having 2,500 exhibitors show off their wares, produce and livestock, the fair will feature the regular family favorites: the horse show, running continuously over the four days, the horse pull on Saturday night, quarter horse racing on Thursday and Saturday night and the \$700 first-prize tractor pull on Friday, September 28.

The Markham Fair has become the largest annual agricultural fair in York and probably among the top three in Southern Ontario. It is the last big event before the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, held in November.

President Mac Cosburn says the bread and butter of the fair is the exhibitors and without them, there would be no show.

The new facilities at McCowan Rd. and 18th Ave. offer 100,000 square feet of covered space including six buildings.

The livestock building, which is Mac's pride and joy, has an area of 3,500 square feet and a capacity to hold 400 head of cattle. That includes a show ring which will seat 1,200 spectators.

That's only one way to tell this is no small operation. You can expect to see 15,000 square feet of vegetables, hay, flowers, apples, pears and children's work (under 18) and that's only a fraction of the show.

"I couldn't say which are the most popular areas," said Mr. Cosburn, "but there's a lot of participation in the baking, needlework, arts and crafts and Christmas September."

He expects to have up to 1,500 elementary school students enter exhibits in the same categories. The Fair Board has arranged with the York County Board of Education to stage a PA (professional activity) day on Friday, September 28, which should allow students more time to get involved with the fair. The PA day applies to Area 4 only. There will also be four busloads of kids coming up from Scarborough.

The Cosburns are really looking forward to this year's fair because never have so many of them been so involved in the preparations. Mac has been on the board for 11 years, including positions as senior and junior director and planner. The late Howard Cosburn, Mac's father had been a director for 32 years. His mother is now in her first year as a director, as is his sister, Gerri Seely, who is helping run the Ladies Section.

Gerri's husband, Dennis, is second vice-president and has been a director for seven years.

Last but not least is Mac's wife, Jennifer, who ran the Fair Queen Dance, is on the Christmas September committee, a group she chaired last year.

If there's something you don't see at the fair or are hoping to see — don't worry — the Cosburns are probably working on it.

LIBERAL SPRINKLINGS

Millie: expert of the lob

By MILLIE STEWART
Liberal Reporter

I wrote in the Liberal Sprinklings not too long ago that I knew absolutely nothing about sports, and furthermore I didn't want to be enlightened.

This past summer, I not only got enlightened, I found I was beginning to like it. What on earth is this world coming to?

The sport I have come to love is called lob ball. It's a game very similar to baseball, but in my opinion, a heck of a lot more fun.

Hubby told me in no uncertain terms that I was going to play on a lob ball team in an Aurora league. No amount of pleading would sway him. He was determined not to give in, no matter what I threatened to do.

So there I was on a Sunday evening in June at a ball park in Aurora with several other couples all set to play ball.

First I must tell you about the game of lob ball. It is played on a baseball diamond and we use baseball bats and other ball equipment, but the ball is a little different.

It is a soft ball, but it's larger than the normal soft ball. It is 16 inches round, which can make it a little tricky when it comes to catching the thing.

The game is seven innings long. Each batter gets three pitches from a pitcher on his or her own team. What the batter does with those pitches, is up to him, but there are only three.

BATTER UP

Each team must consist of an equal number of males and females.

Now let me tell you that if I think I was scared to death of this new game, the other girls felt the same way.

You could hear five sets of knees knocking together that first night and not one guy would give us an ounce of sympathy.

We gritted our teeth and prepared to play. I got banished to the outer extremities of the field... way out in left field.

I guess the guys thought I couldn't get into any trouble way out there. I fooled them. Every second batter seemed bent and determined to hit the ball right at me.

I say at me, because there was no way I was going to catch it. I was scared to death of the ball and I just couldn't bring myself to reach out for it.

Something happened to make me change my mind about the game. I got up to bat. That's all it took.

Oh, I was scared... scared isn't even the proper word. I was terrified that I might not hit it and then everyone would laugh at me. My knees knocked and my teeth chattered, but I was determined to try... even if it killed me.

STRIKE ONE

The pitcher looked me straight in the eye and let the ball go. I swung at it... and I hit it. By gum, that ball took off like a shot out of a cannon, and rolled a whopping ten feet away from me.

Everyone was stunned. People were yelling at me to run. So I did. And for some strange reason, which no one can yet understand, the other team kept dropping the ball and I was able to make it all the way to second base.

I was stupefied. I had actually hit the ball and I wanted to get back up there and do it again. I really did.

We played against several other teams in the league on Sunday nights and the more I played, the more I liked it.

The final game of the series is this Sunday, and I think most feel the same way I do.

Will I play next year? Just let them try and keep me off the team.



Letter

Tenors, basses, we need you...

I just wanted to drop you a line to thank you very much for giving our new operetta group that front page boost last week.

It was the long weekend and I just didn't seem to be able to get through on the phone, so I delivered the information by hand, without much hope of

your being able to put it in that week. So, I was pleased to see it.

Our attendance last Tuesday tripled, you will be pleased to hear, and mainly from reading your paper.

The only snag at the moment is that we are

still very short of men — don't tenors and basses read The Liberal?

Monica Vermeulen
33 Centre Street East
Richmond Hill

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Nervousness unbearable at the dance

'Venus if you will Please send a little girl for me to thrill. A girl who wants my kisses and my arms a girl with all the charms of you.'

Do you remember how we used to line up along the gymnasium wall? The girls all sat in a neat row on the west side of the gigantic room and all of us guys would squirm and shuffle on our chairs on the east.

The only kids who were already dancing were those going steady or had agreed prior to the dance to make it a date for the evening. Time — 8:35 p.m.

'A white sport coat and a pink carnation, I'm all dressed up for the dance...'

You knew that the first move would end in failure and so you tried to postpone the inevitable as long as you could. Your buddies were all in the same boat and the big question was who would be the brave soul who would go and make a fool of himself just so the rest of us wouldn't look so darn stupid.

'You can dance... Every dance with the guy who gives you the eye and let him hold you tight...'

Then you finally get up enough courage to approach the other side of the gym and the music finishes as you are halfway across the floor.

You have concentrated so hard on making it to the opposite wall that you don't realize until it is too late that everyone else has left the floor and there you are... all alone in the middle of the floodlit area.

Sheepishly you continue on and just as you reach your goal, the dumb deejay calls a 'ladies choice' and your intended victim gets up from her chair and crosses the gym to the guy who was seated beside you.

'I had a girl Donna was her name. Since she left me I've never been the same...'

Just so you don't look any more foolish than you already feel, you continue past the girls, out the door, into the hall and kill about ten minutes in the washroom before sneaking back into the auditorium.

Same guys on the east side, fewer girls on the west... can't figure that one out. Time — 9:15 p.m.

'Some people like to rock, some people like to roll, but movin' and groovin' gonna satisfy my soul. Let's have a party...'

There is one girl in particular who you would give your right arm for and suddenly you see HER seated with the rest of THEM. You pray like heck that the next record is a fast one since the chances of injury to your intended partner would be less than during a slow dance.

Once again you cross the floor, a parched and dry feeling fills your throat and you start to tremble uncontrollably.

'Young love first love, filled with true devotion...'

What the heck... you've come this far so you might as well go through with it. Maybe in the dim blue light along the perimeter she won't notice the fact that you are shaking to death.

You extend your hand and she looks up at you with a faint smile on her lips. She slowly arises from the hard wooden chair and follows you onto the floor as you go over in your mind the dance steps... is it two to the side and one together or is it...?

'Come with me oh my love, to the sea the sea of love...'

Your hands suddenly turn clammy and a bead of sweat starts a long journey from your forehead to your neck... did she see it? Your feet won't obey your brain and you apologize over and over for stepping on her feet... did I hurt her? You get braver as the music continues and out of sheer nervousness start to hum the song... Time — 10:05 p.m.

'Who put the bomb in the bomb-de-bomb-de-bomb, who put the ram in the ram-a-lam-a-ding-dong?'

The donuts and Coke in the cafeteria taste like they never have before. You quickly count the change to see if you have enough for a stop at Bing's following the dance. Should I ask her now... or should I wait until later... what the heck... I'll wait and then pop the question.

'She's Venus in Blue jeans Mona Lisa with a ponytail...'

Nothing smells as nice as a pretty girl and there you are with the prettiest one in the whole wide world. No one dances as well as she does and none can match her smile. You become Fred Astaire to her Ginger Rodgers and, as one, you take command of the floor.

All your worries earlier have disappeared and you feel that you will stay together forever.

You ask to take her home and she politely informs you that her brother is picking her up after the dance.

Depressed and saddened you request a date with her tomorrow and she tells you that she is already going out. How about next weekend, maybe? Sorry, but she's going away with her parents to visit her grandmother. Time — 11 p.m.

'There goes my baby movin' on down the line, I'm wondering where, wondering where, wondering where she is bound...'

The ol' Millpond Philosopher once said... 'Growing up is harder than growing old.'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Rice, were you spying on me when I was in high school?