

Trying to untangle commuter bus mess

According to the residents on the east side of Richmond Hill, it's time Markham Transit got off the bus without a transfer — preferably somewhere on Bayview Ave. where the closed-door policy is in effect.

A tangled web of deception and misconception has evolved over the removal of GO Bus service by the Toronto Area Transit Operating Authority (TATO). There are four combatants in this tug-of-war, all of whom say they have the users' best interests at heart.

After a rash of public meetings, letters to the editor and explanations, those interests have become suspect.

At the centre of the controversy is a decision by Markham Transit to run its own service on Bayview, something it said was not viable until GO got lost. It appears Markham got a helping hand from the Ministry of Transportation and Communications when it removed GO's subsidy from Bayview service.

The black glove appeared again when a Ministry edict announced TATO was not to interfere with municipal service. Which boils down to the fact Markham was home free to do as it pleased with its Bayview buses — oblivious to the cries of Thornhill residents complaining about inferior service.

Mayor Tony Roman and Markham Council have wrestled

openly with irate residents and managed to pacify them with promises of routing and scheduling reviews and the possibility of a Sunday "trunk" service. The mayor thinks the only reason Richmond Hill wants GO back on Bayview is so it can be run at the expense of Markham.

Meanwhile, Richmond Hill Mayor Dave Schiller said it's unfortunate Markham has had to play its games so long. As an example he noted the neighboring town asked MTC to do a study on the Bayview service with respect to Markham Transit viability vis-a-vis GO.

He claimed when Markham didn't get the result it wanted it went to an outside consulting firm which produced the figures Markham Transit eventually used as criteria for sole operation (and manipulation) of Bayview.

The two towns are working at cross purposes, something only serving to bring residents in affected areas to a boil. When it comes to the point of forcing commuters to consider using their cars as a viable alternative, the towns are not only toying with a much larger problem, they're bordering on irrationality.

Richmond Hill has managed two exploratory meetings with TATO but little will be accomplished and no one will be satisfied until a joint committee of the two municipalities is struck to produce a satisfactory solution.

Briefly, then...

Maybe it's the change in season or the fact the gremlins and goblins of Hallowe'en are upon us but the past week has been a good one for "Freudian slips" both at Markham Council and Regional Council in Newmarket.

While reading some correspondence from the Devil's Elbow Ratepayers' Association requesting Markham to withhold further residential subdivision approval until the necessary schools are built in the Markham-Unionville area, Mayor Tony Roman called the group "The Devil's Ratepayers' Association."

Until he realized what he said, others in the chambers couldn't help but acknowledge he might

have been thinking of the ultimate subdivision.

MAYOR TAYLOR

The other quaint miscue of the week came from Vaughan Mayor Garnet Williams at Regional Council. In a discussion of budget procedures, he responded to a comment made by Newmarket Councillor Tom Taylor by saying: "I agree with the Mayor of Newmarket."

Council broke up, apparently aware of Mr. Taylor's designs on the position held by Ray Twinney. When Garney realized what he said and later apologized to Taylor and Twinney, Mr. Taylor graciously added: "Not at all."

Plaques to be installed

To preserve a part of our heritage in Richmond Hill, the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC), has arranged for 30 historical plaques to go up in the old town and Yonge Street area.

All plaques will be attached only to structures built before 1883.

"We hope it might point out to the public how these buildings have contributed to Richmond Hill's history," said LACAC member, Mary Dawson.

Most of the owners have been approached for permission to affix a plaque, said Miss Dawson, and are agreeable.

The plaque will show the date the building was erected, the street number and the name of the occupant or significant use.

Buildings chosen so far to be marked are:

The office of Patrick Henger, Barrister and Solicitor, on the east side of Yonge Street across from Richmond Street. This building was built circa 1845 and was an inn.

Hilltop Memorials, 10231 Yonge Street, was built about 1870 and belonged to the village clerk, Alex Hume.

10127 Yonge Street was once the business of John Coulter the tailor and the building is supposed to have been built about 1856.

The present home of Richmond Taylor was once a place called Marlowe House, built about 1859.

Where Bork Jewellers now carry on business the Trench

Carriage Works were once located after 1857 when the building was erected.

Richmond Hill's Council Chambers and Fire Hall were located where Guarantee Trust now stands and Jerry Smith the watchmaker lived in the white house just south of McConaghy School, about the same time between 1850 and 1880.

The Presbyterian Manse was built in 1877, and the grey house across the street was once the Stanford Nursing Home, built about 1860.

In 1850 Hesse Nichols the town conveyancer built his home above Markham Road on the east side at 10027 Yonge Street.

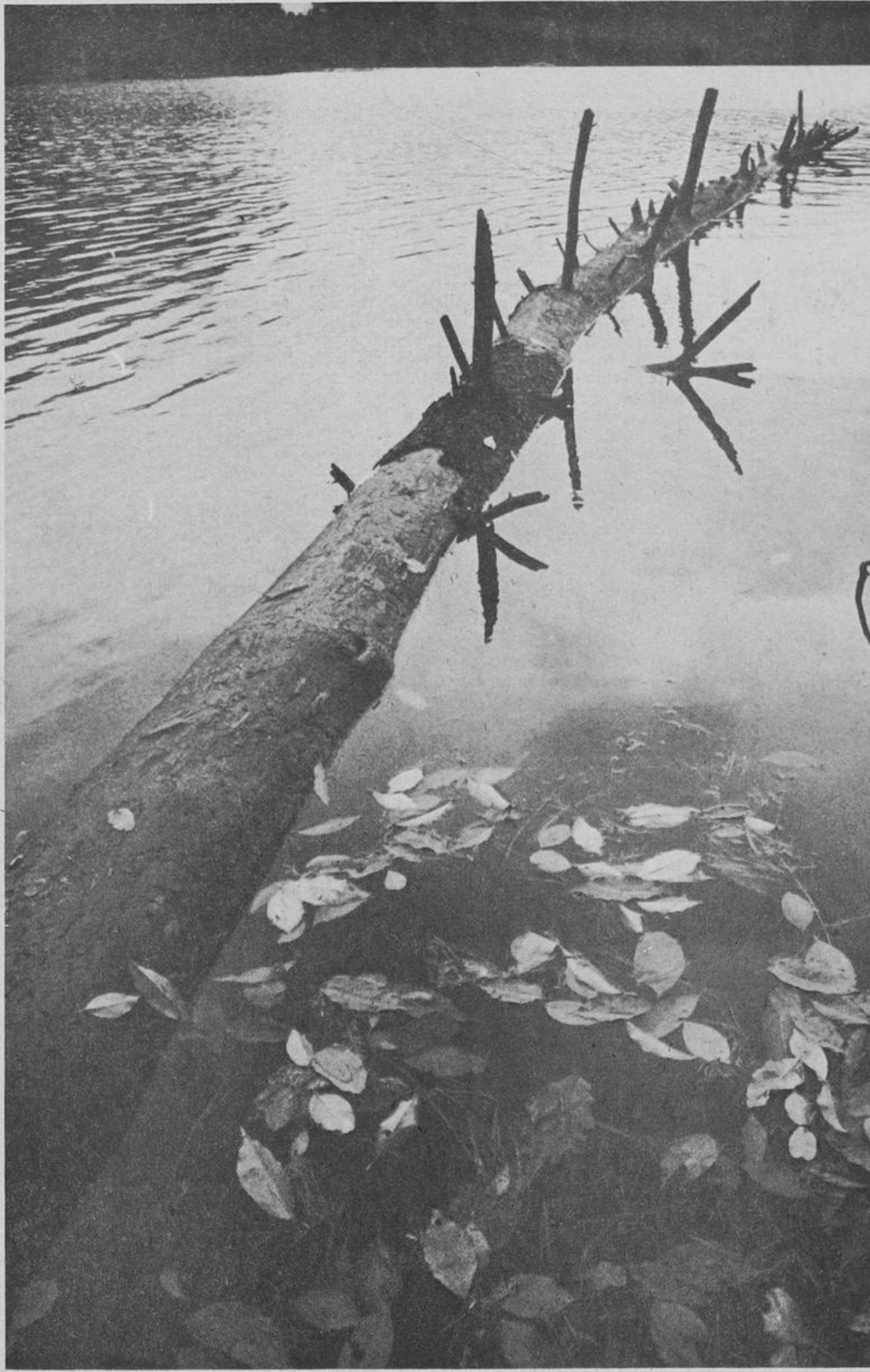
The Central Bank was once located behind what is now known as Simpson's Dry Good Store.

St. Mary's Anglican Church was built in 1872, the Presbyterian Church was built in 1880 and the Methodist Church, now Richmond Hill United Church, was built also in 1880.

On the south-east corner of Markham Road and Yonge Street, the site of Family Trust Realtor was once the home of John Palmer. This was sometime before 1845.

There are 15 more buildings in Richmond Hill under consideration by LACAC to receive historical plaques.

Miss Dawson did point out that just because a building does have an historical plaque does not mean the building must be preserved.



By BOB RICE

Christmas gift for someone who tolerates this column

Well gang . . . I guess that with Hallowe'en underway tonight, Thanksgiving just a memory of turkey sandwiches and the nice warm weather of summer a thing of the past, the only thing that we have left to look forward to is Christmas!

Just think of it . . . in fewer than two months we will all gather around the tree and sing a carol or three and then dive into the mound of gifts and goodies that bear our names.

Later in the day, after the wrapping has been consigned to the fire, the aroma of the festive bird will waft through the house and we will think nice thoughts of those who mean so much to us.

Lest you think that I am pushing the season too early, I would like to remind you that now is the time to start the shopping for gifts while the stores are stocked to the brim with all sorts of neat things that will delight everyone on your list.

As a matter of fact, I have already got my hot little hands on one really fantastic present that I would like to GIVE TO ONE OF MY READERS!

That's right, old faithfuls, for putting up with another year of my scribblings, I would like to give one of you a Christmas present! Yeah . . . whoopeeee and all of that stuff! Howsabout that . . . Rice is giving away something again BUT . . . what's the catch?

No tricks gang . . . no hidden gimmicks . . . I have had some very nice comments on the column from some terrific readers and I would like to show my gratitude.

Last week I ran into Bob Elrick who, in addition to being a nice guy, gets to play with all sorts of nifty gadgets that are manufactured by Panasonic, his employer. I said to Bob . . . "Golly gee whiz Bob, I really would like to give my readers a Christmas present this year but I don't know what to choose."

Mr. Elrick thought for a moment and then said . . . "How about a TR-535C, oh great writer of wise sayings?"

"A TR-535C? But can't you get arrested for that kind of thing around here?"

"No way, oh fantastic nimble fingers . . . the TR-535C is one of our latest pop-up portable television sets that also features an AM-FM radio!"

"The heck you say, pray tell me more."

"Gladly, oh supreme sayer of sooths and such, when we at Panasonic say that we are just slightly ahead of our time, we don't mess around. You've probably seen some of these new TV sets that you can take anywhere and run on just about any kind of power . . . well the 535 is probably one of the best on the market today."

"It has a five-inch screen that pops up out of the snazzy case and it can be run on normal house current, on its own rechargeable batteries or you can get an optional battery cord that lets you plug into your car, boat or dirigible!"

Not only that, this little beauty also has a built in AM-FM radio that you can listen to when you don't want to watch the TV. Neat-oh, eh?"

"Sure is Bob . . . that would sure make a swell present for anyone . . . including someone who admits to reading my column. Put me down for one and I'll talk to the Grand Poobah at The Liberal!"

I will admit that I was slightly nervous as I passed through the doorway into Mr. Wallace's sanctuary and told him of my plan. Ron sat silently for a minute or three and then slowly lifted his head from his hands and said . . . "Rice . . . you've done it again!!"

All that was left to figure how to give the TV set away so that it will truly be a Christmas present for one of you nice people and . . . I'VE DONE IT!

Oops . . . I'm running out of space. Tell you what . . . next week I'll give you the details of how to win the Panasonic Portable TV and in the meantime I'll leave you with the words of the ol' Millpond Philosopher who once said . . . "Don't ask me . . . I've known Rice for years and I still can't figure what he's up to!"

LIBERAL SPRINKLINGS

A day in the classroom

By MILLIE STEWART
Liberal Staff Writer

Last Wednesday, instead of spending my time perusing the latest issues of all the community newspapers, I found myself going back many years; too many to mention, to my carefree days of public school.

First thing in the morning, I was at Ross Doan Public School on Weldrick Road, where the entire enrollment is Kindergarten to Grade 2.

I had been invited to join the special assembly for International Day of the Child and also to enjoy a muffin, made by the children . . . with a little help.

The assembly caused me to drift back in time.

There were all those very young people explaining in song, skits and words what The International Year of the Child means to them and what it should mean to us.

One of the skits showed Lucy and Charlie Brown and their friends explaining about children's rights as stated by The United Nations.

Each child read a few lines about one of the rights. The words were printed on the back of a giant puzzle piece.

When all the children had read a message, the giant puzzle was complete and it showed drawings by the children depicting the rights of children.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

The ultimate tug at my memory came when the children and audience stood to sing "O Canada".

The children sang our National Anthem as though it was the most important moment of their young lives.

A large audience of adults could not have put more meaning into the words or more volume into a song.

From the gym I was escorted to a Grade 2 classroom, where I was invited to sample a muffin, made by the children.

The school decided to combine Nutrition Week with the other celebrations, and; Yes, the muffins were delicious.

DRAGONS AND SUCH

My next stop was Beverley Acres Public School on Neal Drive.

I arrived at the school in search of a dragon . . . that's right. You never know what you'll run into in a school corridor.

Finally I unearthed the dragon, and much to my surprise, I had nothing to fear.

What I found was a Grade 3 class, who had used festivals around the world as its theme for International Day of the Child.

The dragon was drawn and painted on a ten-foot long piece of material and was carried by four stalwart young men.

Other festivals were represented by this class . . . several pinatas were made depicting Mexico and Carp kites depicting various Japanese festivals were also featured.

My camera saw some beautiful sites in that classroom. Let's hope some of the shots turn out.

TOTEM POLE

Next I visited a Special Education class to have a look at a totem pole made by the students.

Before the class would talk to me about the totem pole, I had to meet their pet

mouse.

You heard it, folks, a pet mouse. Now that definitely is not my favorite way of spending a morning, I hate mice.

But these youngsters were having none of that. They encouraged me to hold it in my hand. I'm not sure who was more nervous . . . the mouse or me, but we both survived.

The totem pole was designed and constructed by the eight students of the class with assistance from Lee Banfield, who is the mother of one of the boys, and is part Mohawk Indian.

The construction of this particular totem pole is a little unusual.

It is made of juice cans weighted with stones and sand. Newspapers were used for bulk and the whole thing is covered with white plaster strips like those used to make a cast.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Everyone had a hand in decorating the totem pole.

Reference books and encyclopedia volumes were searched and some help again came from Mrs. Banfield; and the results are spectacular.

The totem pole is decorated with authentic Indian symbols and each represents a right of children . . . medicine, religion, sunshine, education and so on.

When I sit back and recall my morning with the children, I realize how lucky we are to have our future generation growing up with such resourcefulness and concern.

Maybe they can teach us a thing or two.

Thanks, kids, for letting me share your special day with you.

Letter

In praise of Lake Wilcox

Thank you for writing about Lake St. George and about the beauty of the lake.

It's right in the heart of Lake Wilcox and it's important for me to tell you how Lake Wilcox has changed over the past four years.

The government gave the residents a \$10,000 grant to remodel their homes, and these people went right to work and made their homes into something beautiful.

In the past four years, the homes have become great.

We need to tell everyone in Richmond Hill and the surrounding areas that Lake Wilcox is a gorgeous place to live in.

In the autumn of the year, the colors of the trees are beautiful and it's a lovely place to be.

During the summer there is swimming at

meeting once a week at Lake Wilcox Public School. And yoga classes for the ladies of the area.

And you can rent the community centre for showers, weddings, etc.

If there are fires in the area, the neighbors pitch in and help the families and put them up. They are wonderful, down to earth people who would help anyone at any time.

It's a fantastic community to live in.

There is a post office run by Mrs. Good, who is

willing to help you; and there is a store on the corner called "For My Friends Supermarket".

And there are nature trails at Lake St. George.

It's wonderful of The Liberal to publish this in the community section October 24.

As I say again, Lake Wilcox is a great place to live and to raise your family.

Fran Sargeant
Box 861
Oak Ridges

More letters

See Page A-5

THE Liberal

VOLUME 102, NUMBER 18

TELEPHONES

Editorial, Display 884-8177
Classified 884-1105
Circulation 884-0981
Toronto customers 881-3373

Subscription rates: By mail \$13.00 per year in Canada \$26.00 per year outside of Canada. By carrier \$1.00 every four weeks. Single copy sales 25 cents. No mail delivery where carrier service exists. Second Class Mail Registration Number 0190.

Ron Wallace - Editor
Fried Simpson - Sports Editor
Steve Pearlstein - News Editor

The contents, both editorial and advertising of The Liberal, Richmond Hill are protected by copyright and any unauthorized use is prohibited.

METROSPAN

Printing & Publishing Ltd.

METROSPAN - NORTH DIVISION

John C. Fergus, Publisher
Ray Padley Jr., Advertising Director
Norman Sturden, Production Manager
Denis O'Meara - Circulation Director
Rose Reynolds - Accounts

Metrospan Community Newspapers publishes The Richmond Hill/Thornhill Liberal, The Banner, The Oakville Journal Record, The Halton Consumer, The Mississauga Times, The Etobicoke Advertiser/Guardian, The Etobicoke Consumer, The North York Mirror, The North York Consumer, The Scarborough Mirror, The Scarborough Consumer, The Woodbridge & Vaughan News, The Bolton Enterprise, and The North Star Consumer.

