

# CASTOR REVIEW

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## Teacher loss worries parents

Enrolment decline at Osgoode Township High School will result in the layoff of four teachers and reduction of the minimum credit requirement over the four year program from 32 to 28.

The new credit minimum, effective next September, has some parents worried. They feel their children may not receive a complete secondary education and may not be adequately

prepared for university. Noting that a \$1.5 million addition has been approved for the Metcalfe school, a brief submitted by parents to the Carleton Board of Education demands

"the necessary staff to allow students to finish their education on an equal footing with all other students across the board."

The brief was prepared by Carol Parker of Greely who has

two children enrolled at the school. Mrs. Parker is part of an ad-hoc committee of parents, trustees, and Osgoode High principal Wyatt MacLean set up to review the situation. The committee has yet to hold its first meeting.

While conceding that 28 credits would give Osgoode the lowest minimum among high schools in the Carleton board, Mr. MacLean stressed it still meets Ministry of Education criteria allowing no less than 27 credits from Grade 9 through 12.

While its possible students with the most credits might be looked at more favorably for the more popular university programs, Mr. MacLean suggested that high marks are more important than maximum credits.

Enrolment at the school will be down to 700 next September from 740, the principal said. This trend forces the staff cuts; the dismissal of four will leave 41 teachers.

"We've been carrying the extra teachers despite student decline but now we have no other choice than to let some go."

The cuts will depend largely on courses demanded by students. The laid-off teachers will be given preference for jobs at other schools within the board, Mr. MacLean said. The staff reduction will bring Osgoode into the board's 18:1 pupil-teacher ratio for secondary schools.

The principal emphasized that no core subjects will be dropped. Some non-essential courses, "boys cooking for example", may be axed. Despite the reduced minimum, enterprising students will be able to add to their credits by taking extra courses during spare periods, he pointed out.

A large factor in the enrolment drop is loss of Russell Township students transferred to North Dundas District High School at Chesterville. About 120 Russell students are being phased out of Osgoode and only 35 will remain at the school next fall.

Another factor is the decline of enrolment at Metcalfe Public School, Osgoode High's main "feeder" of Grade 9 students, Mr MacLean said.

Parents are concerned that students may not be able to mesh spares with options in order to take extra courses if they so chose. They're also worried that spares may not be properly supervised because of the teacher loss.

It's possible, they say, that some students will be forced to drop in one grade subjects that may be pre-requisites in later years.

Under the new minimum, a student who fails only two courses will not be able to obtain the Ministry of Education graduation diploma at the end of Grade 12, the parental brief contends.

"The graduates of Osgoode Township High School will be at a definite disadvantage when competing for employment or admission to post-secondary institutions."

### Castor Township?

Out with Russell Township and in with Castor Township, says Councillor Baird McNeill.

Castor Township is the name the councillor wants to give to the chunk of real estate now known as Russell Township.

The new name would be catchier, with more local significance, he contends. It would reduce confusion arising from the fact there's a village called Russell, within a township called Russell, within a county called Russell.

Mr. McNeill is opposed to reverting to the name Duncanville for Russell Village as has been suggested in some quarters. The name Russell is meaningful to the village but not to the township, he says.

He notes that the name of the river that flows through the township has been borrowed extensively in recent years; Castor Review, Castor Bus Lines, Castor Estates, and Festin du Castor are examples.

A township name change couldn't happen overnight; a study of the legal ramifications would have to be undertaken and provincial government approval would have to be secured.

However, the councillor is prepared to investigate the feasibility of Castor Township if local ratepayers show enough support for the idea. He invites anyone with an opinion on the subject to get in touch.



QUILTING BEE

Who says the quilting bee is a thing of the past. If it is, nobody told these Russell senior citizens busily quilting on contract, including one creation for Mabel Webb of Russell. The ladies include Mildred

Harrison, Helen Boothe, Susan Sullivan, and Helen Loucks in the back row; Ida Magladry, Ann James, Edyther Cherry, Dorothy Morrice, and Margaret Burton in the front row. (Photo by Rowsell).

### Who'll run red first

Russell Township will be getting its first, city-style, electronically controlled intersection this summer.

A full battery of traffic lights, featuring the traditional three colors, will be installed where St.

Jacques and Notre Dame streets cross in Embrun.

The lights will be equipped with buttons so they can be activated by pedestrians, Reeve Gaston Patenaude explained.

Mr. Patenaude expects the

lights to cost a maximum of \$24,000, with the township paying one quarter, the United Counties of Prescott-Russell one quarter, and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications the remainder.



## Sidewalk Talk

By Mark Van Dusen

### Futherin' wit' Castor-ese

T's tarble t'dee a-treem' t' sthreibl yer spondoolicks.

If you read that and nodded assent without so much as blinking an eye, then you're a true child of the Castor.

If you did a double take, cocked your head, read again and it still didn't make sense, then you're a relative newcomer. But don't feel bad, it's probably fair to say that some of the crustiest oldtimers had trouble deciphering the meaning.

Translated, or rather updated, it comes out: It's terrible today trying to stretch your money.

Still shaking your head? Time then to turn to Ruth E. Scharfe, formerly from the Edwards area, now of Ottawa, and well known to Castor residents as a long-time and an eloquent scribe.

Thirteen years ago, almost to the day, Mrs. Scharfe published a partial dictionary of Ottawa Valley-ese to assist the uninitiated in interpreting some of the colloquial utterings widely-used within a dog-trot of the big city.

That these utterings were colloquial was, it must be said, the unilateral consensus of city folk who ventured to the "sticks" — their expression — no more than once in a lifetime.

"Good day, my dear sir, I seem to have misjudged my itinerary. Could you please render me assistance in establishing the correct course to Ottawa," would have been as colloquial to Joe Dirks, standing befuddled by the roadside, as anything he could have said in reply, had he understood what the stranger was asking.

As Mrs. Scharfe — whose latest poetic contribution elsewhere in this issue attests to her eloquence — so aptly put it: "Odd and colorful savings graced, or disgraced the English language, depending upon one's point of view."

"Those of the older generation who has not had much "school-in" — and that included most of them — communicated eloquently in phrase and inflection inherited in phrase and on from other lands and other days, a kind of verbal patchwork quilt that warmed and charmed you with its simple strength and versatility."

But she also points to the fact that Valley-ese and, more locally, Castor-ese, was not always automatically understood even among country cousins. Although the "ese" in local dialect

has increasingly eased out in recent years "as the young ones get more years of formal 'learnin,' there was a time not too long ago when Joe Dirks may have had trouble understanding even his neighbor from the next community. It could still happen, Mrs. Scharfe said, and she gives some tips that could help in identifying that neighbor, even if you don't have a clue what they're talking about.

"If you come from Edwards or Metcalfe, it's easy to tune in on another Osgoode Township wave-length. Russell and Kenmore are close enough to sound similar, though Kenmorians you ken by more Scottish in the twang, and Edwardsians by their Irish touch of brogue. A slower, drawly accent immediately bespoke the cousin from the Cumberland area," she said.

(It should be pointed out, if it isn't obvious already, that Mrs. Scharfe's study deals entirely with local English-ese. Much could probably be said of the French-ese of our neighbors in Embrun and points east. Maybe a dictionary could be compiled there too).

Mrs. Scharfe's dictionary came to the Castor Review by way of Paul Hempel, who lives "hard by" Aylmer, Que., and who occasionally drifts into the Castor area to visit his brother-in-law, Paul Rodier, of "Coney Island" in Russell Village. Here are some excerpts: A'nonst . . . unbeknownst; Birdie . . . a kiss; Campefledge . . . camouflage; Da . . . father; Futherin' . . . fooling; Gollup . . . gulp; Hotten . . . heat up; Lashuns . . . lots of; More therner . . . more than; Old sender . . . very big; Pamonia . . . pneumonia; Spoggin' along . . . plodding; Tost . . . toward; Unfriz . . . thaw out; Whack . . . big piece; Zinc . . . sink.

So there yuz go. Heer's whish-tin' yuz a whack a good faylins fer t'Ester halldeez.

