

# CASTOR REVIEW

## Elections '79

The first federal election in almost five years is right around the corner and the Castor Review has devoted a special insert to the presentation of the candidates for the ridings Prescott-Russell-Glen-garry and Nepean-Carleton to Castor area voters. The insert can be found on pages 7 and 8. Beaver Bob has his own peculiar thoughts on the campaign and the issues on page 2.

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One Canada

Friday, May 4, 1979

# Russell R.A. Shake-up

## Manager dismissed, Treasurer resigns

The Russell Recreation Association was shaken late last month by the dismissal of the arena manager and resignation of the association's treasurer.

Dan Thompson, arena manager for the past two years, will be leaving at the end of June after the association voted 4-3 April 19 not to renew his contract. Administrative concerns were stated as the reason for the decision.

Keith Boothe, treasurer for the past year-and-a-half, resigned a week after Mr. Thompson's dismissal, citing differences with association president Jack Charters. Mr. Boothe stressed his resignation was not related to Mr. Thompson's dismissal.

The association was to begin advertising as soon as possible for a new manager but Mr. Charters said no move would be made on the treasurer's job until he had a chance to discuss the resignation with Mr. Boothe personally.

He said, in his opinion, the dismissal and resignation were not indicative of general turmoil within the association, nor could he see the resignation being reversed.

A number of Russell residents told the Castor Review they would attend the association's regular meeting May 2 to learn more about the resignation and, perhaps, pressure for Mr. Thompson's contract renewal.

Mr. Charters agreed Mr. Thompson was "a great guy, very popular with everyone who used the arena."

"I felt terrible about having to tell Danny of the board's decision. It was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do."

He added he was sorry to see Mr. Boothe go: "He had a good rapport with the subcommittees."

Mr. Thompson's resignation was upheld April 26 by the Russell Township Recreation Committee. He is the second manager to leave the arena in three years. Mr. Boothe is the second treasurer to leave the association in two years.

Neither the treasurer nor any other members of the association board are paid. Mr. Thompson was earning \$14,100 annually.

Stating he did not want to go into details of the resignation out of concern for Mr. Thompson's

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AUCTION BLOCKS

Members of the Osgoode Township volunteer fire department were busy one recent Saturday cutting 22 cords of wood to be offered for sale during an auction June 2. Money raised from the sale, at Metcalfe fire hall, will go towards the purchase of fire alerting pagers. For those wishing to get a

headstart on their winter fireplace or stove supply, the wood is split and ready to burn. In all, there'll be about 200 articles including the contents of three houses. Popular auctioneers Stewart James and Carson Hill will handle the sale. See page 6.



## Sidewalk Talk

By Mark Van Dusen

### Deflating the Montebello myth

Montebello.

Everyone's heard of it, that luxurious chateau in the Quebec town of the same name.

Not far — just a hop, skip and jump across the Ottawa river, maybe 100 kilometres, or an-hour-and-a-half drive, from Russell.

The real thing makes even the most embellished second-hand descriptions suddenly seem tame. It's breathtaking, a vast three-winged structure built around an open, three-storey lobby complete with towering, floor-to-ceiling, multi-sided fireplace.

And it's log, all log; thousands of straight, smooth, varnished B.C. red cedar notched expertly in place by French-Canadian and Scandinavian craftsmen who worked day and night for four months to complete the building in time for its July 1, 1930, opening.

Back then, it was called the Seignior Club, a monument to American investment in the Canadian backwoods; 65,000 acres of Canadian backwoods, containing 35 lakes and all the hunting and fishing the sportsman ever dreamed of.

In 1970, it was acquired by CP Hotels and opened to the public

and has since developed a reputation as a lavish retreat.

There is no lack of frills: 18-hole golf course, curling rinks, skating rinks, ski trails, giant indoor pool, outdoor pool, fitness trails, horseback riding, marina . . .

Time to prick the balloon.

Despite all appearances, there is something lacking here; something very basic, very human and very important.

The something lacking is hospitality: that good ol' fashioned ingredient that can make even the drabest-looking of hotels a joy to stay in. At a place of the caliber of the Chateau Montebello it should be guaranteed and it should not only be good, it should be fantastic. An Easter weekend stay there proved differently.

The cost per night for two people was \$89, three meals a day thrown in. Not a prohibitive price for most people, considering the "free" meals.

The reception at the front desk set the pattern for the weekend. There was no record of the guarantee that had been placed on our reservations — my wife and I were travelling with Mike and Kelsie McDermott, of Ottawa — and a condescending clerk

insinuated we were lucky there were any rooms left for us.

The adjoining rooms were small by modern hotel standards but tidy and quaint with a pretty view of well-tended grounds that were quickly losing their winter greyness.

We ordered a cheese tray for four to appease appetites worked up by the drive. The tray came in good enough time but was hardly adequate to tide even two of us over until dinner — two or three small lumps of cheese and about eight crackers for \$2.50.

Okay, dinner would be that much more enjoyable, something to look forward to. That free-thinking attitude led us to the next setback.

We arrived at the dining room promptly at the appointed time only to find — after a 20-minute wait in line, that our dinner reservations had not been recorded. The busy-looking maitre D' managed to squeeze us in. Nice-looking place, we all agreed — linen tablecloth, crystal, silver plate.

But again the presentation fizzled in the delivery. There were only four items on the chef's menu (no a la carte) and no wine because it was Good Friday (this is a province that can now sell wine in grocery

stores on Sunday. In Ontario, public dining rooms served wine between certain hours on Good Friday). The meals came with large tasteless boiled potatoes that weren't even adorned with so much as a parsley sprig. My steak was bland.

A runaway child who bashed discordantly and unchallenged on a forlorn piano at the front of the room for 20 minutes before getting bored and going away provided the musical accompaniment for the meal, which was served without elan.

We eagerly sipped wine at dinner the second night but the only lounge in which to relax with a liqueur afterwards had been turned into a disco for the night (okay, if you're in the mood, which we weren't).

Now for the finale. It started as a barely-audible leak — the kind that's just loud enough to keep you awake all night — from the McDermott's toilet. Mike figured a little pre-slumber tinkering toilet tank would make things right. The leak from the gnarl of antiquated plumbing in the tank worsened and Mike knocked on my door for help.

"I'll hold this while you twist that," he said. I should learn. Our efforts were rewarded by a loud pop and a geyser of water that could have given Old

Faithful a run for its money. The engineer ran up and shut off the water just as Mike and I were about to lose in our battle of trying to stem the flow with a bunched up bath mat. The engineer said he couldn't fix the toilet that night because he was having trouble with the boilers. We gave him our sympathy and left the next day with only our sorrows still drenched.

A footnote: The walls around the second-floor mezzanine in the old Chateau are dotted with photographs from former decades of smiling grizzled fishermen with their long lines of catches; of cheery ladies canoeing, of sunny lawn parties. There is a vitality in these photos that makes one wonder if the Chateau was put to better use in its days as a private club.

