

Russell Review

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Grants to unsafe Arenas

A special Ontario Government program announced today will provide up to 75 percent of the cost of repairing unsafe arenas in the province.

Culture and Recreation Minister Robert Welch said provincial funds will come from a special Wintario program and through the Community Recreation Centres Act. The remaining 25 percent is to be raised through public subscription.

"As a result," he said, "municipal tax rates should be affected by the arena problem and communities can move ahead with the necessary repairs almost immediately."

In a joint statement, Mr. Welch and Labour Minister Bette Stephenson, whose ministry is responsible for safety standards, expressed confidence that the special grant program will greatly minimize any disruption of sports activities that could have resulted if municipalities had been unable to make the necessary structural changes.

Mr. Welch and Dr. Stephenson also expressed optimism that their programs will assist the children of Ontario to skate and play hockey with the highest possible assurance of safety in arenas in this province.

Dr. Stephenson re-affirmed her ministry policy that some arenas needing structural repair may remain open this winter if certain conditions are met.

The Ministry of Labour has received engineers' reports on 240 arenas. Of these 240, 49 have been found to be safe while 191 show structural defects. Of the 191, ten have only minor defects.

Dr. Stephenson said that of the 191 with a range of structural defects, municipalities have indicated some will be demolished and some will be repaired. To date, 46 communities have already had their plans for repair certified by the ministry.

In all, 415 suspect arenas have been visited by Ministry of Labour staff.

Dr. Stephenson said arenas with minor defects will be allowed to remain open if renovation and strict monitoring programs begin.

In a letter to all operators of suspect arenas, Dr. Stephenson has stated:

"I realize, of course, that the closure of an arena could have a serious effect on the recreational and social activities of your community this winter, but I believe that we have a mutual obligation to ensure that an arena does not pose a hazard to those who use it.

"While public safety is my prime concern, I do not want to impose unnecessary restrictions. In my statement to the Legislature on June 22 I described an alternative which could promote public safety while enabling an arena to remain open."

Dr. Stephenson told the Legislature: "It may be that some interim accommodations are possible, without in any way

endangering public safety. Let me give an example: it may be found that under certain conditions of snow and wind load, an arena roof structure will be stressed somewhat beyond limits. Nonetheless, through a combination of regular monitoring by the consulting engineer and continuous control and surveillance by the authorities in charge of the arena, the building may still be used without risk of collapse and, therefore, without risk of danger to the users.

"In such case, the owner, in order to be permitted to continue to operate the arena, would be required to have an acceptable design prepared and to have commenced work to permanently rectify the hazard and to be subject to monitoring inspection procedures and routines as prescribed by a professional engineer."

Both Mr. Welch and Dr. Stephenson expressed the hope that all arenas can make the required repairs or changes as quickly as possible.

Mr. Welch said field staff of his ministry and individual Members of the Legislature are being asked to assist municipalities to use the special grant program announced today.

All applications for Wintario grants which have been made for use in repairing unsafe arenas and filed with the ministry prior to today's announcement will be reviewed to give them the benefits of the new program, said Mr. Welch.

Previously, provincial grants were available to cover half the cost of repairs but Mr. Welch said the provincial share was increased in order to help municipal taxpayers and avoid delays.

The revised program will provide 25 per cent of the cost of any repairs up to \$75,000 for each facility affected through the Community Recreation Centres Act.

Wintario will provide \$2 for every \$1 raised locally toward the remainder of the cost.

Normally, Wintario grants are limited to one third or, at the most, half of the balance and are \$1 for \$1 in most areas of Southern Ontario.

In order to allow municipalities to proceed immediately with repairs, the minister said a pledge by a responsible community organization to the council to raise their share within three years will be accepted as proof of local support and provincial funds will be paid over progressively as construction takes place.

Under the regular Wintario supported programs, groups must raise their share and complete construction before receiving money from the lottery.

Although the special Wintario program applies only to repairs necessary to restore existing arenas to a structurally safe condition, the minister said some municipalities may decide to replace rather than repair older buildings.

Report from

J. Albert Belanger

This week I would like to tell you about Bill 81, an Act to amend the Environment Protection Act which was passed just before the Legislature recessed for the summer months.

This amendment will provide for the regulation by the Ministry of the Environment for non-returnable or non-refillable beverage containers.

My colleague, George Kerr as Minister of the Environment hopes that both industry and consumers will be persuaded to accept the idea of standard size refillable containers so that an outright ban will not be necessary.

The amendment states that within five years the phase-out of non-fillable containers will be complete. I have heard complaints from several people who feel that a five year "phasing-out" period is too long a time. Experience in British Columbia, however, has proven that an overnight ban is not the answer. We in Ontario, with this new Act, will strive to obtain a smooth and economic conversion of recycling this added waste to the environment. The five year time limit allows us the time to gradually accept the Government Regulations and to implement the fairest and most effective methods.

All retailers under the new regulations will be required to accept the return of clean, intact refillable bottles. They will also be prevented from offering throwaway bottles unless they offer the same sizes, flavours and brands in refillable containers.

As some of you may already be aware, beverage containers that can be reused are the best to buy. You save both environmentally and economically.

Currently, these bottles offer a price advantage of 6 or 7 cents on the content price and, due to recent refund increases, you now receive 10 cents on containers of less than 16 ounces and 20 cents on larger sizes.

The fact that some jobs in the canning industry and the glass and bottle trade will be lost due to these regulations is a probability. Thus the "five year period of adjustment" which I have spoken about will also allow for the time to make definite plans for finding alternative employment. More jobs, however, may be created if there is an increase in the number of people buying refillable containers.

It is evident that we can no longer afford to be overrun by the millions of tons of garbage known as convenience packaging. And with these new regulations I am convinced that most citizens will show their concern for the environment by purchasing refillable containers.

J. Albert Belanger,
M.P.P. Prescott-Russell

Water under the Bridge

This column, this time round, is mainly concerned with saying good-bye as editor. For those who missed last issue, I'm dropping out, rather sadly, but definitely. My first two weeks of law school have been unbelievably hectic and they say it just keeps on going, so there is just no time for any endeavors like the Review. I've allocated my wife three hours per week to visit me and I've got a guarantee from Peter Emerson that no snow will fall in our driveway until March. If I can "hack" five years of it I can't think of a nicer place to hang out a shingle than Russell. But enough of that.

I hate to leave the Review because so much is left undone. We'd planned to fleece you dear readers. That's right, we were going to ask for donations (oh, no! I gave at the office!) so that the R.A. wouldn't have to go into hock for us, but be decided to wait and let the new editor get a shot at it.

More important, though, there remains a lot of things for this paper to do, we've barely scratched the surface. Technical things like going bi-weekly, being more regular, building readership, great goals but requiring patience. But the real business of a community paper - providing a focus - has only begun to be done. For instance:

— How about the Nakion Valley Conservation Authority? What is it? What plans does it have? How does it affect us?

— Municipal elections this fall. — Whatever happened to the Prescott-Russell Planning Study? Maybe they heard what they didn't want to hear, so much for participatory democracy.

— Those roads, my gosh hasn't anybody else lost teeth on the way to the 417?

— Some high schoolers in our reading area travel FORTY miles EACH WAY to school. That's about 15,200 miles per year, 76,000 miles in a high school career. But, I won't editorialize, but you've got to think of all those wasted hours, and the costs. Why at 5c a mile.

— What's going on about our sewers? Postponed? It's just a bit too vague, don't you think?

— What are the official plans for our Township? How do they affect us?

Anyway, there she be. The paper is going to go forward. While I may be a fool on some grounds, I'm not such a fool as to think I'm indispensable.

This community has talent to spare - we may have to pry it loose, but it's there. We're having a meeting this week to look at the Reviews' future - and if you're in the Reviews' future, you'll be there. Phone for the time.

Finally, many thanks from all of us to you who helped get this old pamphlet off the ground. I trust my successor will have all the support I enjoyed.

Norman Bowley
Editor

Social Notes

Mr. and Mrs. Russell Hay, and Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Wade and Ian enjoyed a vacation in the Eastern Provinces.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Boyce, Dale and Scott had dinner recently with the Misses Florence and Dorothy Marquette.

Many Russellites attended the wedding of Mr. William Gamble to Miss Patti Barker in Ottawa, August 28.

Mrs. Larry Droppo, Pamela and Kevin of Wetaskewin, Alberta, spent a week with the parents Mr. and Mrs. Donald Hay.

Mr. and Mrs. George Dempsey of Stoney Creek, Mrs. William Lee and Linda of Burlington visited the former's mother Mrs. James Dempsey.

Mrs. John Twiname spent a few days with friends in Sarnia and London.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Williams of Kemptville visited the Misses Florence and Dorothy Marquette.

Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Dempsey and children of Greenbanks visited with the formers' grandmother, Mrs. James Dempsey.

Mr. and Mrs. Dan MacDonald of Winchester visited with Mrs. Asa Sullivan.

Rev. and Mrs. Roy Lees and son of Port Huron, Michigan were guests of Mrs. Lees mother, Mrs. Asa Sullivan.

Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Gamble spent a few days with Mr. and Mrs. Harold Gamble and attended the Gamble-Barker wedding.

We are pleased to report Mr. Steven Shirley is home from hospital. We wish him continued progress.

Corp. Fred Wall of Cold Lake, Alberta spent several days with Mr. and Mrs. Shirley Rombough.

Mrs. Leila Twiname, Misses Florence and Dorothy Marquette spent a day recently with Mrs. Milton Walker of Ottawa.

Mrs. Leila Twiname, Mr. and Mrs. Barry Carscadden and Mr.

and Mrs. Duane Johnston attended the O'Dwyer-Riley wedding in Toronto.

Miss Colleen O'Dwyer of Toronto spent several days with Mr. and Mrs. Barry Carscadden and boys.

Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Fisher of Peterborough called on Mrs. James Dempsey one afternoon recently.

Mrs. Lloyd Campbell is spending some time with her aunt Mrs. Clifford Miller.

We welcome Mrs. Coombs to Russell. Mrs. Coombs has recently emigrated from England and is living with her daughter and son-in-law Mr. and Mrs. David Webster.

We are sorry to have Mr. and Mrs. Donald Woodcock leaving our midst. We wish them well in their new home in British Columbia.

We are sorry to report the death of the Rev. Percy Clark in Newfoundland. Mr. Clark, a former rector of St. Mary's Anglican Church will be remembered by many in the area.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Rolland Forgues celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary on September 15th.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Campbell celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary on October 13th.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Hay entertained Mr. and Mrs. John Roberts and their four daughters, Marlo, Melinda, Mallery and Mandy of Hartford, Connecticut, at a fondue party.

John, who is Manager of the Sheraton Hotel in Hartford, is one of the Roberts identical twins and a nephew of Mrs. Hay. Hello to Tom Thompson who is beginning his teaching career at Coral Harbour, N.W.T.

Welcome to Brigitte Bittner and Pat Reid who have just moved into the Watkin's home on Church St. and Good Luck to the Watkins who are moving to Toronto!!