

## Minimum wage increases in March

Ontario's \$3.50 minimum wage will increase to \$3.85 next March and to \$4.00 an hour in October, according to the Minister of Labour. This is the first increase in the minimum wage since October, 1981, and will affect about 200,000 Ontario workers, most of them women.

Criticized on the inadequacy of the increase, the Minister said, "There was a real

temptation to come up with a higher figure but the Government also had to consider the present high unemployment." He felt that the increase represented a reasonable balance between the need to assist the minimum wage earners in keeping pace with the cost of living and the equally urgent need to maintain employment opportunities by ensuring that increases in the minimum

do not have a detrimental effect on employment levels.

There are variations in the minimum for different types of work. Waiters and waitresses who serve liquor go from \$3.00 to \$3.50; students under 18 from \$2.65 to \$3.15; apprentices from \$3.40 to \$3.90; construction workers from \$3.75 to \$4.25; and domestics from \$3.00 to \$3.50.

## Snowmobiler continue to die

Ontario Transportation and Communications Minister James Snow recently released figures on snowmobile accidents for the 1982-83 winter season.

"Of special concern," he said, "was the number of fatalities, which combined both drinking and speeding. Of the nine drivers involved in a fatality, eight had been drinking and six had been speeding.

"While the general figures were the lowest in the past 10 years," Snow reported, "there is still a very real concern about snowmobile

safety since it was the mildest winter in many years.

"In spite of the limited season, there were 358 reported accidents, 11 deaths and 316 people injured. And while these figures are down more than 50 per cent from the previous year," he continued, "they cannot be said to reflect any improvement in the safe operation of these machines.

"Slightly more than half the accidents (195) occurred on the weekend, primarily in good visibility (307 as compared to 51) and de-

facts were found in only 45 cases," Snow added.

"This mild winter also reflected the carelessness with which many snowmobilers approach driving on lakes and rivers," Snow continued. "Despite innumerable warnings on radio and in print, the number of drownings increased dramatically.

"Seven drivers and two passengers were drowned compared to three drivers and one

passenger the previous winter. It's obvious that despite increased publicity on the dangers of drinking and driving and snowmobiling on thin ice, drivers continue to take chances.

"With winter close at hand, I would like to remind every snowmobiler that care and caution are important to ensure the safe enjoyment of one of the greatest winter sports," he concluded.

## More fire protection for unorganized communities

An additional \$400,000 per year for three years will be spent on this vital service for every unorganized community in the north.

Changes to the criteria of the programme will not allow communities with populations of 300 or more to be eligible to receive a "Rapid Attack" fire vehicle. The RAV is specially designed for rural and remote areas. Communities with populations of 100 to 300 will now be eligible for financial assistance to purchase conventional fire vehicles. Fire protection packages will

continue to be provided to communities of less than 100 people.

Other criteria for the programme will still apply. These include a

community's willingness to maintain the equipment, need, housing (for RAV's) and the recommendation of the Fire Marshall's office.

### THANK YOU

I would like to thank my wife, my family and all my friends for making my retirement such a memorable occasion, and thank you C.P. Rail for 40 good years. Lastly, thank you dispatchers for train order No. 301, of November 12, 1983. It makes up for quite a bit of the time I spent in the sidings "Waiting for the meet".

D'Arcy McGuire

### In Thanksgiving for favours received:

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, for whom it is impossible not to have compassion on the afflicted, have mercy on us and grant us the grace we ask of you through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your tender mother and ours. Thanks also to St. Francis, St. Anthony and Padre Pio.

Sheila McAdam and family

### THANK YOU

I wish to greatly thank all those people who visited me, sent cards or telephoned while I was in the hospitals in Thunder Bay, Toronto and also The McCausland Hospital in Terrace Bay.

A very special thank you to all the people who so generously donated of their time, money and sent food to me during my illness.

Your kindness and generosity will never be forgotten. Merry Christmas and God bless you all.

Des O'Driscoll

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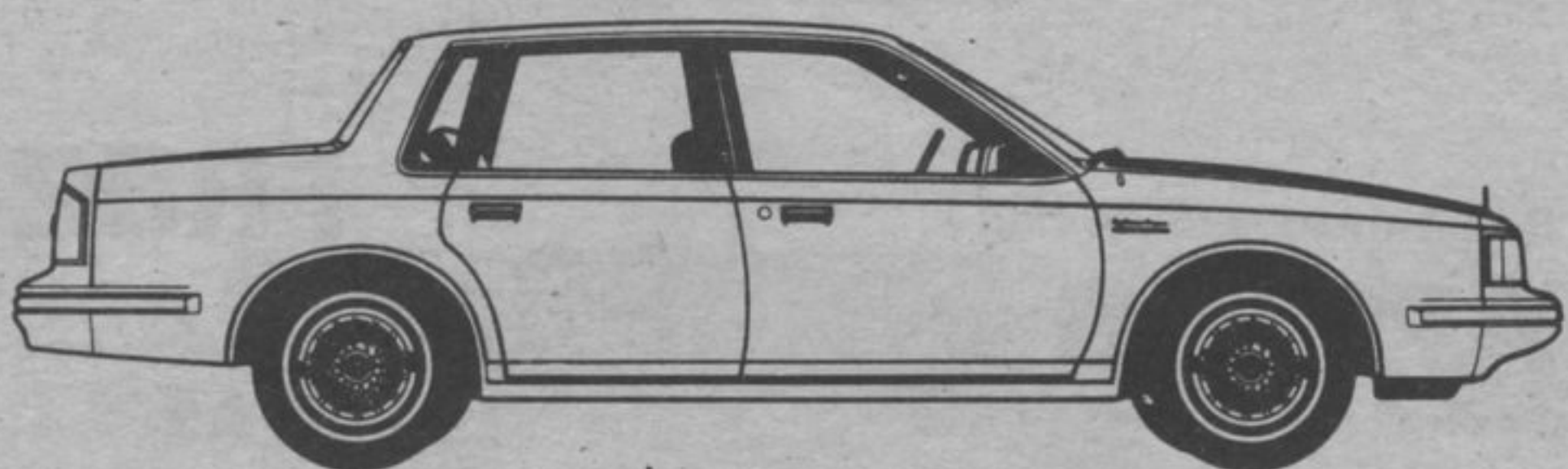
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