

Editorial Page

Tel.: 825-3747

The Terrace Bay-Schreiber News is published every Wednesday by Laurentian Publishing Limited, Box 579, Terrace Bay, Ont., P0T-2W0 Tel.: 807-825-3747. Second class mailing permit 0867. Member of the Ontario Community Newspaper Assn. and the Canadian Community Newspaper Assn.

General Manager.....Paul Marcon
Editor.....David Chmara
Admin. Asst.....Gayle Fournier
Production Asst....Carmen Dinner
Editorial Asst.....Connie Sodaro

Single copies 40 cents.
Subscription rates: \$15 per year / \$25 two years (local) and \$21 per year (out of town).

Too early for Canada Post's pat on the back

For the past few months, Canadians have been exposed to a barrage of self-congratulations by Canada Post.

Boasting previously unheard of profits and what appear to be amazing levels of customer satisfaction, Canada Post is making sure everyone across Canada knows about their success.

Unfortunately, the whole story is not getting out in their ads.

For instance, the \$96 million profit of the past year has come about due to a number of reasons. Much of that profit came about due to the corporation's selling outlets, primarily in rural Canada, to private businesses. This means this was a one time influx of cash and does not reflect a recurring source of income.

On the positive side though, some of this profit came about because of an increase in mail volumes and improvements in efficiency.

However, something many Canadians are concerned about is the varying level of service customers receive even though we're all paying the same price for these services.

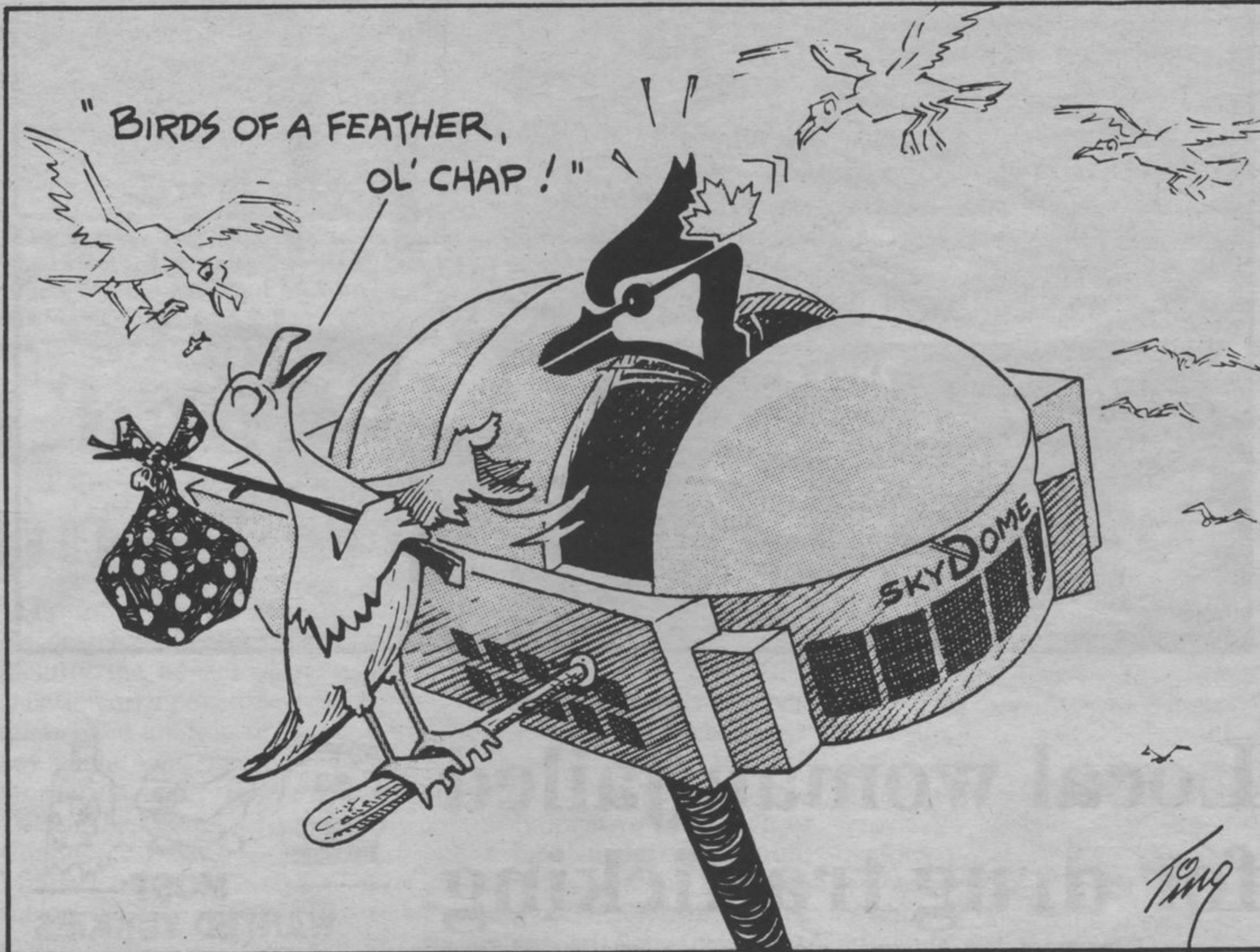
While some people get daily delivery right to their homes, others must go to the post office to pick up their mail from post office boxes, some must go to boxes in their neighborhood, and yet others have to retrieve their mail from so-called Super Boxes.

It seems more and more, Canada Post is getting away from home delivery - the service that the majority of us were once used to.

For some time now, independent firms have been conducting surveys to see how the level of service by Canada Post ranks. One recent study, conducted by Gallup, found that 97 per cent of rural Canadians are satisfied with the level of service offered in their communities.

I have some doubts as to the validity and accuracy of this figure.

As many people know, survey results can be significantly



affected depending upon how a question is asked, how it is phrased, who asks it, when it is asked, where it is asked, and a number of other factors.

Statistics are a useful tool, but as most statisticians know, given a set of data, they can often come up with conflicting results. So the 97 per cent level of satisfaction must be viewed with a certain level of skepticism - I find it hard to believe if 100 local residents were asked if they are satisfied with Canada Post's level of service (not just the local outlets, but the corporation as a whole) that 97 would respond positively.

Don't get me wrong, Canada Post is improving, but there are problems the corporation must overcome before it should start boasting about itself.

The News welcomes your letters to the editor. Feel free to express comments, opinions, appreciation, or debate anything of public interest. Write to:

Editor
Terrace Bay/Schreiber News
Box 579
Terrace Bay, Ontario
13 Simcoe Plaza
P0T 2W0

In order that we may verify authorship, please sign your letters.

Is Bush a cartoonist's nightmare?

If you've got any leftover kind thoughts, could you toss a couple to the editorial cartoonists of the world?

You know -- the guys who decorate the editorial page and usually manage to pack more pith and vinegar into one drawing than we scribblers can muster in a 500-word think piece.

The American chapter held its annual convention in Newport, Rhode Island last month. Normally it's a merry affair with lots of booze and banter. This year it was about as cheerful as a get-together of Maple Leaf goaltenders.

Cause of the gloom?

George Bush. The man is a political will o' the wisp. He has no discernible personality, no lampoonable quirks or habits, no definable policies on any particular subject. He casts no shadow, leaves no footprints. The man is walking jello.

Put another way, the cartoonists can't draw him.

This year's annual cartoonists convention turned

into a kind of bleary eyed wake for America's ex-prez -- a man who provided unalloyed glee (not to mention gainful employment) for the past eight years.

"Reagan was such a character" said one cartoonist wistfully. "I'm not having as much fun now."

"George Bush?" wailed another, "George Bush is a lot like Mister Rogers' Neighbourhood."

Well, Ronald Reagan unquestionably offered a lot more to draw with his patent leather pompadour, his bushy brow, his crepe-y neck and his overall mien of matinee idol gone to seed.

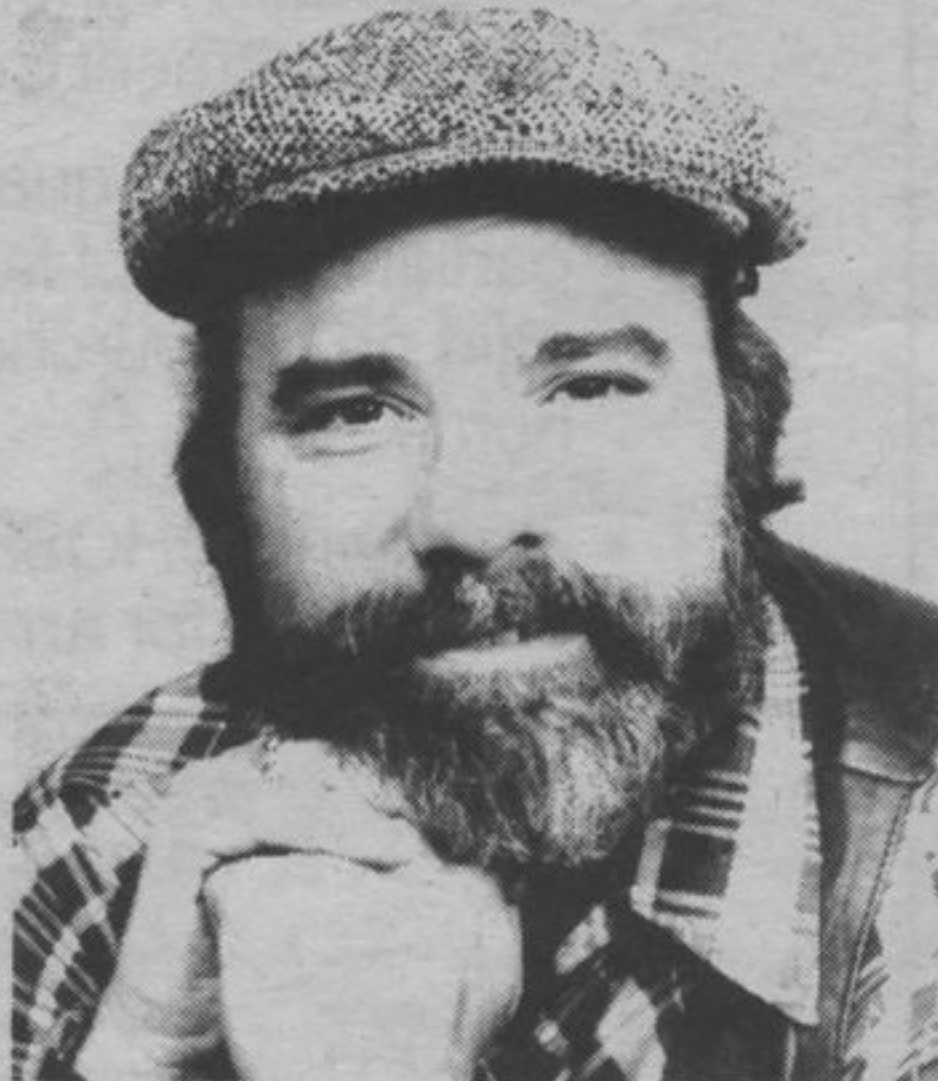
Which come to think of it, is what he was.

The physiognomy of George Bush offers no such pegs for a cartoonist to hang his hat on. Bush is kind of pale and reedy, middle-aged, middle class, middle everything. Remember the guy who sat next to you at the Home and School meeting? You don't? Exactly.

That's George Bush. No

wonder the American cartoonists are crying in their beer.

I think it's very important for a political figure to be caricaturable. It could be that John Turner's failure to ignite the imagination of the



Arthur Black

Canadian electorate stems in part from the fact that nobody could draw a good editorial cartoon of him. Canadian cartoonists had a field day with Trudeau and his balding pate, his bony face and his penchant for sniffing roses. They were

merciless in their depiction of gloomy Robert Stanfield, the Undertakers' Undertaker. They had a ball portraying Joe Clark as a gormless puppy, Lester Pearson as a pudgy, nearsighted Mister Bumble.

And Dief. Was there ever a greater gift to the cartoonist's pen than John George Diefenbaker, 13th Prime Minister of Canada?

Dief had beady eyes, protruding teeth and corrugated hair, all riding on a nest of neck wattles that wobbled impressively when Dief was aroused, which was often. He was magnificent. He was the Mona Lisa for Canadian cartoonists. They all had their versions of him, and none was better than the Toronto Star's Duncan Macpherson. When Prime Minister Diefenbaker canceled production of the Avro Arrow, throwing thousands of aviation workers out of a job, The Star ran a Macpherson cartoon of Diefenbaker dressed as Marie Antoinette, complete with curls, cleavage and birthmark,

all over the caption "Let them eat cake."

That was 30 years ago. I still can't think of that cartoon without smiling.

All of which is scant solace for American cartoonists facing at least four years of trying to pin George Bush to paper.

Meanwhile, Ronald Reagan, the man they loved to draw is moving on to...larger canvasses as it were. There's a move afoot in the states right now to chisel Reagan's likeness into the granite of Mount Rushmore alongside Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

Canada has no such tradition yet, but who knows? What with Free Trade and all, perhaps when Prime Minister Mulroney's term expires (if ever) his admirers (if any) will see to it that his likeness is carved into the Canadian countryside.

Hopefully a suitable bluff could be found.

Around Moose Jaw, preferably.