

# Local VIA service derailed

By Dave Chmara

With the recent announcement of the VIA Rail cuts, both Terrace Bay and Schreiber will no longer have rail passenger service.

Benoit Bouchard, Minister of Transportation, announced the cuts will take effect Jan. 15, 1990.

Of the current 38 VIA routes in Canada, 18 will be eliminated which will lead to over 2,700 VIA employees being laid off.

Schreiber Reeve Mike Cosgrove said there will be 22 to 25 jobs lost in Schreiber. He said some of these people may keep their jobs because of seniority,

but they will no longer be working in Schreiber.

"I'm angry and shocked," commented Cosgrove on the cuts. "Passenger service across Canada means just that - Canada. The government is simply not listening to the people, to Canadians," he added.

Cosgrove said, "the handicapped, seniors and people without cars" will be hurt by these cuts.

Saying he was extremely upset with the announcement, Cosgrove said, "the government can spend over \$500 million on bilingualism but they can't on the train. Jobs,

people and heritage are being taken away from the country."

Saying Schreiber won't give up without a fight, Cosgrove said, "at the minimum we'll send a delegation to Transport Canada" to oppose the cuts.

The day the cuts were

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## Terrace Bay - Schreiber

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## Reading Rising continues with gov't grant

By Dave Chmara

The local adult literacy program, Reading Rising, and the Literacy Northwest Network have received grants of \$36,700 and \$20,000 from the Ministry of Skills Development for this year.

Pam McKeever, the Community Literacy Coordinator for Reading Rising, said the money will help in the purchase of materials and supplies needed to help people to learn to read and write.

It will also help pay for the training required for the volunteer tutors before they can start teaching, any necessary travelling and salaries.

McKeever said at this point the literacy program has 30 tutors that have been trained and others have come forward to be trained.

There are currently 19 students enrolled in the literacy program. McKeever said their ages and reading levels vary.

"Some people are learning English as a second language, other people are taking courses needed to get their grade 12 and some are at a basic level," she said.

The tutors, who are asked to give three hours per week (although some give more), work one to one with their student and the student's involvement in the

program is kept confidential.

"Some people have been in the program for three years and people don't know about it so the confidentiality is working," said McKeever.

McKeever said she does an initial interview with the student to get an idea of the person's reading and writing level.

She said one reason the program is so successful is because it is based around learner centred training.

"Each student decides what they want to learn. For example, a person may want to learn how to drive so we'll help them towards this goal. The adults learn very well if what they're learning is what they want and need to learn," said McKeever.

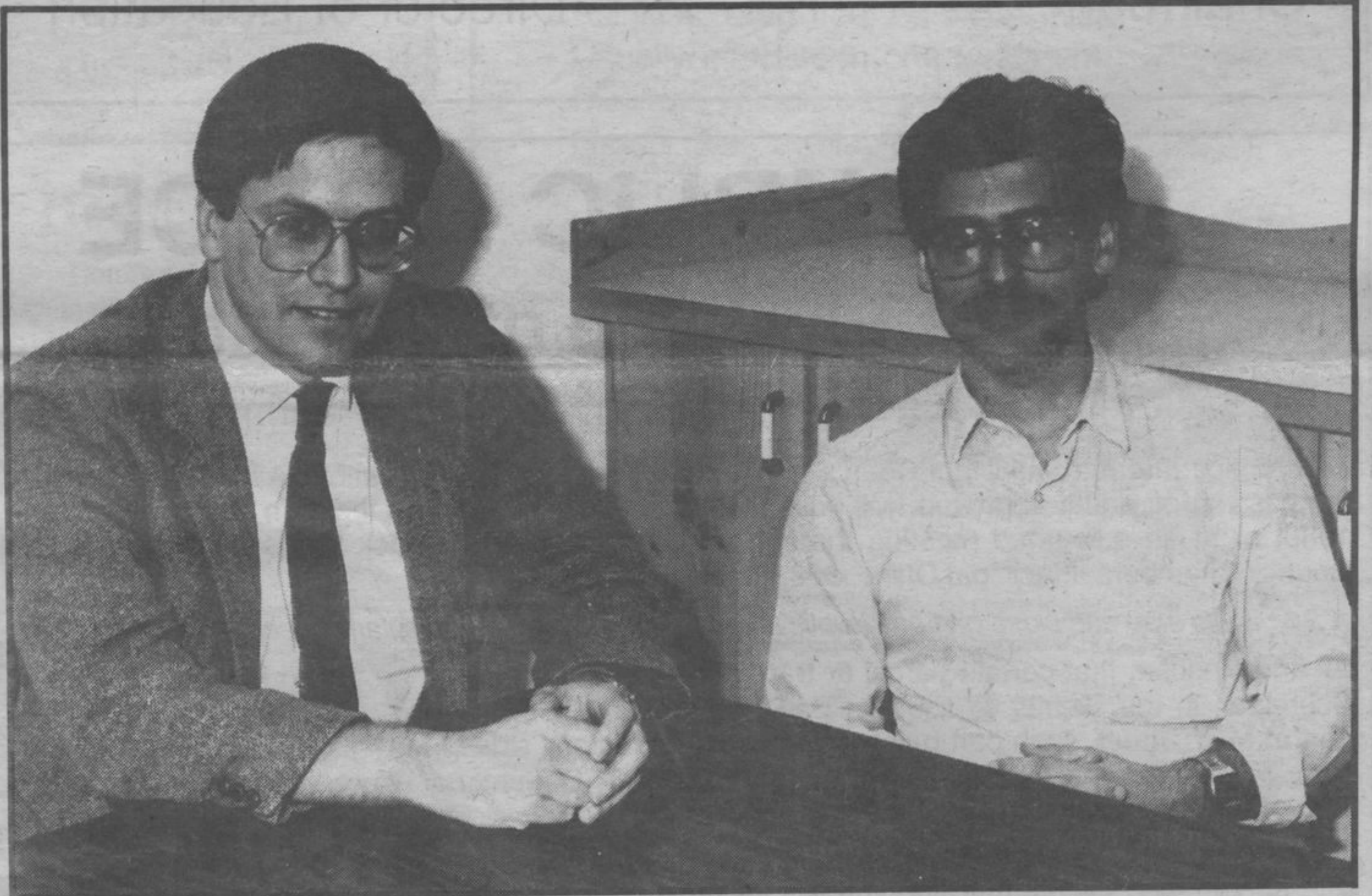
She said the work can be very satisfying to both the student and the tutor.

McKeever said she tries to match students and tutors who have similar interests.

"If the tutor has trouble adapting to the learner centred curriculum we can always change the tutor," she said.

Jeanne Marcella, the head librarian at the Terrace Bay Library, is one of Reading Rising's tutors, said she really believes in the program.

"I enjoy it and you get to know



Doctors Mark Woldnik, left, and Amir Geran are two physicians who recently took up practices in Terrace Bay and Schreiber. Dr. Geran works out of the Schreiber Medical Clinic and Dr. Woldnik has a private practice at McCausland Hospital. See their story on page 2.  
Photo by Dave Chmara.

people. You develop friendships and the students are really appreciative," said Marcella.

She added it's no problem attracting tutors but it's hard to attract students.

"It's difficult for them to come forward. It's a big commitment on the part of the student."

Marcella first became involved in the Reading Rising program after attending a conference originally intended to promote literacy through the libraries.

"A series of workshops were held and other literacy groups attended as well," said Marcella.

She then decided to volunteer to become a tutor and to also sit

on the literacy committee.

"Anyone can be a tutor," she said. "But they do need some guidance and training."

All the resources used in the program can be found in the Schreiber or Terrace Bay Libraries and McKeever said they have both been very supportive of the program.

The Reading Rising program does not take referrals noted McKeever. People wanting to learn to read and write must contact someone in the program themselves.

Locally, McKeever said according to Statistics Canada, the illiteracy rate is 15 per cent.

Here are more facts on illiteracy as found by a Southam Inc. survey conducted in Sept. 1987.

- Illiteracy is higher among men than women, 53.5 per cent to 46.5 per cent.

- Illiteracy is higher among francophones than anglophones - 29 to 33 per cent - but the gap is biggest among the oldest and vanishes among the young.

- There are five million illiterate people living in Canada.

- Nearly half of Canada's illiterates are 55 or older even though this group accounts for 29 per cent of the population.



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