



The Tribune

Established 1838

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Editorial

Unfair to all concerned

Snowmobile races are continuing at the fairgrounds track in Markham—temporarily, perhaps, but continuing just the same. The situation that currently exists, however, is anything but good. Residents, with homes adjacent to the site, are clamoring to have the races stopped. The promoter, having gone to considerable expense in organizing the event, is equally anxious that competition be continued. The Fair Board is caught in the squeeze. While not wholly to blame, Markham Town Council could have done one party or the other a greater service, by taking a firmer stand on the issue when it was first introduced.

They should have answered "yes you can" or "no you can't." Rather, they elected to sit on the fence—adopt a "wait and see" approach. They didn't have long to wait. One afternoon of competition and the complaints began pouring in. Then, and only then, did they elect to act. And, quite naturally, as politicians, they sided in with the complainants—the people that put their 'X' on the ballots. Participatory democracy, as advanced by Prime Minister Trudeau, is indeed a fine thing; but in many instances, not too practical. There are times when an elected assembly must act as it alone sees fit. Lack of action, as in this instance, only buries the problem.

Touring teams soon commonplace

Stouffville's O.M.H.A. Bantam team is currently on tour in Switzerland. The club, with its contingent of supporting fans, will return, Jan. 22. It is an experience none will ever forget. While many look on the games strictly as "competition", the won-loss record is of secondary importance in our opinion. Rather, it's the boys' conduct, on and off the ice, that matters most. This fact was pointed out very forcibly by convenor Ed Grimshaw, prior to the team's departure, Friday. "You are not only representing the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville," he said, "but your country, Canada. You know what's expected of you. I don't think I need to say more."

Mr. Grimshaw wasn't thinking in terms of figures on a scoreboard. He was stressing the importance of good public relations at an international level. It is in this area, that games are won or lost—that tournaments are a success or failure. Overseas "visits" of this kind will soon be commonplace. And this is good. For athletes are experts in diplomacy. They have gained, where politicians have failed. In 1974, Whitchurch-Stouffville will play the role of an international hockey host. A Swiss team and their supporters will be our guests. Let's hope we establish the same standard of goodwill, that we all know our boys will establish over there.

Minority rules in Canada

While everyone is ready to admit that David Lewis of the NDP is presently wielding considerable power in Ottawa, he should not forget that less than 20% of the electorate chose to support his policies in the last election. As he prepares to twist the arm of the Liberal government into promoting these policies, he should keep this point in mind. After being turned down by eighty per cent of Canadians in the election it seems a bit presumptuous now for him to assume that this same policy now is what the country needs or wants. The people chose freely in the election and it was not the policy of Mr. Lewis that

they selected. Under these circumstances Mr. Lewis should not be too bullish in trying to legislate for Canadians what he thinks is good for them. It is probably true that the vast majority of Canadians do not want another election right now and no one would have less stomach for it than Mr. Lewis and his NDP party. However, we can't see but that even an election would be better than to have the country under one-man rule, particularly when that one man needs a splinter party which has been able to garner such a small percentage of the over-all Canadian vote.

Editor's Mail

Dear Editor: Just a word to let you know that the Jan. 4 edition of The Tribune, arrived here Jan. 6. We were indeed pleasantly surprised, because that is faster delivery than we receive on our weekly paper here. We are appreciative of the many Christmas cards received from Stouffville friends, after The Tribune published our address in a recent issue. It is important, however, to include the Postal Code number, O.X.11.O.J.U. Thanks again. Mr. and Mrs. Ben Tablot, Rowstock, Berkshire, England.

Dear Mr. Thomas: In your review of the Student Variety Night held, Dec. 21, at Stouffville High School, you made a comment on the wisdom of promoting the sale of alcoholic beverages from a school stage. The skit in question, "The Pie-Eyed Piper" was taken from a short story by a prominent Toronto newspaper columnist, and adapted by the students to suit Stouffville. This skit was not promoting the sale of alcohol, any more than the "Drivers Ed" skit was promoting running over dogs and cats, or the "Awards Night" skit was promoting low academic standards. I feel, therefore, that your criticism of our taste in presenting it, is quite unjustified. John Campey, Gormley.



'On Guard'

SUGAR AND SPICE

A little glee for '73

By BILL SMILEY



It was rather a gloomy end to 1972, with the deaths of scrappy Harry Truman and that fine Canadian, Mike Pearson, and the eternal shootings among the mad Irish, and the earthquake in Nicaragua. So let's get off on the right foot for the next twelve months with something a little lighter. Some columnists are smart enough to keep a file of funny or unusual things that happened during the previous year, so that they have a ready-made column just after New Year. The only funny or unusual thing around our place is my filing system: I just took a look at it, eighteen inches high all over my desk, picked up my typewriter and moved to the dining room table. There's nobody here but us crumbs. Whereby I decided to pass along some things that I consider amusing, with the hope that you will too. They're not original and are culled from the centuries. Here's Stephen Leacock describing an encounter with a pirate ship: "The two ships were brought side by side. They were then lashed tightly together with bag string and binder twine, and a gangplank laid between them. In a moment the pirates swarmed upon our deck, rolling their eyes, gnashing their teeth and filing their nails." And as he relates the ensuing carnage: "I noticed one gigantic fellow brandishing a knotted towel, and striking right and left among our fellows, until Captain Bilge rushed at him and struck him flat across the mouth with a banana skin."

That's the humour of incongruity. Here's an example of the humour of heartlessness, of which a master was Harry Graham. Try writing some of your own. The ice upon our pond's so thin That poor Mamma has fallen in We cannot reach her from the shore Until the surface freezes more. Ah me, my heart grows weary waiting— Besides, I want to have some skating Another of his was: In the drinking well Which the plumber built her Aunt Eliza fell; We must buy a filter. Here's a touch of the ironic. And I'd like to ask my friend Dr. Hackstetter to please note "The denunciation of the young is a necessary part of the hygiene of older people, and greatly assists the circulation of their blood." How about a couple from Ogden Nash that great humorist in verse. This one's entitled Song Of The Open Road: I think that I shall never see A billboard lovely as a tree. Indeed, unless the billboards fall, I'll never see a tree at all. That's typically American in theme and content, but here's a little couplet of his that is symbolic and universal: If you hear the scream of a panther Don't anther. I can resist one more Ogden Nash, and if you haven't read him, buy a copy. This is called Reflection On Ice-Breaking. Candy is dandy But liquor Is quicker. Then, of course, there's the epigram, a very brief witty observation. Its master was Oscar Wilde, who came to a bad end, in more ways than one. But our sample will be from Hilaire Belloc. Entitled On His Books. When I am dead, I hope it may be said: His sins were scarlet, but his books were read. Isn't that a nice example of the pun, as well as saying in two lines something about the monstrous pride of the writer? Here's another by Belloc. It's called, simply, Epitaph On My Wife. Here lies my wife. Here lies she. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Then there is the limerick. Some of the funniest (and foulest) verses in the language are found in this form. But this is simply clever, or cleverly simple. The bottle of perfume that Willie sent Was highly displeasing to Millicent; Her thanks were so cold They quarreled, I'm told Through that silly scent Willie sent Millicent. The fine art of satire has fallen into lethargy these days, except perhaps among political cartoonists, where it is often merely cruel, rather than witty. But the Roman satirist, Martial, wrote a verse that is just as modern as it was 2,000 years ago. The golden hair Fabulla wears Is hers, Who can deny it? She swears 'tis hers, and true she swears For I did see her buy it. Many Canadians tend to take life very seriously. I hope these samples, ninety per cent of which were taken from school texts, will help dispell that preoccupation. So, whether your troubles are kids, or parents, or old people, or unrequited love, remember, you have only one life. And this is it. Enjoy.

ROAMING AROUND

I'm all heart come Feb. 14

By Jim Thomas

Four seasons ago, as some readers may recall, I embarked on a crusade against Christmas cards—both the sending and the receiving. For, with the exception of remembering folks one seldom sees, the tradition, to me at least, seemed kind of foolish. And it still does, although my wife strongly disagrees. In fact, she finds my anti-card exchange policy so distasteful, she looks on it (and me) as a kind of throw-back to the era of Scrooge. But look on it this way. It's Dec. 23, I'm already fifteen minutes late for work, and the car's marooned to the axles in a driveway full of snow. So what do I do? I go seeking the assistance of good neighbor Vic Little and later, after a lot of huffing and puffing, I'm out. Quite naturally, I say thanks, concluding the conversation with "Merry Christmas." The same day he receives a card from us, saying exactly the same thing, only in a commercial rather than personal way.

Which is best? Needless to say, since publicizing this stand, my receipt of Christmas correspondence has slackened off to a mere trickle—that is to me alone. Mind you, many still come addressed Mr. and Mrs., but that custom is more out of respect for our marital status than seasonal felicitations to me. I don't mind a bit. While many of you will find this hard to believe, I'm predicting that in ten years, maybe less, Christmas card sending will have stopped. And, except for the aforementioned exception (distant friends and kinfolk), I say great. But wait a minute. If this custom is to die, something must arise, or be expanded upon, to take its place. My answer to this is Feb. 14—St. Valentine's Day. Now there's an occasion that should be celebrated, certainly more than it is now.

At present, the sending of a Valentine is a kind of school kid's event. But what about we oldsters? Are the rights to display one's likes and loves reserved only for the single set? I should hope not. For instance, every Friday, on receipt of my cheque, I gallop down to the Bank to see Doreen. Mind you, there's nothing going between us (her husband can be assured of that); she never slips me an extra \$10 or pads my anaemic account (her employer can be certain of that); she just helps to brighten my week, particularly after Ottawa has cabbaged a big part of my pay. Doreen deserves a Valentine. Down at the Arena is Betty. She works in the snack bar, patiently dealing out everything from skate laces to chewing gum. At 7 a.m. on a Saturday morning, it's good medicine for sleepy-eyed parents to see someone who can smile. A Valentine for Betty. At Hunt's Sunoco, the proprietor says "thanks" after cleaning the windshield and headlights, checking the tires, battery and anti-freeze, then changing a \$20 bill for a \$2 sale. Mickey deserves a Valentine. At the I.G.A., the manager comments "come back again," while mopping up the contents of a case of coke; the shopper's child has "accidentally" pulled off the shelf. A Valentine for Jack. Christmas trees are still considered garbage two weeks after New Year's. Valentines for Beanie and Harry. My wife tightens up four pairs of skates, only to loosen them ten minutes later. Jean deserves a Valentine. They say, "I Like You," "I Love You," or just plain "I Thank You." Feb. 14—the most important day of the year. Remember the occasion with a card.

How to build an outdoor rink

My appeal (Jan. 11) for information on how to construct an outdoor natural ice rink, has met excellent response. For example, Don Boynton of Victoria Square invited me over to inspect his project personally. "It would take too long to explain the procedure over the phone," he said. I haven't made it yet, but I fully intend to—maybe even take my wife and five children along. Bill Edwards, Stouffville, R.R. 3, claims the secret to an outside rink is "freeze the ground first," then carry on from there. "Without a frozen base, you're wasting your time," he concluded. "Get the whole neighborhood in and tramp down the snow," said Jim Elliott, Stouffville, R.R. 2. The best time to flood, says Jim, is late at night with the temperature around zero degrees. Mrs. Shirley Wright, Markham, R.R. 1, had possibly the best suggestion of all. "Order a rink from Eaton's Catalogue. They cost about \$4.99. Now there's a practical person."

