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DON BERNARD, Editor  
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# Editorials

## Time-wasting not necessary

The length of council and planning board meetings has been slowly creeping up for some time and it is now not unusual for these sessions to carry on for 3½ or four hours.

Thankfully, the situation has not yet deteriorated to the point, as it has with the school board, where only a portion of the agenda is covered, but, if things keep going the way they have, it may eventually come to that.

Part of the problem is an augmented workload due to more involved planning procedures and increased development pressures.

The other reason is that ratepayers have been coming in and wasting a great deal of council time on what are basically fact-finding missions.

Planning Committee was held up for more than an hour last week by a group of Ballantrae citizens who were seeking background information on the proposed Melvin Baker subdivision in Ballantrae.

These people had a legitimate interest, and we are not trying to discourage this, but we would like to point out that the majority, if not all, their questions could have been answered by the local ward councillor, Becky Wedley, or by Planning Secretary Ken Aida.

In our opinion the whole point of having a ward system is that the ratepayer knows there is one councillor who has his or her

particular interest in mind and they can refer to that person when seeking information.

Mrs. Wedley, we are confident, would have been quite willing to supply the ratepayers with the information they required and a long and unproductive hour would have been eliminated from last week's meeting.

After taking this step, if they still had doubts, the residents could have appeared before the board and filled in the remaining gaps, likely in a matter of minutes.

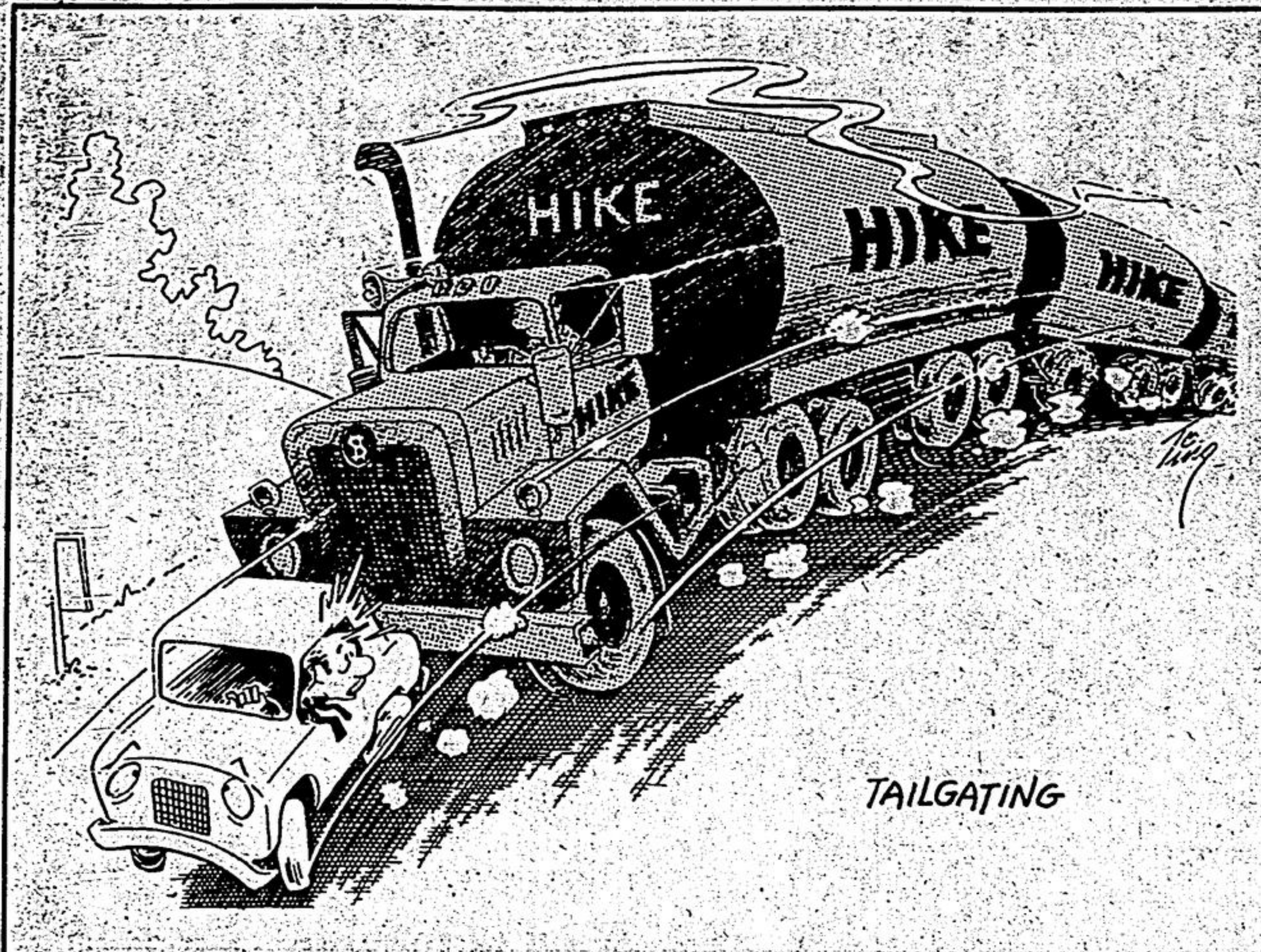
We are not trying to discourage citizen involvement but it would greatly facilitate council business if people would do a little homework before appearing as a delegation.

Another complaint is with residents groups who insist on having two or three people speak for them at a meeting. There is nothing objectionable if each spokesman raises different points, but unfortunately this is often not the case.

It happens time and time again that speaker after speaker will get up and drone on and on over the same points that have already been covered ad infinitum and ad nauseum.

A particular group that can be singled out for blame for this particular time squandering tactic is the Vivian and the 9th Ratepayers Group.

The process of municipal government is long drawn out and tedious enough for our municipal representatives without adding this type of aggravation.



## SUGAR AND SPICE

# Backward approach to bilingualism

By BILL SMILEY



You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. You can't teach an old dog new tricks. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

To these old adages might be added another, closely related. You can't create a fluent, sparkling, bilingual cosmopolitan out of a dull, middle-class, middle-aged civil servant.

I'm glad to see that some semblance of sense has seeped into the senility surrounding the approach to bilingualism at Ottawa.

Keith Spicer, the grand poobah of bilingualism, appointed by the Trudeau government to wet-nurse one of its favorite babies, has finally reached a conclusion that an average 12-year-old could have arrived at, without undue mental strain, in about 15 minutes.

He decided, and had the courage to admit, that the government program for creating bilingualism in the civil service was bass ackwards.

Some unkind people might say that Ottawa civil servants have always spoken with a double tongue, even when they had only one language, and why have them speaking doubletalk in two?

Instead of pouring millions into converting stodgy civil servants into connoisseurs of French language and culture, Mr. Spicer concedes, the money should be spent in the schools, teaching French to children. Great thinking, Keith. Anyone with any knowledge of learning a second language could have told you that two years ago.

Ordinary, every-day common sense and experience shows us how true this is. Take an average family of immigrants to Canada, German, Italian, whatever you like. The parents have great difficulty in learning English, and retain a strong accent all their lives.

Their children, even though their only language is their native one when they arrive here, and even though it is spoken almost exclusively at home, are completely at ease in English within a year or two. To hear them chirp and prattle away in the idiom, you'd never know that they weren't born and bred in English-speaking Canada.

For an adult, learning a new language is horribly hard work. And for a bureaucrat or civil servant, it must be double difficult, because their minds are constitutionally unable to admit anything new.

French-Canadians who want to get somewhere in Canada, whether it's in business or politics, learn English because they have to. Whatever the pundits say, this is primarily an English-speaking country.

Most French-Canadian cabinet ministers are at least adequate in English. Some politicians, like Pierre Trudeau and Claude Wagner, speak English beautifully, far better than most of their Anglophone peers and opponents.

But when an Anglo politician speaks French, however atrociously, we look upon him or her with amazement, as though it were

a sign of genius. What hypocrisy, in a country that is, theoretically, bilingual. (I still wince every time John Diefenbaker strays into what he fondly believes is French.)

As you may have gathered, I have strong feelings about bilingualism. Unlike a great many Canadians, I am all for it. But the government's approach to creating that blessed state has been at best a farce, a charade, at worst a swindle of the taxpayers.

Of course the beginnings must be with the children! On the surface, the study of French in our schools has been encouraged by government. In fact, the moneys for a practical, realistic approach to learning French have been held back from the schools and poured into that bottomless pit at Ottawa.

French has practically been abolished as a pre-requisite for university entrance. As a result, and because learning it requires some real effort, students shy away from it and look for "bird" courses.

Result, French classes in our schools have shrunk deplorably. This, despite the fact that French is being taught better, and in a more lively, interesting, and realistic way, than ever before. (I studied French for five years in high school, three in university, and can barely proposition a girl, let alone order a meal in French.)

O.K. Let's start all over again with our bilingual program, and forget that painful failure in Ottawa.

Start teaching it to kids in Grade 1. Keep it up. Make it a prerequisite for university.

## EDITOR'S MAIL

# YCBE chairman explains

Dear Sir:

In your paper of April 29, 1976, you published an interview with Mr. Harry Bowes, Trustee of The York County Board of Education, concerning the Ministry of Education's decision to give Sketch Plan Approval for an addition to Orchard Park Public School.

In your article you wrote that Mr. Bowes said that the board staff had set the priorities and "did not let the Trustees know". Also, the article quoted Mr. Bowes as saying, "They tried to slip it in as routine approval" and "It seems to me that the administration has decided Orchard Park should go ahead and not the trustees themselves".

Since these comments could cause some doubts in the minds of your readers with respect to the manner in which their elected trustees make decisions, I thought the following information would clarify this situation.

On Oct. 15, 1974, the Board of Education approved its Five Year Capital Expenditure Forecast including a Library Resource Centre and a General Purpose Room for Summitview Public School (Priority No. 3) at an estimated cost of \$439,728.00. At the same time, among other projects, the Board approved the addition of a Library Resource Centre to Orchard Park Public School (Priority No. 5) at an estimated cost of \$181,500.00.

The estimates for all of the additions for that year was \$800,000.00 but the Ministry allocated only \$448,000.00. The Trustees then had to reconsider the appropriate allocation of the monies. It should be noted that any Board has no assurance that money made available for one project will be transferred to another. The new project must be evaluated by the Ministry's criteria. The York County Board of Education has, however, always found the Ministry sympathetic when changes have been requested. As we felt it was worthwhile to proceed with three projects rather than one project, we therefore decided to allocate that money for the Richmond Hill High School Renovations, the Orchard Park Public School Library Resource Centre and the Eva L. Dennis Library Resource Centre and General Purpose Room. We also decided to attempt to get additional capital funds from the Ministry to undertake the balance of the building projects as set forth in the 1975 capital expenditure. This action was approved by the Board at its meeting on April 14, 1975.

Later, on Sept. 8, 1975, the Board reassessed its priorities and the Eva L. Dennis project was replaced by an addition to George Street Public School, and the work

required by the Fire Marshal for Summitview Public School. On September 22, 1975, the Board appointed the Architect for Summitview Public School project and approximately the same date the request for "Approval in Principle" for these renovations for Summitview Public School was submitted to the Ministry of Education. Approval in Principle to complete the renovations was granted by the Ministry of Education on Oct. 31, 1975.

To follow the Orchard Park project, the building proposal was submitted in July to the Ministry of Education and approval was received. In September the Board appointed an architect for the work. In November the Board approved sketch plans for Orchard Park.

In December 1975 the Ministry of Education announced "a hold" on all capital projects that had not passed through the sketch plan approval stage.

In January 1976, the Board advised the Ministry that because of the development around Summitview Public School, a review of priorities would probably be required. During the same month, the Board received a report from the staff showing all projects which were affected by the delay.

On March 26th, sketch plan approval for Orchard Park Public School was received from the Ministry of Education, and this letter of approval came to the Chairman's Committee Meeting on April 19, 1976. In retrospect, the decision of the Chairman's Committee to put that forward as routine was unfortunate inasmuch as we had advised the Ministry that we wanted to review our priorities if and when some money may be considered for York County.

Fortunately, Mr. Bowes caught this error and took it off routine and it was forwarded to the Planning and Building Committee for their recommendations to the Board.

My reason for writing this letter is to point out that the decisions reached were arrived at by the Trustees. The staff advised us but the Trustees made the decisions. Mr. Bowes is a hard working Trustee and I do not write this letter to cast any aspersions on his good efforts. However, since his statement could be considered both as criticism of the Board's staff or of the Board as a whole, I wished to set the matter straight. Much of what has happened occurred before Mr. Bowes was elected and as I must accept a great deal of the responsibility myself, I felt an obligation to make this information available to your readers.

DOUGLAS ALLEN  
Y.C.B.E. Chairman



## VIEWPOINT

# The great adventure begins

By DON BERNARD

When most of you are reading this column, I will be somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean heading for a three-week trip to Holland. However, what started out as plans for a holiday, has turned into a real adventure. You see when I walked out of The Tribune office yesterday, it was for the last time as editor.

To those people who know me, the decision to resign will not come as much of a surprise. Others might wonder about it a little. But this is my farewell column and I should make it good.

About three years ago my newspaper career took somewhat of an upturn, when I was asked to take over as editor of the Markham Economist and Sun. Up until that time, I had toiled in relative obscurity as sports editor of the Newmarket Era.

After a number of experiences, including meeting the woman who is presently my wife, I felt that God was calling me out of newspaper work. In fact, after 3½ months at the Economist and Sun I resigned. The next week Johanna and I were married and we went on our honeymoon to Holland.

After a six-week honeymoon, we returned to the hard realities of life and, at that point, I chickened out and took a job as reporter at The Tribune. Still feeling that God had something for me, I tendered my resignation after six months or so.

It was then that I found out that the editor's job was coming open. Jim Thomas was moving to the Markham paper (ironically), and I was offered his job at The Tribune.

After some soul-searching (and I mean soul-searching), I decided to stay on and give it a try. That was just over two years ago. But if God truly calls an individual then that individual better listen to God or face the consequences.

I might say that the first 18 months of my tenure as editor amounted to a virtual spiritual desert. As I struggled to master the job, my spiritual life seemed to be in limbo.

Then my sister came to the Lord last fall (you might remember I wrote about that) and Johanna and I felt a new urgency to pray, especially for those who did not know Jesus. Ever since then God seems to be revealing more and more of himself to us.

And gradually God began to lead me in new ways. For once in my life I felt the great bubbling power of the Holy Spirit. I felt great peace and assurance when talking to people about Jesus. For the first time, I could testify confidently to my mother of God's love for her.

Meanwhile, I came to feel that none of this really conflicted sharply with my work at The Tribune.

But it was the weekend of the Sacred Music Night at St. James' Presbyterian Church that really turned the trick: My wife was to sing second last on the program. As the evening progressed, I felt the spirit of God present.

There was a welling up inside me while the quartet sang and I felt the Lord telling me to introduce my wife's song. That was too much, to push myself forward to speak, when I wasn't even on the program. Just before she was to go up I whispered to Johanna that I wanted to introduce the song.

Don't ask me exactly what I said, God gave me the words, but I knew one thing, that I must point the people there to Jesus Christ and the "call" he places on each believer's life.

Never before had I a compulsion to speak and never before did God give the words. It was glorious. If nobody was ministered to that night, at least I was, both my own involvement and my wife's song.

Glorious as that was, God was not yet through with me. Sunday evening, during the regular service at our church, our pastor announced special prayer for people in the congregation with some physical disorder.

While the service went on, I felt this same welling up in my stomach and felt God telling

me that there was someone there with a hearing problem and pain in the spine. Not wanting to make a mistake, I did not speak it out. But it welled up greater, greater, until I had to tell.

A few minutes later an elderly lady stood up to say that she had both of those ailments. She went forward for prayer and removed her hearing aid. She testified later in the service that she could hear and that God had "aled her".

There was also someone facing a major business decision, at least that's what God was telling me. When I spoke it out, nobody came forward. I spoke later in the meeting about some of my recent experiences when I realized that I was the person facing the business decision. The people prayed for me and I knew that I had to submit my resignation.

As to the future, your guess is as good as mine, but I have great peace about it and know that God is in control. Ever since my decision was made, I have had such assurance that it is God's will.

But let me say this one thing. Faith is a gift of God.

Only when we have surrendered our lives to him, can he give us the faith to do things out of the ordinary. Many of us have been led to believe that living a moral life is good enough. But I feel God wants to do more for us in this time.

He can only do that in a people yielded to Him.

Jesus said to his disciples: "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me." My prayer is that we truly lift up Jesus Christ.

# 30 years ago this week

Excerpts from The Tribune  
from May 16, 1946.

Giving the initials "K. K." for the middle-aged man who dropped into town last Friday morning and asked permission to stage a bit of a show on Market Street early in the evening. His display of art was to pull a five ton truck by his teeth with a rope. The strong man did the trick all right. During the day he

visited the public school and told the pupils that he attributed much of his strength to the fact that he avoids sweets; does not use strong drink, nor tobacco. The stranger is said to be right at home as a swimmer and is not adverse to jumping in the pond when it is ten below zero, a feat he performed at Walkerton. Despite the short notice he had a good-sized audience, and passed the hat for a reward.

**COUNTDOWN:**  
**Stouffville Centennial**  
**1877-1977**

Did You Know?  
•Stouffville had as many as four blacksmith shops just sixty years ago. The late William Dickson operated a shop about 500 yards east of Summitview School on the south side of Main St. There was also the Hill shop on Mill St. immediately to the rear of the present Sound & Music store, the Beebe shop, adjacent to the Stouffville Bakery, and the Griffith & Lintner operation in what is now Smith Welding.

•Stouffville was having dumping problems forty years ago and had established a waste yard on property that is now Rose Avenue.

•Stouffville Lions Club received its charter away back in 1938 and the first meetings were held in the Mansion House restaurant. The late J.R. Hodgins, local C.N.R. station agent was the first president.

# Bible thought for the Week

Will you be my prayer partners? For the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and because of your love for me — given to you by the Holy Spirit — pray much with me for my work. Pray that I will be protected in Jerusalem from those who are not Christians. Pray also that the Christians there will be willing to accept the money I am bringing them. Then I will be able to come to you with a happy heart by the will of God, and we can refresh each other. And now may our God, who gives peace, be with you all. Amen.

Romans 15:30-33