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Editorials

What's 96 million dollars?

It's trustee chastising time. Every year with the release of the annual budget, everyone, from the man on the street to municipal politicians, become experts in making cost-cuts on education. However, few, if any, ever appear before the Board to make a verbal presentation. And even fewer will ever put their suggestions in writing. Recommendation would be welcomed, are even encouraged, but the truth is, no one has any valid recommendations to make. It's just that ninety-six and a half million dollars seems like (and is) an awful lot of money. There should be room for reductions somewhere. But where? With so many expenses, such as salaries, already set, the trustees' hands are virtually tied.

This doesn't mean that Board members aren't obligated to try. This is difficult to do when one-third didn't even bother to show up at the last budget meeting.

Absent were - Beverley Breslow and Bill Munro of Richmond Hill, John Stephens and Patti Grand of Markham, Craig Cribar of Newmarket and Hector Massey of King.

Aurora's Norm Weller, never one to waste words, drew attention to the empty chairs around the board table, March 24. "There's something wrong here," he said. And he was so right. The most important meeting (from a taxpayers' point of view) in the entire year and six out of twenty missing.

Perhaps for good reasons, perhaps not. In our opinion, each absentee trustee owes his or her municipality an explanation. To them, the budget at that stage, might have appeared final, a fait accompli so to speak. To others like Norm Weller and Bill Laird (Georgina) it wasn't. They spoke out against it. But what of the missing six? Silence must mean consent.

Growth keeping costs down

The Town of Markham has, on several occasions, been criticized by non-resident regional councillors (and this newspaper), for failing to restrict growth to what would seem to be a reasonable limit. Because of massive build-up, great sums of money have been expended so that services such as schools, roads and recreation can keep pace.

Some of these funds have come from regional coffers and quite naturally, resentment surfaces when so much money is earmarked in that direction.

M.S. rural representatives don't understand Markham's situation. Situated on Metro Toronto's doorstep, politicians are

subject to tremendous pressure with, on many occasions, no alternative but to give in.

However, there's a positive side, one that all too often is ignored by those resentful of change. Markham is growing residentially that's true, but it is also growing industrially and commercially. And because our southern neighbors are enjoying great industrial growth, the Region as a whole is benefitting.

Admittedly, regional costs are up considerably. But thanks to Markham, so are receipts; hence a zero increase in the Region's mill rate for 1980. Henceforth, the region should think twice before biting the hand that feeds it.

Teens need to be challenged

The Lions-sponsored Bike-a-Thon has been cancelled. Danger to participants has been cited as one reason. There are others, the most obvious being a lack of challenge. Bikes being what they are today, twenty, twenty-five and even thirty miles is really no challenge at all. Proof of that was the fact one entrant went around the route twice.

Most kids (and some adults), like to be tested. To them, doing the impossible is fun. Anything less is a bore. And that's what the Bike-a-Thon had become - a bore.

So very few bothered to take part.

However, the desire to be challenged remains, in some other form. That is why the Lions (or another service organization), should come up with something different, even difficult, anything that will inspire young folks (and older) to give it their best.

With so many, young and old, on the run these days, why not a Jog-a-Thon or, if that seems too tough, bring back the Walk-a-Thons that proved so popular a decade ago.

Aside from the money-raising end, there's something to be said for community involvement. But first, the community must be challenged to get involved.



What a difference a week makes

What a difference a week makes. A few days ago, Duffin's Creek in the centre of Stouffville was a raging torrent, with water

coming within two feet of the top of the bank. Now it's back to normal with the spring run-off over. JoAnn Thompson

NEWS ITEM: Six trustees absent from Board budget meeting



"Ninety-six million dollars, h-mmm, either it gave them a scare or they just don't care"

Sugar and Spice

Solving the energy crisis

By Bill Smiley

Everybody talks about the energy crisis, but nobody does anything about it.

In point of fact, as we say in this game when we're not sure of either our point or our facts, precious few people know what a crisis is.

As an old English teacher, I know. A crisis is a turning-point that occurs in a story or play when something unexpected gives the plot a new direction.

To that extent, the energy crisis is no such thing. Everybody knew that oil was a non-renewable energy, just like coal and natural gas.

But we went on blithely in our unfounded assurance that we could always be warm at the turn of a switch, always be cool at the turn of another, kill each other in steadily increasing numbers on the highways, tear around on boats and motorcycles and snowmobiles, fly to the far corners of the earth for a comparative pittance, and so on.

The Garden of Eden, smelling of oil and poisoning the ozone. What a collection of nincompoops! And I do mean the poops part of it.

It became a crisis only when the Ayrabs came to their senses, got us by the short and curly, and began to twist.

Even then, it was more like a bad dream than reality. Our brilliant political leaders assured us that there was plenty for everybody for another twenty or ten or thirty or fifty years, depending on whether or not they were in power.

So everybody bought a second family car, or a new cruiser. To hell with our grand children. Let them freeze in the dark.

The great oil companies, with their conglomerates that sell everything from condoms to nylons, kept mum. And I don't mean they maintained mother.

Every time some backroom genius came up with an invention that proved you could run a car forty miles on faith, hope and spit, they gave him a million bucks for the patent and told him to disappear, quietly.

They were joined in the conspiracy of silence by the vast motor car companies, so powerful they can dictate to governments. These corporate citizens know, and knew long ago, that they were deliberately burning up the world's huge energy reserves. Did they care? Not as long as the profits held up.

If there is any history of this time, twentieth-century man will be looked on by the higher species that evolves in about the same way we look upon the dodo bird, a creature too stupid to survive.

Just the other day, I went down to the licence office and paid sixty dollars for the privilege of driving a large lump of rusting metal about, polluting the countryside. I told the girl that if she'd give me the \$60 back, and add three hundred, she could have the car. She refused. And I don't blame her.

The twentieth century is one of charlatans, dreamers, violence and sheer naïveté. We remind me of the alchemists, who flourished in the middle ages, trying to turn lead into gold.

We jog in polluted air to improve our lungs and hearts. We buy smaller cars to save gas and drive twice as much as we used to. We buy wood stoves at wild prices, and firewood at even wilder. We talk more about unemployment insurance than we do on research into these things.

We are all so well-educated and literate that we have a school system, churning out semi-literates who will breed vigorously and produce semi-morons.

We have a greedy, gluttonous society that gobbles up all the useless things it produces, and still can't find enough jobs for the people in it to lead a life of reasonable dignity.

I could go on and on, as you well know, but I must get down to brass facts, and propose some solutions. Here they are.

There's no use going to the politicians. They are interested in votes, not principles. We need a dictator. Oh, I don't mean some megalomaniac like Hitler or Mussolini. Just a nice, kindly, benevolent dictator, a sort of Mafia-like Don of the old-school, soft-spoken, but in charge.

His first move would be to call in his "boys" and gently suggest the elimination of all politicians, school administrators, economists, and drug pushers, so that we could start on a clean sheet.

I don't mean elimination in the crude way. The politicians would have to raise personally every cent they promised to spend. The school administrators would be assigned seven Grade 9 classes a day and lunch supervision. The economists would be sentenced to twenty years of arithmetic, and the drug pushers would be impaled on sharp stakes, at high noon, every Wednesday.

Then he'd appoint some commissioners to get things cleared up. I, for one, would be willing to accept the onerous chores of Energy Commissioner.

I wouldn't be unduly harsh. I'd just have collected, and burned, every snowmobile, power boat and motor-cycle in the country. I'd

put a governor on every car so that it couldn't go over 30 miles an hour. I'd ground every aircraft on a pleasure flight, and tie up every ocean liner, ditto. I'd issue an edict that subsidized longjohns and fine every household caught with its temperature above 60 degrees.

Of course, I'd expect a Cadillac and a Jet liner and a power cruiser to transport me about on my various, nefarious duties.

Plain people



RAE MCFADDEN
 Baker Avenue, Stouffville

If the program involves young people, it's a safe bet that Rae McFadden, Baker Avenue, Stouffville is a participant. Since coming to town in 1959, much of his free time's been spent with children or projects involving children. For example, he was an energetic worker within the Stouffville Minor Hockey Association, serving in many capacities including house league manager, statistician and timekeeper. For two seasons, he coached a Pee-wee softball team; was committee chairman and secretary of the Stouffville Drum and Bugle Corps; was a member of the group committee with 1st Stouffville Scouts and Cubs; Chairman of the Youth Education Committee within the Stouffville Branch of the Canadian Legion; Sunday School Superintendent and a teacher at the Stouffville United Church; Secretary of Camp Big Canoe Association; Chairman of the Canadian Legion's District Track and Field Committee (47 branches) and District Chairman of the Boy Scout Association. Rae is a past president of the Stouffville Legion, a former secretary and chairman of many committees. He's served as the Zone E-2 commander of the Legion (11 branches) and has assisted with the Poppy Fund including the position of chairman. Rae served with the R.C.A.F. during World War II and recently retired as an instructor in the Meteorological Branch of Environment Canada. Rae is proud of his family, that includes two sons, Tom with the Fire Department in Calgary; John, a Detective Sgt. with the Calgary Police Department and Arlene, a registered nurse on the staff of Foothills Hospital, also in Calgary. He has three grandchildren and hopes to see them all when he and his wife travel West this summer. It's because of people like Rae McFadden, Whitechurch-Stouffville's a better place in which to live.

Public always welcome

By JOHN STEPHENS
 York County Board of Education Trustee

The policy-making body of the York County Board of Education is the board of 20 trustees elected by ratepayers within the various municipalities of York Region.

The implementation of policy and all administrative work is done by administrative staff under the direction and supervision of the Director of Education who is also Secretary-Treasurer of the Board.

Annually the trustees elect from among themselves a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman who together with the Past Chairman form the Chairman's Committee, a kind of executive committee of the Board but not quite that powerful.

The duties of a Chairman are not well set out but they are basically to preside at meetings and to monitor things generally for trustees.

It can be limiting in that when the Chairman wishes to speak to a motion, the Chairman must step out of the chair and allow

the Vice-Chairman to preside.

Board meetings are divided into two sections. One, an in-camera committee meeting of the whole, discusses such things as land acquisition, personnel matters, disciplinary items and negotiations. In due course actions taken, to the extent they can be revealed, are reported in public.

All other board business is supposed to be carried on in public in discussions at board meetings at which only the trustees are allowed to debate although staff may be asked for information.

Provision is made for delegations to come to the Board and its Standing Committees.

Because the Board agenda is usually so packed, discussion is limited by time. Therefore to ensure matters are thoroughly investigated by Trustees and more time is available for discussion, the Board has established four standing committees and two required by statute.

It's a pity more people don't attend meetings of the Board or its Committees.