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Exchange issue still ringing

By RON HINCHLIFFE
649-2979

CLAREMONT — After having my ears scorched this week by an irate resident, I feel it imperative that I add a little more information to an article I wrote a couple of weeks ago. In that story I asked people to write to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) to voice their support in favor of an application by Bell Canada to allow extension of the 649 exchange. A strong show of support and a favorable decision by the CRTC would enable Bell to survey area residents to see if they're in favor of extending the service. The poll would include the amount that our phone bills would be increased, and only then would we as a whole decide whether this service would be beneficial to us. In a democratic society, a "majority rule" is the only possible way changes are made. And that is exactly what's required for

Bell Canada to move on a decision of such magnitude.

My personal feelings, which should not influence yours, have already been expressed. If community members as a whole disagree with this opinion, then I'll be more than happy to abide by their decision. People opposed to Extended Area Service should take pen in hand and write to the same governing body as citizens backing the proposal. The address again is: Paul Godin, Complaints and Inquiries, CRTC, Ottawa, Ont., KIA 0N2. A decision on this issue should be reached by the CRTC in the next couple of weeks. I'll be sure to let you know the results.

A community shower is being held for Jim and Lorrie Stiner to help them recover from the fire last week that devastated their lives. Jim and Lorrie and their three children Trevor, 7, Troy, 5, and Todd, 4, were born and raised

in the Claremont area. They're presently staying with Jim's parents. A strong show of support from us would undoubtedly be appreciated. The family's many friends and neighbors are holding the shower at Claremont Legion Hall Feb. 19 at 8 p.m. For more information please contact Denise Norton at 649-2615.

Claremont Women's Institute is sponsoring a free course on candle-wicking, balloon curtains and Roman shades. The classes will be held at the home of Dorothy Britton, who'll conduct them along with Wendy Bell. Course dates are Wednesday, Feb. 5 and 12. Two groups will be instructed each day, the first from 1 to 4 p.m. and the second from 7 to 10 p.m. Those interested are asked to call Mrs. Britton at 649-5630.

Claremont United Church is hosting a Shrove pancake supper at the church on Feb. 11 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to enjoy dinner followed by games. Where else can you get sausages or pancakes for 50 cents each and drinks for 25 cents apiece? Come hungry and eat for a good cause.

This is the big weekend when Claremont's forefathers look down from the heavens and smile as we kick up our heels and celebrate the hamlet's third annual Winter Carnival. The weather seems to be turning a little more wintry, so the festival should be all that we expected: lots of snow, cold feet and fun! Don't forget tonight's (Jan. 29) opening event, a Lions and Lioness bingo night in the Community Centre at 7:30 p.m. The five-day carnival continues through Sunday, Feb. 2.

Editor's Mail

Outlines criterion

To the Editor:

In response to both Mr. Marks' letters published in your paper last week, and to recent coverage of the matter of Extended Area Service (E.A.S.), i.e. "toll-free calling to Toronto," there are a few points which I wish to clarify.

The criteria for an exchange to be eligible for E.A.S. were established in 1979 by the C.R.T.C. They are as follows:

- (1) Telephone exchange centres must be within a 30 mile radius.
- (2) Exchanges must have a 60 per cent community of interest, in this case a 60 per cent proportion of customers making at least one call per month to Toronto.
- (3) Exchanges must be contiguous (adjacent).
- (4) A survey indicating 51 per cent customer acceptance (of E.A.S.) must be completed.

The Claremont 649 exchange currently meets the first two criteria. Of the 5/6 of the 649 exchange successfully contacted in an October 1984 poll, 85 per cent of these people indicated that they were in favor of changed E.A.S. criteria. That is, 85 per cent showed an interest in toll-free calling to Toronto and in petitioning for the criteria to be

changed so that the Bell would proceed with a survey to establish the per cent of customer acceptance for E.A.S. Thus it appears that the 649 exchange could very well meet the fourth criterion.

It is the criterion requiring contiguity which our exchange does not meet. Stouffville, the 640 exchange which received E.A.S. prior to the establishment of these criteria, would currently not be eligible for E.A.S. since it also does not meet this criterion. One of the purposes of the Claremont meeting in April 1985 was to identify to 649 customers the C.R.T.C. criteria and to point out that the requirement for contiguity is the reason the Claremont exchange is not eligible for consideration for E.A.S. Other objectives of the meeting were: (i) to create a forum for discussion of E.A.S. and other Bell services; (ii) to measure community interest through attendance and (iii) to provide direction regarding whom to contact, politicians included, to request a change to the C.R.T.C. criteria. The fact that nearly 200 village and rural customers attended the meeting clearly indicated the degree of interest in his matter.

Bell's recent application to the C.R.T.C. to revise the E.A.S. criteria so that the requirement for exchanges to be contiguous be deleted indicates Bell's responsiveness to the needs and interests of her customers, not only in Claremont but in other exchanges in similar circumstances where strong interest in E.A.S. has been expressed.

If deletion of the contiguity requirement is approved by the C.R.T.C., the door will be opened for Bell to conduct a survey of the 649 exchange. At that time, Bell will provide 649 customers with the actual increased costs in basic rates which E.A.S. would create for them. This will provide all of us, myself included, the opportunity to decide individually whether such a service is to our advantage. It will also measure the degree of support for E.A.S. in the 649 exchange, objectively determining whether a majority of Claremont residents want this service.

Our work, including the meeting held last year in Claremont has been aimed at providing the community with this opportunity. Those wishing the C.R.T.C. to be aware of their opinion on this matter should write to Mr. Paul Godin, Complaints and Inquiries, C.R.T.C., Ottawa, KIA 0N2.

Sincerely,
Keith Powell
R.R. 2, Claremont

Novice team split games

The Neil Patrick Novice Clippers split weekend exhibition games, defeating the Oshawa Canadians 5-1 and succumbing to the Markham Novice "A" boys 3-1.

Lindsay Haylow and Geoff Smith scored a pair of goals respectively against the Canadians on Friday night. Ryan Jefferson rounded out the tally. Defenceman Brian Coughlan found himself in an unusual role — between the pipes — when the Clippers' regular goalie was sidelined with an injury.

The following day the Clippers found themselves trailing Markham, 2-0 in the second period. However, defenceman Sean Morrison put Stouffville on the board with an end-to-end rush. Winger Michael Boyd almost tied the game when his shot deflected off the Markham goalpost. But the southern neighbours came back to sink an insurance marker.

PLAYOFFS

The novice Clippers open their round-robin playoff series against Port Perry on Friday night (7 p.m.) at the Recreation Complex in Stouffville.

The local boys will also meet the Pickering Jets and Uxbridge soon after to decide the finalist of the eastern leg of the Lakeshore League. The winner takes on the western champion.

Stouffville should be a favorite in this competition since its only loss in regular season play was against Pickering.

You Should Know
...that 76.1% of Markham-area adults are under age 50. And 72.9% of them read the Economist & Sun/Tribune. (Source: 1985 Kubas & Associates study.)

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