

School trustees discuss funding

STOUFFVILLE — Trustees representing both Durham and York Region Boards of Education met in private Sept. 13 with Education Minister Chris Ward.

Accommodating more students with less money were main topics of discussion during the three-and-a-half hour discussion, explained Whitelock-Stouffville trustee Harry Bowes.

Mr. Bowes, one of five trustees in attendance, said York-Durham MPP Bill Ballinger arranged the gathering to give trustees an opportunity to outline their concerns.

Mr. Bowes claims trustees are troubled by ever-increasing numbers of portable classrooms. He says 142 portables were added in York Region this year.

Although Stouffville has only 11 compared to 37 in Georgina and 27 in East Gwillimbury, Bowes says he's concerned because "we still must bus kids away."

This year, the education ministry caused problems for the York Board when it announced capital grants would be spread over a three-year period. As a result, the board was forced to spend an extra \$1.5 million upfront to finance school construction.

As for the current system of regional government, that pools finances, Bowes claims this isn't fair to Whitelock-Stouffville who shouldn't have to finance schools in other areas.

This year, education taxes in Whitelock-Stouffville were higher than in Aurora, yet Aurora is beginning to get more schools and Whitelock-Stouffville "isn't getting anything."

Although Bowes said they "got everything out in the open," he added that the school board must still keep lobbying the provincial treasurer.

Claremont parents angered by split classes

CLAREMONT — Concern has been expressed by several parents over the need for split classes at Claremont Public School.

The combined grades were introduced Sept. 12.

Principal Gail Elliott is optimistic the new system will work. With the right approach, there should be no problems, she says.

Split classes are by no means unique, Principal Elliott points out; in fact, they're required in most schools today.

The teachers, she explains, are equal to the task and good programs result.

"We'd like our classes to be smaller," Ms. Elliott states, "but this isn't realistic."

She admits the split grade system places added responsibilities on staff. "They, (the teachers), must do extra work when planning for two grade levels," she concludes.

Horseshoe tournament at the Fair

The Markham Fair will host the first ever York Region Doubles Horseshoe Tournament on the Saturday and Sunday of this year's Fair.

The event is slated for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 1 and Sunday, Oct. 2 from noon to 2 p.m.

It will be a single knockout tournament. First prize is \$400, 2nd prize \$200, 3rd prize \$50, 4th prize \$25. Entry fee is \$10 per team. Shoes are provided.

For information call 640-1576.

Stouffville Machine Inc. saved by its new owner

The history of Stouffville Machine Inc. goes back over eighty years, to the early part of the century; its threatened closure in 1984 was averted by present owner Charles Jackson when he bought the business from Derek Chadwick.

On Feb. 2, 1942, Don Chadwick and Jack Smits purchased the company from the Barkey brothers, who had put up the original building. At that time, "they were into steam engines, boilers and valves," explains Mr. Jackson. In March, 1964, the controlling interest was sold to Akron Standard Mold in the States, and in the fall of that year the company was sold to a holding company, Eagle-Picher Industries.

Eagle-Picher had a number of interests in Europe and out west. In 1976, they sold all foreign assets, which were first offered back to the original owners, then to the employees. If the original companies didn't want to repurchase, they were put back on the market. "In most cases they were bought back by the original owners or employees," Mr. Jackson states.

In August 1976, Stouffville

Machine was re-purchased from the holding company by Derek Chadwick, Don's son, "recalls Mr. Jackson. Until the early '70s, much of the company's business had been with the tire industry and when Dunlop went under at the beginning of the decade, it was a tough time for Stouffville Machine. "That was half our business," he comments. "We were on two shifts when that hit; we were back to one overnight."

For many years, Stouffville Machine had been one of two suppliers to the tire companies; with the decline of the industry and the advent of two new manufacturing companies who opened up "almost overnight," there wasn't enough business to go around. "We had been dealing with the tire industry over the years," Mr. Jackson notes, "but in the early 1970s we decided to get out."

Mr. Jackson himself joined the company in 1966 as accountant and secretary-treasurer. His offer to purchase Stouffville Machine came about in April 1984, when Derek Chadwick announced that he was closing up and selling off the equipment at the end of June that year.

Mr. Jackson felt the company

could grow if they actively sought out new customers. "A few years ago you didn't really have to go after the business, but by now that had changed," he explained. The existing staff were vital to the success of the operation. "It couldn't have worked if I hadn't had their co-operation," he insists. Stouffville Machine employs 22 people, 16 of whom are in manufacturing, many of them long-time employees.

Nowadays, the company manufacturers a variety of moulds, tire building drums and machinery and all types of mill room equipment, and they sell their products to all the major rubber manufacturers in Canada and the United States. Equipment is custom made to suit specific needs. "We do a lot of custom machine shop work from customers' drawings," Mr. Jackson says, "that side has got bigger in the last three or four years."

With new, larger equipment being brought in, he is confident the company can meet the challenges of the future. "We can concentrate on getting new customers and working towards obtaining new product lines," he concludes.

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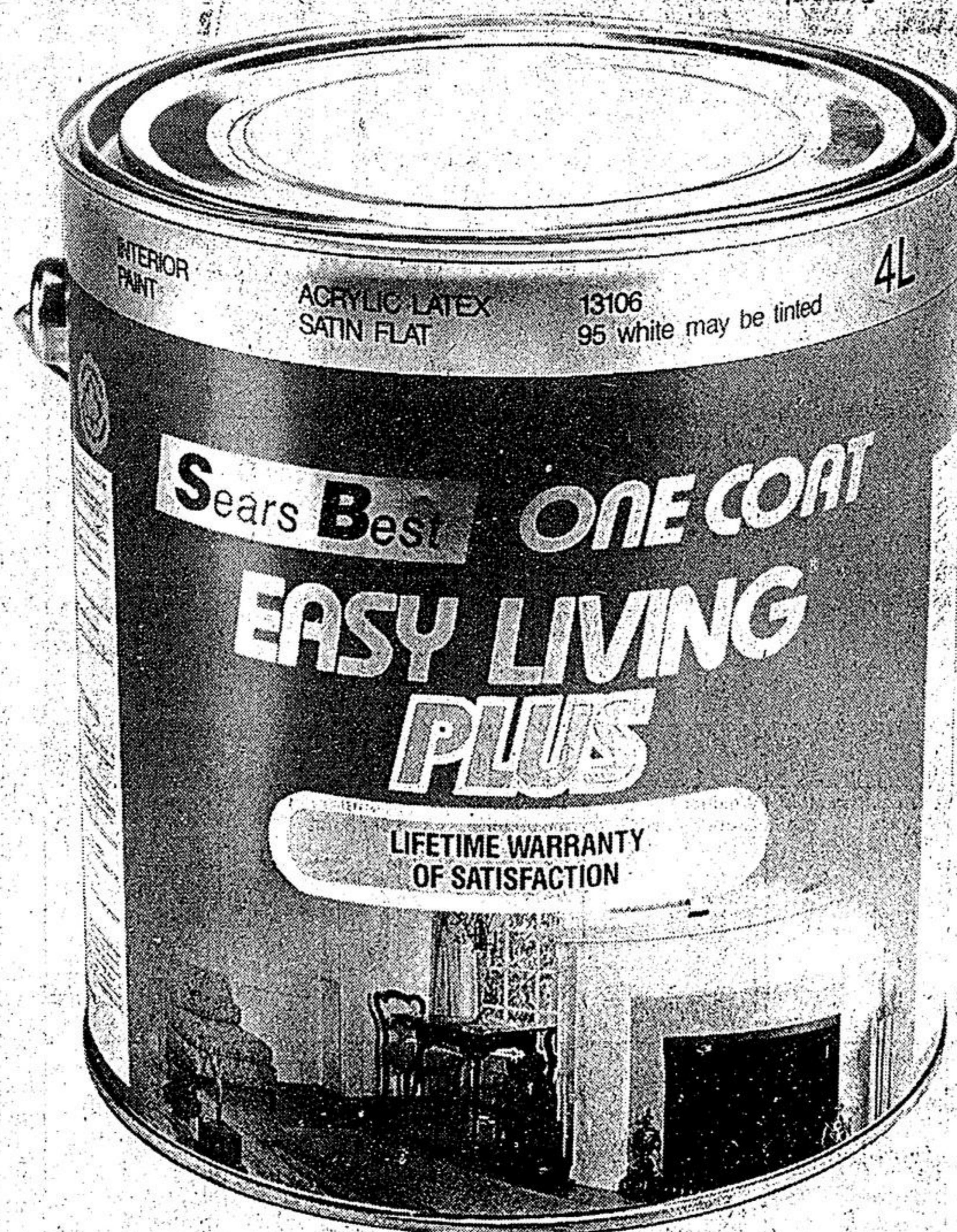
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