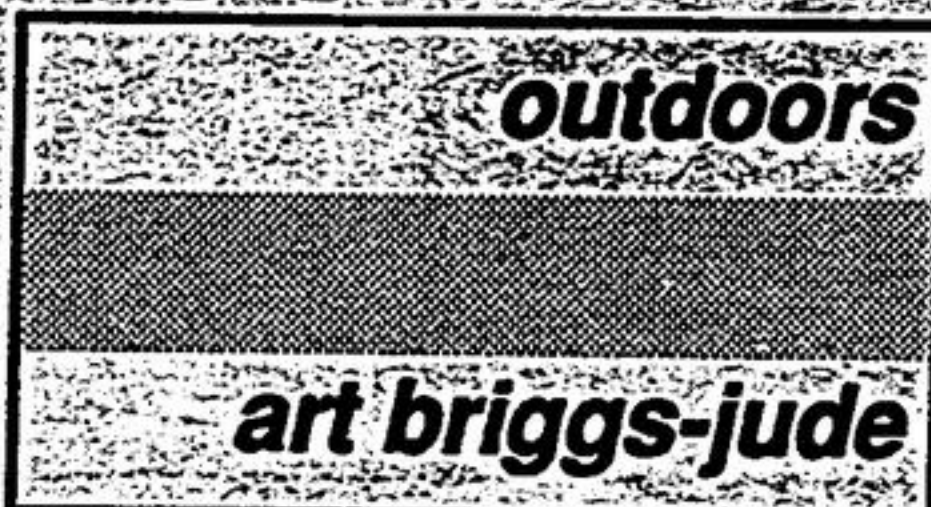


# Wintering birds will appreciate backyard feeders

With the overtures of winter all around us, the focus of an increasing number of people becomes centered on their backyard bird feeder. Here, from the warmth and comfort of their own homes, they can watch and enjoy a very important part of a bird's daily life, mainly its eating behavior. When these observations are increased to include a dozen or more different bird species, the interest grows accordingly. I'm not sure when this bird-feeding pastime started but ironically my first columns on birds written in the early 1960's coincided with the doubling of the price of sunflower seed in

our area within the next two years. Today the introduction of the smaller black sunflower seed with its higher oil content actually gives you and the birds the best value.

There's no doubt that the wintering birds originally sought out natural sources of nourishment to carry them through the rigors of this cold weather season. Trees and shrubs like native mountain ash and juniper for their winter persistent berries, soft maple and conifers for their keys and cones, and the various grasses and weed-heads for their seeds. In rural areas these are still the main food source of



many kinds of winter birds as witnessed by the annual flocks of snow buntings or the wandering waxwings that rarely come close to feeding shelves.

While special planting for birds will bring added avian rewards, many of the seed-eaters and bug borers can be readily attracted by offering them a

dependable daily food source. This can be accomplished as easily as scattering seed on the ground in a sheltered place, like under the boughs of an evergreen tree or beneath a picnic table. Matter of fact, this practice will be much appreciated by the ground-feeding tree sparrows, cardinals, mourning doves, grouse, and pheasants.

For the largest number of seed eaters however, some sort of seed shelf or hopper feeder is your best bet.

To entice woodpeckers and nuthatches, simply hang suet in a mesh bag from the nearest tree or fashion a feeder to hold peanuts in the shell using half inch mesh chicken wire.

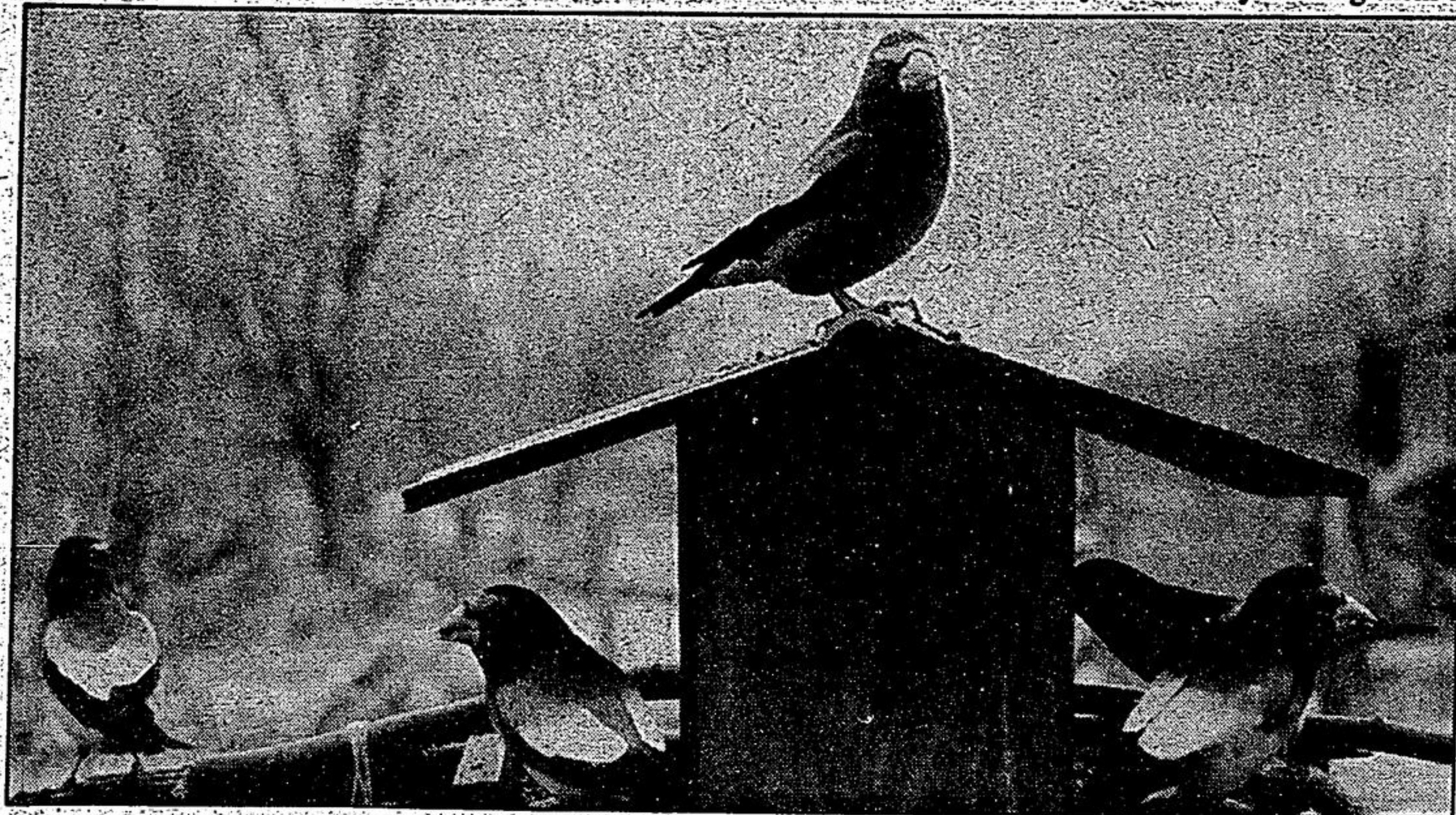
These feeders don't have to be fancy but they do have to be kept full once you get the birds coming to them. Many stores sell commercial bird feeders or you can easily build your own.

Of course the number one seed on the menu for backyard bird visitors is sunflower seed, striped or black. We believe that the black seed is more appealing to many of the smaller wintering finches and siskins than the larger striped kernels. The facts that the grosbeaks and blue jays have no preference and that there are more seeds per bag make us favor the black sunflower seed. We do not buy the bags of ready-mixed bird seed because they often contain seeds that are very rarely eaten. Instead along with the sunflower seed we give them

cracked corn, a good heat source that all the different bird species relish. We also keep a distelfink feeder filled with niger seed, but it is not as popular with the birds as our other seed feeders.

Now that you have your feeder full and ready, the next question is where do you put it. It's best to choose a location that's not only clearly visible from a convenient window, but has some protection from the prevailing winds. Place the feeder on a pipe or hang it from a tree branch out of the reach of dogs, cats, squirrels, and raccoons. A length of 20 pound test monofil fishing line makes a good hanging support that prevents squirrels from gaining access. For persistent squirrels, try suspending your feeder between two trees on a stout wire on which some six inch sections of ABS pipe have been loosely threaded. If a pipe or post is used as a mount, keep it at a reasonable height for refilling and attach an inverted cone to stop predators from climbing up.

As with any endeavor of this nature, it often takes time to build up your backyard feathered clientele. However, if you are patient and persistent, you will soon get a preview of what makes feeding the wild birds such a fascinating winter hobby. Then one day, just when you think you can identify all of your backyard birds, a new or rare species arrives. At that time, you won't have to be told whether your efforts were all worth it. You'll know immediately.



Photo/ART BRIGGS JUDE

The Evening Grosbeaks are colorful winter visitors to bird feeding stations.

## Goodwood news

### Dance coming Dec. 15

Last Wednesday was bingo night at the Goodwood Hall. A nice crowd, but we could do with more people. The next bingo is tomorrow (Wed.) night at 7 p.m.

John Hirlbert is coming along after a few trips to the hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery. Elva Dymis is also coming along just fine after her operation.

Thursday night was the big annual United Church Anniversary turkey supper at the Goodwood Hall. People came from all over for

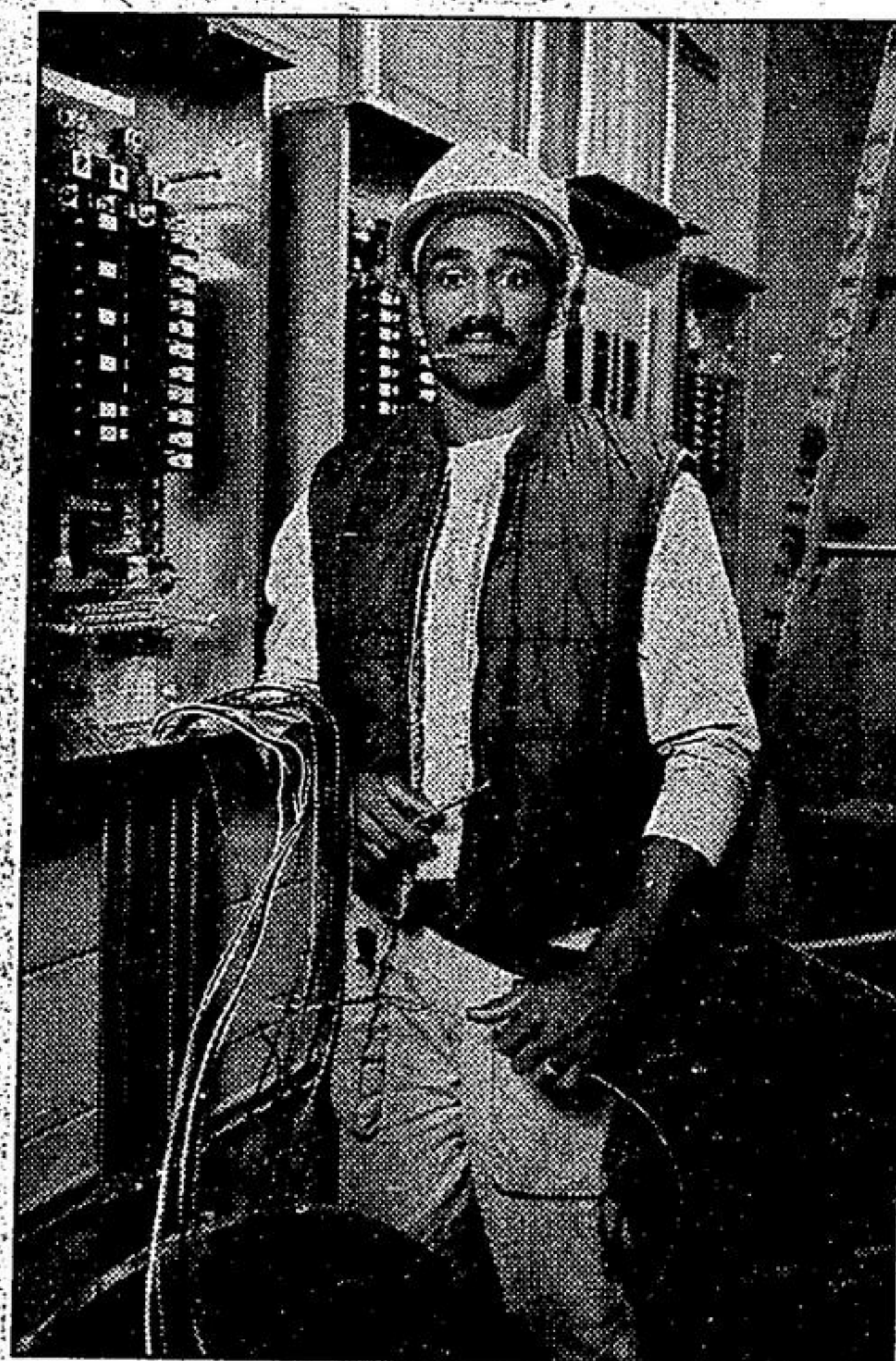
this reunion of sorts.

The new United Church minister was there and he helped serve at the tables.

The Goodwood Seniors are in need of more people to join in their fun. Sign up if you haven't. The Couples Club is also experiencing small crowds of late. Come out and join the fun. Remember the Christmas dance on Dec. 15 with a real Christmas dinner.

Phone Marlene Bell for tickets at 640-3985.

## I've prepared for the GST.



## Have you?

### Now is the time to register.

Are you ready for the proposed GST? If not, now is the time to register and prepare. Registration applies to anyone involved in a commercial enterprise. This includes fishing, farming, professional services, and many activities carried out

by non-profit organizations.

Revenue Canada is ready to assist you with information on:

- How to register and the benefits of doing so
- What the GST means to your operation
- Simplified accounting options and administrative procedures
- Rebates of the Federal Sales Tax
- How to recover GST on business purchases
- GST return and filing options

Contact us today.

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Outside Toronto call:

**1 800 461-1082**

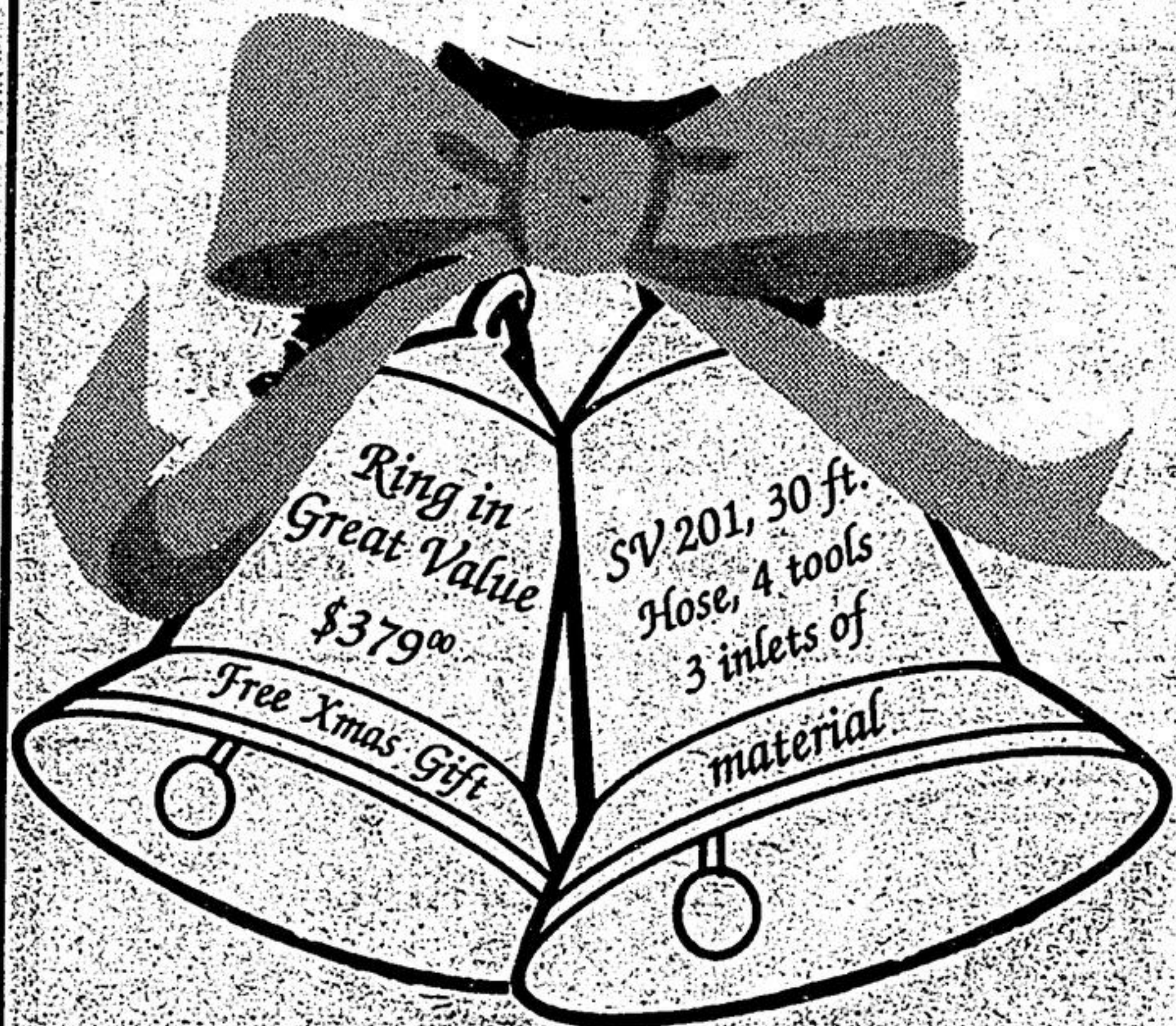
Telecommunications device for the hearing impaired:

**1 800 465-5770**

Or drop by the Revenue Canada Excise Office nearest you, Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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