



Photo: LORI EMMERSON

Off to Beantown

Some 61 students in the band at SDSS boarded a bus bound for Boston Wednesday. The five-day tour had the local teens in high spirits as they prepared to represent the town in the U.S.

Catholic board offers 4% hike

JULIE CASPERSEN
Staff Reporter

Catholic ratepayers in York Region are blessed with possibly the lowest educational tax hike in the province.

York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board trustees passed a 4 per cent mill rate increase last Wednesday, despite warnings of "civic disobedience" from administration.

"Personally, I find that poor business," said Director of Education Frank Bobesich, referencing the board's \$16.2 million shortfall. Staff recommended levying a 7.35 tax hike and slicing \$700,000 from the deficit, and Bobesich said a tax hike of less than 5.5 per cent would have "grave consequences" on the system.

Raising taxes by 4 per cent does nothing to reduce the board's \$16.2-million deficit, despite the Ministry of Education's demand that the board follow a five-year deficit reduction plan.

Whitchurch-Stouffville residents can expect an additional \$69 on their educational tax bill. Aurora/Whitchurch-Stouffville trustee Dennis Collins voted against the 4 per cent, advocating a high tax hike in order to address the board's financial

shortfall. The motion to levy a 4 per cent hike includes adding \$13 million to the board's existing debenture debt.

In passing the 1992 mill rate increase, the board strayed from its usual practice of levying a slightly higher tax hike than the York Region Board of Education. The public board set its 1992 increase at 5.5 per cent.

Trustee Terry Ryan told the board a 5.5 per cent increase has financially different ramifications for separate ratepayers than for public school supporters. For example, a 5.5 per cent hike equates to an additional \$102 on a public board tax bill but would add \$112 to a Catholic board bill for the average Markham home. In order to equalize the assessment, the separate board would need to levy a tax increase of less than one per cent. At an April 30 budget meeting Ryan proposed a list of 11 cutbacks. Nine were referred to staff for a cost-saving analysis, and include suggestions to streamline administration personnel, to merge departments and cut a secretary at each school. These potential savings were not factored into the 1992 budget process and staff will report back in the fall.

Hot dog vendor turned down

A hot dog vendor's plea didn't cut the mustard with local officials this week, who turned down his request to sell dogs in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Richmond Hill resident George Vavaroutsos told council he can't operate a cart in his town because of a bylaw which disallows vending.

Vavaroutsos's niece, Jeannie McLoughlin, of Markham, spoke on his behalf, and told officials that her uncle's business does not affect other local restaurants.

"His was a \$2 operation. It's not like a diner where you go in and sit down and spend \$10," McLoughlin said.

She said Vavaroutsos "provided a nice service and people liked him."

She requested council allow her uncle to operate his vending cart, his sole means of income, in Stouffville.

Unfair
However, Mayor Fran Sainsbury told McLoughlin that permanent taxpayers and residents felt vending is unfair competition.

She suggested he go to other municipalities which allow vending.

But McLoughlin said York Region makes it difficult for vendors to make a living because of strict guidelines placed on bylaws in the few

communities which allow vending.

Sorry
The Tribune had asked Canadian Tire employees last week if they wanted Vavaroutsos on the property, and many people said they were sorry to see him go.

Meanwhile, town building director Bob Bennett said there is no bylaw which permits vending, but there is no bylaw which prohibits it either.

Bennett added that bylaws are not necessary until a problem exists in a certain area.

If complaints reach his office however, the town must then look into passing a bylaw.

La Leche comes to Stouffville

The La Leche League is coming to Stouffville. Thursday, May 14 at 8 p.m. will be the group's next meeting for women breastfeeding their babies. Nursing babies are welcome. For more information call 642-2200.

Council

Bill those with special requests: Nick Tatone

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

The cost to relocate a handicapped parking space on Main St. should perhaps be charged to the person who requested the change, said one local official this week.

Ward 3 councillor Nick Tatone said a juggling of parking spaces cost town staff time and money to accommodate one citizen.

He suggested in future that council consider billing people personally for work performed because of special requests.

The town will relocate a handicapped parking space from in front of Houston's Pharmacy on Main St. to a location east of Church St. on the north side of Main St. in front of O'Neill Funeral Home, it was decided.

The change was initiated after a request in February made by Houston's owner George Wassef.

Wassef told *The Tribune* this week that he originally had two parking spaces in front of his store.

Then one day out of the blue those two spots were wiped out, Wassef said. The two spots were turned into one larger handicapped spot, he added.

Wassef, who said Houston's Pharmacy has been operating at that location for 113 years, added that he almost immediately noticed a "drastic drop in business," with the two spots gone.

He said the handicapped spot was used "only five minutes each month" and that having convenient parking in front of his store gave him a "marginal advantage" for business.

He said after the change, people were driving to other drug stores rather than struggle to find a spot down the street to shop at his pharmacy.

"Why chance a ticket? I even got a ticket one day parked there while I was unloading merchandise for my store."

Wassef said many of his customers are elderly people who are not handicapped, but walk with canes.

These elderly customers now had to walk further and across busy Main St. to get to his store, he added.

He said Tatone's suggestion is unfounded because his request accommodates a lot more than one citizen.

Wassef said there were no costs involved in his specific request because the town is undertaking a complete pavement marking program next month anyway.

Tatone's suggestion was not made official and council voted to remove the handicapped spot in front of Wassef's store and to add an additional handicapped spot on town-owned property on Commercial St.

Fashion show had heart

The spring fashion show organized by the Stouffville Chapter of the Heart and Stroke Foundation proved highly successful, thanks to the strong support of local businesses and individuals.

"There wasn't one person we approached who said no to us," said Mary Mittelstaedt. "The Maples of Ballantrae and their staff graciously hosted the event."

Hugh Wallis and Flora MacDonald of Cameron Balloons donated a champagne balloon flight for a raffle prize, and we raised a lot of money from that.

The foundation also thanked Laura, Laura Petites and Melanie Lyne in Markville Mall, and Uptown Kids on

Main Street, Stouffville, who provided the fashions.

The following merchants donated door prizes: Angie's Eatery, Card's Hardware, Coffee, Tea and Me, Farmer Jack's Gardens, Debbie Hallahan (specialty cakes), Stouffville IGA, Lindy's Floral Boutique, Laura, Laura Petites, Melanie Lyne and Uptown Kids.

Karen Nugent showed special talent as the fantastic producer of the fashion show, said Mittelstaedt. The models, entertainers and speakers contributed to the successful evening by their enthusiastic efforts. A special thank you to all the patrons and participants for your support from the bottom of our hearts.

Race is tops, says magazine

(From page 1)

running and cycling. The event started with 30 participants, has grown to a 93-athlete event, McKee Wetheral said.

Ward 2 councillor Stephen Bellerby, an avid cyclist who plans to enter the race, said the magazine article is "quite an honor" and will give the town recognition it deserves.

And Ward 6 councillor Ken Prentice, also a member of the town's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), will pass the information on to members.

McKee Wetheral said the town is looking for volunteers to man the many water stations set up for the participants. Anyone interested can call the recreation office at 640-8521.

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