

# Follow 'protocol', senior staff warned by York politicians

TRACY KIBBLE  
Staff Reporter

York Regional politicians have ordered senior staff not to speak to reporters, it was discovered last week.

Officials have decided they don't want department heads "biasing their reports" to newspapers before council has an opportunity to review the information, said chief administrative officer, Bob Forhan, Thursday.

The CAO said newspaper reports - which state a department head's view before the matter is discussed in chambers - could alter political decisions and public perception of a matter.

Forhan admitted also that politicians prefer if staff members refrain from making headlines to give elected officials the opportunity to make public comments first.

The *Tribune* called York's social services commissioner, Peter Crichton, last week for information regarding the province's criticized Jobs Ontario program. The reporter wanted information on how the program was progressing locally.

But Crichton said he was unable to comment because there was a "protocol now in place," and referred the reporter to a politician.

Regional councillor Bob Johnston said later that senior staff has been asked "not to comment on items until they've been discussed in committee."

When it was alleged by reporters that the policy left no

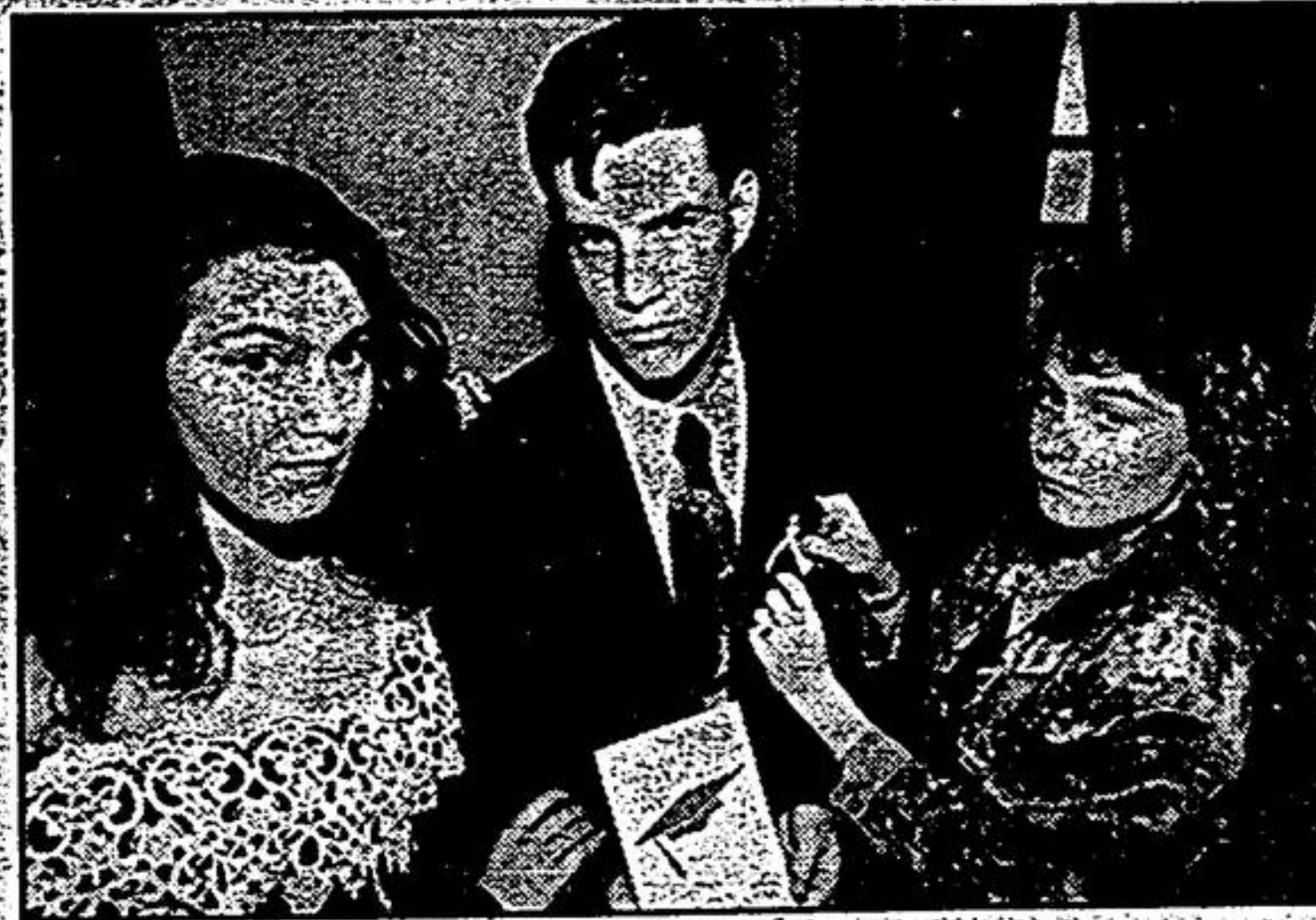
room for public participation or input into a matter until after a decision is made final, Johnston said, "it's not me who initiated this." Chairman Eldred King said when the media prints articles where staff discusses recommendations to council, taxpayers sometimes perceive that a decision is final.

Who wants to be council, the newspaper or council?

-Eldred King

"The public sees these recommendations before council approves them. Who wants to be council, the newspaper or council?" King asked.

King threatened to remove the media's privilege to view council agendas ahead of meetings, if press refused to adhere to the protocol.



Photos/CELIA BRONKHORST/BRUCE STAPLEY

## SDSS holds commencement

Stouffville District Secondary School held its annual commencement on Friday. At left, there was a sad moment as Jacquelyn Rooney, friend of Dan McNeil, the teen that was killed last month in a car accident, pins a yellow ribbon in memory of Dan and a white ribbon symbolizing hope for the injured Jeff Cowley, on Natalie Wood and Paul Spencer. At right, a moment of gladness as some of the award winners gathered for a photograph session. From left, Fred Klein, valedictorian, Jacquelyn Rooney, winner of the York Region Council for Exceptional Children award; Jennifer Montgomery, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Fred Crossen Memorial and Chesebrough-Pond Proficiency Award winner; Andrea Zemp, winner of the OSSTF award for Dist. II and Peter Caudle, winner of the York Region Special Education award, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville award, Chesebrough-Pond's Proficiency Award and Governor General's Medal.



# Groups vow to continue dump site fight

A pledge to maintain the anti-dump battle was taken by protesters from municipalities spanning two regions.

Markham MPP Don Cousens hosted a declaration-signing conference at Queens Park Monday attended by protesters of a provincial plan to create landfills in York, Durham and Peel regions.

A total of 57 sites were chosen in the three regions, and the list is being narrowed to about 15 potential sites.

The sites that make the short list will be announced later this week or next week by the Interim Waste Authority site-search team.

The priority for all landfill protesters is to keep the anti-

dump momentum alive and halt what they believe is a flawed selection process. Representatives from Whitchurch-Stouffville, Georgina, Vaughan, Caledon, Markham and Pickering vowed to continue the fight no matter which sites make the short list.

The final site for each region is set to be chosen next spring.

Delaying through legal channels could stall the process until the next provincial election in 1995 when dump protesters hope to oust the NDP government in favor of one promising to look at incineration and rail-haul options. Cousens, a Progressive Conservative member, would not

rule out the possibility of his party considering landfill, but said it would examine all alternatives.

# Mailman retires to Goodwood farm

(From Page 1)

when he'd be most loaded down. "They used to have hooks on the mail boxes for parcels, and the parcels would all have strings around them for hanging."

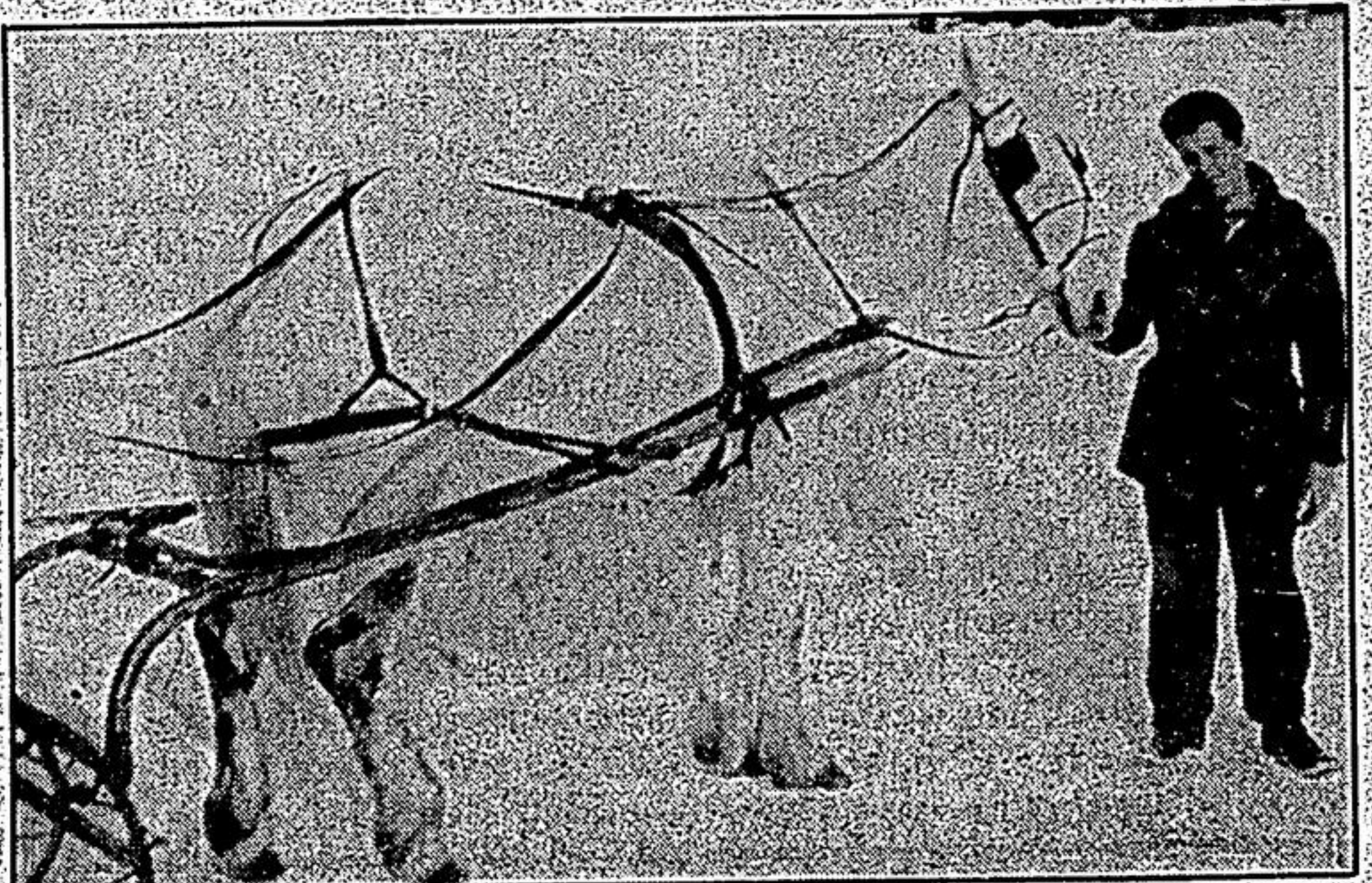
All five of his children were sworn in to help out at one time or another.

Harper started out helping his father with the mail at the age of 15. When his father died in 1955, Harry took over the contract.

He has watched the route grow from 60 homes to 200, while the distance covered increased from 18 to 24 miles.

Having watched Goodwood's transformation from a remote rural village to a part of the Greater Toronto Area, he smiles and wonders if anything has really been gained.

"I don't know if there's been any progress or not," he laughed.



Harry Harper used to deliver the mail by horse and cutter.

# York may raise dump fight fund

York Regional councillors are not happy with a revised dump fight budget, and have sent their lawyer back to scramble with the figures.

Chairman Eldred King told reporters last week that York has already exhausted its original \$100,000 budget to keep Metro Toronto waste out of the region.

Environmental lawyer, Ian Blue had told the region earlier that it would cost more than he anticipated to challenge the Interim Waste Authority because of an unexpected slow response in answering the region's legal mail.

Blue's revised budget figures were presented to council last week but were not specifically outlined, King said. "York Region is not sufficiently clear on how (Blue) will spend the funds," he

added. Blue has already submitted a third draft budget, which King said will be reviewed by councillors this week. Blue told reporters several months ago that a fight, which challenges the province's site search process as undemocratic, might cost taxpayers as much as \$3.5 million.

But King has pledged his commitment to keep the battle alive even if it takes several years and the forecasted dollars.

"We have a heck of a good case here, and you can't know how complicated it can get - no one can know," King told *The Tribune* earlier this month. King has also said that York should not be the "sole importer of Metro Toronto's waste."

Council will review Blue's draft budget, and will discuss the matter in two weeks.



## Santa stops in for a visit

Getting a jump on the pre-Christmas rush, Santa Claus was able to visit the Claremont Nursery School Christmas bazaar on Saturday afternoon. Here, he chats with five-year-old Erric Wiesflock at the annual school bazaar.

Photo/LORI EMMERSON

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