

# Farewell to the election and hello to the monkey

Eight down, three to go.

I did the math: I'll cover three more municipal elections and then I'll throw in the towel.

Before I think of easy street, I'll congratulate those elected to Whitchurch-Stouffville council, including Mayor Wayne Emmerson.

Emmerson is hard working and he sincerely cares about Whitchurch-Stouffville. And, he knows this town like no other.

Emmerson is quoted as saying his opponent Jeanne Major put on a good show. He's right. Jeanne Major was a very credible candidate. She's articulate, passionate and committed. I hope Jeanne continues to take an interest in municipal matters.

I'd especially like to thank defeated Ward 5 councillor Judy Scala for six years of dedicated service. Judy has lots of energy. She took a positive approach to the job and Judy was always fair.

When I left the newsroom just before 1 a.m. Tuesday morning, I noticed something I didn't like: I was tired. I can't be running out of steam. I've got three elections to go. I've covered umpteen municipal, provincial and federal elections. I've worked elections for community newspapers, daily newspapers, television and radio.

My maiden voyage into election coverage took place in 1974. I worked 10 hours. The take-home pay was \$15. The sick part is: I'd have done it for nothing. I never got tired in 1974.

My first election assignment was a freelance job with CKLB Radio. Stationed at Oshawa City Hall, I was equipped with a head mike and power battery pack which connected to the radio station's newsroom. Across Durham region, there were eight free lance reporters in municipal offices doing exactly the same thing, with varying degrees of know how.

The drill was: on a rotation basis, a radio commentator introduced each of us from our perspective municipality; each would give a two-minute update on who was winning, who was losing, who was cheering and who was crying. Ten minutes later, we'd do it all over again. It was a horrifying experience. I loved it. I was queen of the fake. No one knew I didn't know what I was doing.

The lingo went something like this: commentator: "Joan Ransberry will give us a report from Oshawa's City Hall. Come in Joan"



Joan Ransberry

"Yes Bob. It's really heating up here. The mayor's opponent is walking a little funny. His eyes are glassed over and they're beat red. He must have allergies. The mayor looks like he's swallowed a canary.

"With 12,590 votes, it would be safe to say the mayor's been

re-elected. Most of the races in the city's seven wards are too close to call, although Ward 3 councillor Alice Brown has captured 99 per cent of the vote. She's been on council for 33 years. I guess experience counts. Bob. The council chambers are full. There's a lot of booing and a lot of cheering. The CAW executive and the Oshawa District Labor Council has just turned up.

"So has a guy with his pet monkey. He comes every election. It's a tradition. I'll sign off Bob. I'd like to say 'hi' to the monkey."

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