

Win FREE Golf
www.pheasantrungolf.com

York Region .com
See what's on at the MOVIES!
It clicks home

End of mandatory retirement may ease construction crisis

BY PATRICK MANGION
Staff Writer

CORRECTION

Due to an error, the second part of this story was omitted from Thursday's Economist & Sun.
We regret the error.

The end of mandatory retirement could avert a skilled labour crisis in York Region's booming housing industry.

Labour Minister Chris Bentley introduced legislation to repeal Ontario's mandatory retirement at 65.

It was welcome news to industries relying on skilled tradespeople, said Eddie Thornton, executive director of the carpenters local union in Woodbridge.

"It's important to us not to lose out on those years of experience," Mr. Thornton said.

The number of Canadians working in skilled trade occupations has declined nearly 4 per cent over the past decade.

Tuesday's announcement may stall the trend, as experts were expecting thousands of baby-boomers to retire over the next five to 10 years.

"We feel it's entirely up to the individual," Mr. Thornton added.

Aurora resident and former high school principal John Volpe agreed, saying the issue is all about choice.

"If you're capable and healthy, you should be able to continue to work," Mr. Volpe said.

He didn't wait to be pushed out the door, instead, opting for early retirement seven years ago at 56.

Today, he volunteers as vice-president of Habitat for Humanity York Region and works part-time as a starter at a local golf course.

While critics argue lifting

mandatory retirement may be lauded by white-collar professionals, such as professors or doctors, the province's union leaders have said blue-collar workers in physically-demanding jobs will not be helped by the changes.

Furthermore, there is a concern it could push back federal pension eligibility, as it has in the United States, where social security starts at age 67.

However, Mr. Bentley said the proposal to eliminate mandatory retirement was fueled by feedback from more than 100 Ontario residents and 50 stakeholders during meetings last September.

"Ending mandatory retirement would allow workers to retire based on lifestyle, circumstance and priorities. We listened to the needs and concerns of business, labour and others who have consulted with us and are doing this in a way that protects existing rights to pension, early retirement and benefits plans," Mr. Bentley said in a news release.

The idea of eliminating mandatory retirement was first proposed by the Conservatives two years ago.

However, the legislation was shelved following a Liberal victory in the last provincial election.

THE FACTS

Highlights of the Liberals proposal to eliminate mandatory retirement at age 65 in Ontario:

- Under the Employment Standards Act, employers will not be obligated to provide senior workers benefits, such as medical coverage;

- The legislation would require changes to the Ontario Human Rights Code, since it does not protect those 65 and older from discrimination in employment;

- About 100,000 Ontarians turn 65 this year;

- 4,000 workers, or 0.6 per cent of the province's workforce, are expected to continue working past 65;

- Eligible Ontario residents who continue working past 65 could still accept Canada Pension Plan payouts, old age security and the guaranteed income supplement;

- The new law will overrule union contracts calling for mandatory retirement at 65, and;

- The legislation could become law this fall at the earliest. The government will wait another year before it takes effect.

More information about retirement ages:

- The average retirement age in Canada has dropped to 61, according to Statistics Canada;

- Ontario would join Alberta, Quebec, the Yukon, New Brunswick and Manitoba as provinces without mandatory retirement;

- Other countries include the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

The Susie Award

Register a garden for a Markham Garden Award

If you know of a garden, visible from the street, that is a source of beauty and pride to its owners and the surrounding neighbours, please consider nominating it for Markham's Susie Award.

Awards will be presented in each of the following categories:

- Category A: • Front garden with frontage of 40 feet or less
• Single family dwelling, duplex, or ground-level apartment/condo/townhouse
- Category B: • Front garden with frontage of 41 feet or more
• Single family dwelling or duplex
- Category C: • Multiple front gardens within a multiple unit complex
• Apartment or seniors building, townhouse/condominium complex
- Category D: • Businesses - Front landscapes of business/commercial locations and Places of Worship
- Eco Susie: • Environmentally friendly garden, including watering, native plants and alternate pesticide control

Registrations must be received by Wednesday, June 15, 2005. Judging will take place in between July 3 to 18 by experienced horticulturalists. The Susie Awards will be presented at Markham Council in September. For more information visit our website: www.markham.ca.

To register a much-admired garden, simply fill out the form below and fax it to the Town of Markham Parks Operations at 905-904-1550 or call the Contact Centre at 905-415-7535. Nomination forms may also be dropped off at the Information Markham booth at the Markham Civic Centre or e-mailed to webmaster@markham.ca.

Name of Garden Owner: _____
Address of Garden: _____
m Markham m Unionville m Milliken Mills m Thornhill
Telephone Number: _____ Facsimile: _____
Garden Category: m category A m category B m category C m category D m Eco Susie
Nominated By: _____
Telephone Number: _____ Facsimile: _____
Garden owner is aware of this nomination and has given permission: m yes m no
If you are the garden owner, would you like your garden open for viewing between July 3 to 18? m yes m no.

MARKHAM
Sponsored by the Town of Markham, the Markham Garden Society, and the Thornhill Horticultural Society.

ecco
Annual Tent Event
June 9 - 19, 2005

Up to **70%** OFF Selected styles

Hurry, some styles will not last!

Bayview Ave.	Major MacKenzie Dr E	Leslie St.	Hwy #404
	Hwy #7		

Bayview and Major MacKenzie
905.737.9452
Mon-Fri: 9am-8pm; Sat-Sun: 9am-6pm

FATHERS DAY HEADQUARTERS

POWERBILT CART BAG • 14 Individual Full Length Dividers • External Putter Tube Special Buy \$99.99	TOP FLITE Complete Distance 15 Ball PK \$19.99	POWERBILT GOLF GLOVES Cabrera Leather 2 for \$20	TAYLOR MADE RACHT IRONS 4-SW Steel \$649 FREE RESCUE CLUB WITH PURCHASE	HOGAN CFT HYBRID • Titanium Face • Easy To Hit • Replaces Long Irons FROM \$129.99
POWERBILT STAND BAG DOUBLE STRAP \$79.99	NIKE SLINGSHOT CART BAG Special Buy Reg. \$199 \$99.99	NEW FOR 2005 POWERBILT TPS 460 • Max COR (.830), max CO (460), max distance and accuracy. • The TPS 460 has a 4-way roll sole, so there's hardly any drag on the backswing. • Super-premium TVC beta titanium. • The expanded sweet spot and perimeter weighting keep the ball in the fairway, even when you don't make perfect contact. • Available in LH & RH, 9" & 10.5" Lofts ONLY \$199	ABDAS TORSION EURO Available in Black or Brown • Euro Style • 2 year Waterproof Warranty NEW FOR 2005 \$149.99	WILSON FAT BOY • 460 cc Head 10.5 • UST Proforce shaft • Winn Style Grip NEW FOR 2005 \$129.99
MEN'S & LADIES' DAIKREK CART BAG Navigator Model \$129.99	RAM Poles & Mocs \$129.99	HAGGAR Cotton Shorts & Pants • Stain Resistant • Wrinkle Free • Black, Navy, Stone, Olive & Khaki 25% OFF \$69.99	DRESS PANTS by Ballin • Wrinkle Free Microfibre • Black, Tan, Navy \$69.99	NORTHEND Windsuit • 1/2 Sleeve • 1/4 Zip • Lined Reg. \$49.99 Sale \$29.99
PGA Merchand Poles \$159.99	IZOD G Men's Polo & Soccer \$139.99	ASHWORTH Gift Box Polo & Camp Golf Starts With Divot Tool & Markers Reg. \$69.99 \$64.99	PING Merchand Poles \$179.99	NIKE Merchand Poles \$159.99

Find it @ **DiMarco Golf CLEARANCE CENTRE**
8312 McCOWAN RD. www.dimarcogolf.com 905-479-5077

24 hours a day,
7 days a week

Call
1-888-HSF-INFO

to make your
donation towards
life-saving
research today!

HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION OF ONTARIO

Heart disease and stroke claim more than 79,000 lives each year in Canada.

This message brought to you as a community service of The Economist & Sun