

'Schools are for People' Conference

More public use means more money used



A Conference on the subject 'Schools Are For People' was held at Markham, Saturday, with representatives present from both York Region and Ontario County. Shown here, receiving an

identification tag from Sandi King of Richmond Hill is Wilfrid Morley of Stouffville. Whitchurch-Stouffville councillor Betty vanNostrand looks on. —Jas. Thomas.

The Director, while upholding the position of the educators, denied that theirs was a 'dog in the manger' attitude. He said rather, that the policy in school use had been broadened, but the need still existed for closer co-operation between the municipal councils and the school boards, to establish a satisfactory financial base on which to establish these programs.

Being specific, Mr. Chapman suggested school facilities could be used by such organizations as senior citizens, and craft groups. He noted too, that most school libraries contained a wealth of material that could prove beneficial to non-students within the community.

Mrs. Gaile Gaele of King Township said many facilities were already available in her area, but residents lacked an awareness of what those facilities were. She said that the urban-rural makeup of the municipality added to this problem.

Robert Rist, a Regional Education Director said a first step in setting up a community program in schools, was to learn the needs within the community. He said the day was not far off when school buildings would be open 12 months a year and 24 hours a day. "The time has come for us to break out of our defensive cocoons and fly a little", he concluded.

MARKHAM - Additional use of school facilities can be arranged, Sam Chapman, York County Board of Education director, told a Conference at Markham, Saturday, but it will cost additional dollars.

In a frank assessment of the present position held by persons within the school system, Mr. Chapman said Board members would be very reluctant to utilize budget money for extra-curricular activities.

He noted that such opinions did not begin and end with trustees. He pointed out, for example, that a Physical Education Instructor would not want his equipment damaged, because his replacement funds are limited; the principal is hesitant to grant his approval because it places additional pressures on the staff and the Board is slow to push such programs, because they get the blame when costs increase.

"Trustees are anxious to co-operate", he said, "but their first responsibility is education".

Mr. Chapman also pointed out that Board members are well aware that every suggestion carries a price tag, with little or no financial return. "People who are already criticized for spending educational dollars, will certainly fight against spending dollars for non-educational use", he continued.

Young people are not bums

By Donald M. Deacon, M.P.P., York-Centre

YORK-CENTRE - At a recent Danson Deacon meeting in Richmond Hill (the meetings that Barney Danson, Federal Member for York North, and I hold regularly throughout the riding in order to give you an opportunity of firing questions at us and giving us your point of view), I was interested to note the vehemence with which some of those in our audience attacked the young people of today.

Their point of view seemed to be that young men and women just leaving school are

unwilling to work and prefer instead to become a 'charge on the state or on their parents, rather than settling in to gainful employment.

This opinion of young people, although it is not borne out by the facts, is surprisingly prevalent among the people of my generation.

I certainly have a more than passing interest in this question as I have six children of my own, ranging from ages 23 to 12, and I certainly wouldn't relish the thought of having to support them until their middle age!

But in conversations with my sons and daughter, and with other young people, I have come to realize that for many who have left or are leaving school at this time, that they are not interested in simply getting employment but insist that it be meaningful employment.

The word "meaningful" has been very much overused in recent years but I think that for these young people it signifies that their jobs should be relevant to the problems that they are meeting in the world today rather than merely a means of earning a living.

To those of us who went through the depression years, when the possession of a job - any job - was of prime importance, this attitude may seem strange. But I am sure that most young people are sincere in their belief and they are not afraid of hard work.

For example, there are ten applicants for every job available in Frontier College, the project which sends educated young people into the rural areas of this country where they are employed at hard manual labour for very little pay and agree to assist in the furthering of the education of disadvantaged people with whom they work.

These are not "jobs with a future". They are not jobs which pay highly. But for these young people they are jobs which are highly satisfying.

No, young people today are not bums, unwilling to work, anymore so than our generation. But they do demand that the jobs which they undertake shall contribute something worthwhile to the world in which they live and which they, in their turn, will one day run. I think they have a point.

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