

Improved school bus safety measures urged by area parents - drivers

STOUFFVILLE - On Oct. 11, an eight year old pupil of St. Mark's School, Stouffville died under the wheel of a bus, a few feet from the laneway entrance to her Vandorf Road home.

The tragedy has resulted in demands by some parents, and drivers too, for improved safety equipment on such vehicles plus, in some cases, a closer program of mechanical inspection.

A move may also follow to enlarge on the student patrol system, a

program that, according to parents, has proved very successful at Ballantrae. With it, selected senior boys and girls, ride on the buses to maintain order, and assist the children in getting on and off.

"Driving a school bus is responsibility enough, without having to look after 55 kids seated behind", said one mother.

Heading the list of priorities is the need for an improved mirror system that enables a driver to see directly

down on the front wheels. The Tribune has learned that Ward 3 councillor Merlyn Baker plans to introduce such a suggestion before Town Council, calling for this equipment to be made mandatory.

With the receipt of several complaints from parents of bus-transported pupils, The Tribune contacted several drivers. All spoke freely, but asked that their identity not be revealed.

One admitted "that

the vehicles are not taken care of as good as they should be". He recalled operating one of the 'spares' with the steering so stiff from lack of grease, he could hardly turn a corner. On the subject of student patrols, he said the program could prove a benefit if the right type of boy or girl is selected.

Another said her bus was kept on the road for over a month with defective brakes. "Finally, I got mad, and then they were fixed", she recalled. She said

the company is so big, with so many vehicles in use, that proper servicing is sometimes neglected. She endorsed the new-type mirrors, suggesting that such equipment could possibly have prevented the October tragedy.

"I would have thought some sort of action would have followed immediately", said a second parent, contacted by The Tribune. She said she had discussed improved safety measures with several mothers, but

none seemed very concerned. She felt the problem should be the concern of the Board of Education, rather than Town Council.

On the issue of student patrols, one father recalled seeing a bus moving away from a school, with one boy holding onto another through the window, and dangling from the outside. "Sure, the driver should have seen it, but just how much responsibility can one person be expected to accept?"

All drivers approached, endorsed the new-type mirrors, although one observed that, like everything else, they must be checked periodically.

"Over rough roads", he said, "they tend to shake loose. You look out to see a child and there's nothing there at all".

Another said she thought they were mandatory in Metro, and that all new buses were delivered so equipped.

Players' Theatre
Nov. 16-18
Latham Hall

The Tribune

Candidates' Meeting
Goodwood Hall
Thurs. Nov. 23

VOL. 89, NO. 25 PHONE 640-2101 WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE — UXBRIDGE — MARKHAM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1972 52 PAGES 15 CENTS

Markham Council concludes in chaos

MARKHAM - A Markham Town Council meeting evaporated into chaos, Tuesday, when members abandoned all rules of parliamentary procedure, and Norm Tyndall (Ward 6), walked out.

The climax to earlier fireworks occurred, when discussion arose over the hiring of a swimming instructor for the co-owned pool at Thornlea School, Bayview Avenue.

There was disagreement over when his duties should start, Jan. 1 or Jan. 30.

Councillor Jim Jongeneel suggested the issue be deferred until Nov. 21, with Mayor Tony Roman breaking the tie vote in favor of the motion.

Later, when a recorded vote was requested, councillor Tyndall stomped out, and Mayor Roman called an adjournment. Later still, the council reconvened; councillor Tyndall returned, but only to pick up his briefcase and leave again.

Request 'warning' flashers

STOUFFVILLE - Councillor Merlyn Baker presented a resolution to Council, Nov. 10, that the Ministry of Transport be requested to replace the 'city' traffic lights at Bloomington Road and Hwy. 48, with official 'highway' lenses, and that warning flashers be placed an appropriate distance from the corner, on both roads.

The intersection has been the scene of many accidents, especially during foggy conditions, when motorists have overrun the red signal.

The resolution was passed by Council and will be presented to the Region of York and Bill Hodgson, M.P.P., for support.

Port expropriations

Over 3,000 objections

PICKERING TWP. - More than 3,000 objections have been registered with the federal government, opposing land expropriations for the new International Airport in Pickering Township. Hearings will begin, Nov. 27, and after reports are studied by Public Works Minister Jean-Eudes Dube, an official decision will be made on whether to proceed.

Meanwhile, the government appears to be moving ahead with its Airport plan, and has filed intention to expropriate in the Canada Gazette.

If, after the hearings, the government decides not to expropriate, the issue of whether a new Toronto International Airport is needed, will be thrashed out in public again.

The 'People or Planes' group disputes the need, and maintains that the existing airport at Malton can be expanded to handle future traffic.

A special board of examination, to study what form the Airport would take; when it should be built and how it could be tied in with the Toronto-area transportation system, will likely be conducted.

Trip costlier

STOUFFVILLE - It is going to cost more money this year to bring Santa Claus to Town - at least in the style to which he has become accustomed.

In a letter to Council, the Kinsmen Club, sponsors of the annual Christmas parade, cited increased expenses in asking for a \$700 donation to subsidize the event, Nov. 25.

Mayor Ken Laushway commented that the Kinsmen do a beneficial thing in arranging the parade, but felt it was time to take a look at an alternative form of pre-Christmas spectacle for the community - a winter carnival, perhaps. "Every year", he added, "it has become harder to sponsor... It's become a chore for one organization".

Council agreed that \$600, which could have been expended this year on conventions, should be re-routed to support the Kinsmen venture, and the Clerk was instructed to request assistance from the police in patrolling the parade route.



A Grad's night to shine

Friday evening was 'Graduation Night' at Stouffville Dist. Secondary School, and the spotlight of attention was focused on every student recipient of diplomas and awards. One of these was Evelyn (Lyn) Patrick, Burkholder Street, Stouffville. Here, she receives a framed Ontario Scholarship from Principal William E. Duxbury. —Jim Thomas.

Gordon Ratcliff Mayor-elect; - ten qualify in four wards

Two for trustee post

STOUFFVILLE - Gordon Ratcliff is the 1973-74 Mayor-elect, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The popular Ward 4 representative, and former township councillor, agreed to assume the chief magistrate's chair several weeks ago, after incumbent Mayor Ken Laushway announced his intention to retire. Mr. Ratcliff was not opposed.

While the shift in power marks a 'beginning' for councillor Ratcliff, it also tolls an 'end' for Mayor Laushway, the end of a political career that has spanned a record 17 years.

For a time, it was a considered possibility that Ken Laushway might allow his name to stand in either Wards 4 or 5, and, while in fact nominated, he later withdrew.

Acclaimed along with Mayor-elect Ratcliff are Arthur Starr (Ward 1) and Merlyn Baker (Ward 3).

In Ward 2, councillor Herb Simpson is challenged by three candidates, Herb Peach, an electrician; Jim Wong, a school teacher, and Jack Wylie, an accountant.

In Ward 4, ex-councillor R.F. 'Tommy' Farr has tossed his hat back into the ring, along with newcomer, Cathy Joice, mother of three and a resident on Rupert Avenue.

In Ward 5, councillor June Button is opposed by Clara Harman of Ringwood. In Ward 6, councillor Tom Lonergan has as his opponent, Eldred King, Markham, R.R.2. The latter was



GORDON RATCLIFF

a mayoralty candidate in 1970.

A 'two-way' contest has developed for the lone trustee post on the York County (public school) Board of Education. Candidates are Michael Durman, Sunset Blvd., and John McMurray, Elm Road, both of Stouffville. John McDermott, Fairview Avenue, has been acclaimed to the County Separate School Board.

The ballot, Dec. 4, will also include provisions for a liquor vote.

Prior to the vote, all candidates' meetings are anticipated, likely in Stouffville and possibly Ballantrae.

Level grave markers mandatory

STOUFFVILLE - Reg Tomkinson, representing Stouffville Monument Works, met with Planning Committee, Nov. 10 to discuss a recent cemetery proposal.

Mr. Tomkinson did not disagree that a cemetery (part lot 24, conc. 8, Ballantrae) was desirable, but with the concept of a memorial gardens.

He said that, naturally, he was reflecting concern for personal reasons, but urged full consideration of certain aspects of the proposal.

In the memorial gardens, bronze in-the-ground grave markers would be mandatory.

Mr. Tomkinson speculated that there could be a monopoly on their sale and that, if they were sold on cemetery premises, it could be a tax-free business venture. He pointed out the disparity this could create, when taxes must be paid on a memorial sales business in

Stouffville.

Mr. Tomkinson disagreed with the conformity in a memorial gardens. He explained that, in times of stress, relatives were inclined to make decisions about burial without looking into details. "When they find out they can't put something on the grave of their own choosing, they are upset".

Chairman Tom Lonergan assured him that taxes on cemetery operations would be thoroughly investigated and his observations taken into consideration when the plan is reconsidered.

MARKHAM - a 16 year old Scarborough youth has been acquitted on charges of criminal negligence and careless use of a firearm, following a shooting incident, June 15, that seriously injured a little girl on the grounds of Dickson's Hill School.

Harry Ross Gowman, alleged to have fired the bullet from a location, south-east of the play area, testified that he and a companion, Bruce Thaw, 15, were shooting groundhogs at the time, and had not intended to harm anyone. He entered a plea of not guilty.

Dannette Grove, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Grove, 18th Avenue, R.R.2, Markham, was hospitalized for a period of 11 days.

Following conclusion of the case, the acquittal was handed down, Nov. 8.

Girl shot - youth freed

Pitfalls of pit fill

STOUFFVILLE - An application to fill and rehabilitate part of the former Roberts' gravel pit, Bloomington Road, has not been received with enthusiasm by Town Planning Committee.

The 'fill', members were informed, would be clean, industrial waste.

"You would need to have an inspector there all the time", remarked councillor Gordon Ratcliff.

There was some difference of opinion over what could be deposited at the site.

"Does anyone really think that dry, household garbage would hurt?" questioned councillor Herb Simpson.

Chairman Tom Lonergan contended that this could contain poisonous substances and councillor Merlyn Baker contended that garbage was only dry until a rainfall makes it drain through the earth.

Mr. Baker spoke emphatically against dumping. He pointed out that, though the Wastes Act

stated inert materials could be used for fill, "we are going to be the ones to say 'yes' or 'no'".

Lady beaten

GOODWOOD - A 23-year old Goodwood area woman, was beaten about the head when, according to police, she surprised an intruder, who had entered the family residence at lot 20, conc. 3, Uxbridge Twp.

Mrs. Catherine French was rendered unconscious by the blow, necessitating treatment in hospital. She was released, Saturday.

Candidate flexes muscles

UXBRIDGE TWP. - Stanley Cragg, Goodwood, a candidate for deputy-reeve in Uxbridge Twp., flexed his campaign muscles at Council meeting, Nov. 14.

Mr. Cragg interrupted proceedings, from the floor, on three occasions, to disapprove Council's actions on items on the agenda.

The candidate, a resident of Goodwood for one year, is a professional trades unionist and president of Toronto Building and Construction Trades

Council.

Asked about his reasons for running, Mr. Cragg commented, after his session with Council, that "It should be obvious". He was of the opinion that the Township needed 'new blood'.

Mr. Cragg did not think that he was aiming too high in contesting the deputy-reeve's position and that his long involvement with other administrative work would give him insight to handle municipal affairs. "I think I have the necessary acumen", he said.

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