

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:
I am writing in response to Mr. Doug Green's letter to the editor in the Lantern, Volume 16, Number 3. Let us get the facts straight. I did not vote to give teachers or anyone else on the staff of the Leeds and Grenville Board of Education an increase in salaries. Salaries and employee benefits eat up 80% of the Board's budget. If costs are not controlled in this area, costs are not substantially controlled at all. I would like to point out that I have taken the initiative to help relieve the local ratepayer of an exorbitant increase in taxes caused by salary and benefit increases over the past year or more, coupled with a tremendous decrease in anticipated transfer grants from the province. I put forward a motion that the Board develop and implement a strategic plan for budgeting over the next three years, in order to cut costs and spread the impact of recent happenings over a span of time. I have also put forward a motion that we write the Minister of Education telling him that we intend no longer to implement initiatives put forward by the province, if it means doing so at the expense of the local ratepayer. The Board passed both of these motions unanimously. This says something, I believe, about the Board's present commitment to controlling expenditures to keep the mill rate manageable. My stance has been and will remain one of vigilance and accountability. In the next few weeks I shall be meeting with the municipal councils of South Crosby and the Rear of Leeds and Lansdowne to convey to them just where the Board is situated in terms of budget and mill rate prospects. Later on this spring I will be holding public meetings in each of these constituencies to obtain input and comment. As far as Mr. Green's use of inflation rates as parameters for justifying salary increases, with all due respect, I don't consider this method to be a useful tool, even with inflation rates as low as they are. The truest measure of budget increases, and therefore salary increases, lies in the tax rolls of the various municipalities. The tremendous amounts of property taxes outstanding across Leeds and Grenville shows us that the ratepayers well has just about run dry. We should take great care not to dip too deeply into it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR DO NOT REFLECT THE OPINIONS OF OF THE EDITOR AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE LANTERN


I cannot condone Mr. Green's irresponsible manner of basing letters to the editor on erroneous information. This, I can only deduce, comes about from improperly researching the data. A phone call to me beforehand would have set him straight on my voting record had he accorded me that courtesy. I do, however, appreciate his giving me the opportunity to correct any misconceptions the public may have regarding my stance on financial matters at the Board of Education meetings. I do not mean to say that money matters always come foremost when looking at issues. Of course accountability of service must also be a factor. After all, we are defining the future of our children, ourselves, and our country by the way we approach education today. Sincerely,
Don Franklin

To the Editor:
Notice to concerned taxpayers and residents of the Municipality of Bastard and Burgess South. There seems to be some confusion in the township as to the wording of resolution #167-92 passed on February 17, 1992. The resolution is as follows:
Moved by Donald Wills
Seconded by John Firth

That as a condition of employment with the township all roads department personnel can have their driveways plowed and sanded if required. That no other private driveways can be plowed, sanded or graded.
Carried
Anna Greenhorn
The main reason behind this resolution was to create an atmosphere of trust and respect between township council and their employees. Being a newly elected council we have new ideas we would like to develop. In order to make these changes happen we need the respect of our employees. We were elected to make decisions for the well being of the entire township and not just special interest groups. We will endeavor to continue making sound decisions on the management of this township during our term of office. If you have any concerns please feel free to address them to your council:
Reeve, Howard French.....928-2594
Deputy Reeve, Anna Greenhorn...359-5847
Councilor, John Firth.....272-2141
Councillor, Jane McCabe.....924-2361
Councillor, Donald H.Wills.....283-7363
Sincerely,
Donald Wills

RESOURCE EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE

The Resource Employment Conference will be held at the Carriage House in Gananoque on Tuesday April 14th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.. The keynote speaker will be Sandra Mark. Several workshops will be presented to raise awareness of local resources available for employment and education, for people interested in getting back into the workforce, for retraining and for higher education. Numerous displays will also be present. Lunch will be served, transportation and babysitting can also be provided. There will be no fee for this conference and everyone is welcome. To register or for more information call June at Family Focus at 359-1069.



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Thirty-five years is a long time to be with another person. We've learned a lot about ourselves, and I think one of the biggest things we learned is the importance of considering the other's needs.

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