

Senator defends hard-working members of Upper House

By **KATHY YANCHUS**
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

The recent public uproar over a wayward senator and the subsequent controversy surrounding the upper chamber was, in retrospect, a good thing, according to Senator Isobel Finnerty.

Monday morning, the Burlington resident squeezed in an hour to speak open-

ly and candidly about her job to a group of St. Ignatius of Loyola history and law students before boarding a plane back to Ottawa.

She told the students the flak caused the senate to defend its accountability.

Most senators, she emphasized, work extremely hard, even on their so-called holidays.

"If we are away for a day, if we are

away sick, we have to get a doctor's certificate," said Finnerty. "If we miss one day, we are docked a percentage of our pay. My day begins at 7:30 a.m. and if I'm home by 8, I'm happy."

The senate is like a cup of tea set to cool, quoted Finnerty.

"It cools off the process with calm, serious thought so that bills can be amended and made better."

Senate members should never be elected because they then would be in conflict with members of parliament, she said in response to a question.

"They can't both be in the same job," she said.

To dispel a myth that senators are all breathing fossils, Finnerty said the average age is 64 and "most people quit before they're 75."

Although Finnerty was appointed by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien last September, she knows how busy and dedicated senators must be and is in full agreement with the mandatory retirement age of 75.

"I don't know what my energy level would be like at 75," she said.

Finnerty grew up in northern Ontario and became involved in politics, particularly related to the environment, while watching Timmins' abundance of natural resources being removed with "nothing coming back, no roads, no airports."

An avid athlete in her community, Finnerty was approached by the Timmins' mayor to sit on the city's parks and recreation commission.

"There was nothing for young ladies. It was all hockey," she said.

Timmins boasted 28 outdoor rinks, but they were filled with sticks and pucks so she suggested building an ice pad beside the boarded rinks so girls could skate, too. She also instigated Jam Can curling, improvising curling rocks with cans filled with cement as well as teen dances at the teen centre.

"I ended up staying there for 20 years," said Finnerty.

When she found a candidate who supported environmental concerns she would get involved in their election campaigns and her political involvement continued as she and her CN executive husband moved throughout Ontario.

"I became quite good at it. Then I started working for the Liberal party and became its executive director within two years."

Among the high profile politicians she has worked with are Pierre Trudeau, John Munro and David Peterson.

"Working with Trudeau was the greatest experience of my life. You were in absolute awe of his intelligence. Jean Chrétien is the most street smart politician I've ever met and I've met a lot."

Finnerty also ran Chrétien's leadership campaign and it was he who appointed her to the senate last fall.

"There I was at the cottage up in Timmins, in my Shania Twain T-shirt, and I got the call," she smiled.

At the time, she didn't realize how much her life would change, but she is honored to be one of 34 women sitting in the non-partisan senate.

"There is every nationality, every educational background. We bring to the table a lot of different life experiences."

Among the most important bill facing the senate today is the Clarity Bill, which



Photo by Barrie Erskine
Senator Isobel Finnerty: Halton resident says she and her colleagues work very hard

will clarify the question for Quebecers should they decide to hold another referendum, and should be voted on by Friday, said Finnerty.

Other senate business includes legislation which would increase the cost of a package of cigarettes by 19-cents in an effort to deter youths from smoking, and private members' bills on consecutive sentencing and euthanasia.

The most important bill, however, is the Clarity Bill, she said.

"I think Quebec is spoiled. We can't keep paying for the mistakes of the past. I love the uniqueness of the French culture. It's the French influence that makes us so unique. We can't ever lose that and I don't think we will."

Town Manager retiring after 24 years with local government

Oakville Town Manager Harry Henderson has announced he will be retiring this spring after 24 years with the municipality.

The date of Henderson's retirement - in either May or June - will be determined in consultation with Town Council.

For the past 16 years, Henderson served as Town manager. Prior to that, he was Town Treasurer for more than eight years.

"It has been a great pleasure to work with Mr. Henderson during my tenure as mayor and as a councillor before that," said Ann Mulvale. "His considerable skills and commitment to Oakville have served the town and its people extremely well."

Developer donates \$25,000 to Bronte Butterfly Project

The Bronte Butterfly Project has received a \$25,000 pledge from Metrus Development Inc..

The Concord land development corporation, which recently purchased the 338-acre former Shell Research site for residential development, will donate the money over a five-year period.

The Metrus donation is the third major donation announced by the Bronte Butterfly Foundation in two weeks.

Last week, the foundation announced a \$150,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and a \$25,000 donation of engineering services by Cimco Refrigeration, the largest skating rink contractor in the world.

The Trillium Foundation grant will be spread over two years to cover fundraising costs including staffing, organizational support and office expenses.

So far, more than \$500,000 has been raised towards the \$2.44 million project.

The three-acre park, which will incorporate a butterfly garden, formal gardens, pathways, fountains, a gazebo and an outdoor skating area in the winter, is planned for the mouth of the Bronte Outer Harbour at Heritage Park, south of Ontario Street.

Plans are for the lakeside skating area, which will be in the shape of a butterfly, to open this coming winter. The butterfly sanctuary and park are expected to open next spring or summer.

Construction on the project is due to begin in mid-May.

About \$45,000 has been donated by individuals, with the purchase of paving stones and benches most popular among local residents.

The paving stones, which will line the paths of the park and welcome visitors at the entrance, are priced between \$25 and \$100 depending on their size and location. Donors will have their names etched in the stones.



The Roman Catholic Parishes of Oakville invite you to join us for the celebrations of Holy Week in this year of the Great Jubilee.

RECONCILIATION

St. Andrew	47 Reynolds Street	Wednesday, April 19, 2000	7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
St. Dominic	2415 Rebecca Street	Tuesday, April 18, 2000	6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
St. James	231 Morden Road	Sunday, April 16, 2000 (communal)	7:30 p.m.
St. Michael	181 Sewell Drive	Saturday, April 15, 2000	9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
			1:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.
St. Matthew	1150 Monks Passage	Saturday, April 15, 2000	9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Mary Mother of God			
St. Marguerite School	1359 Bayshire Rd	Saturday, April 15, 2000	4:00 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.
Parish Rectory	463 Glenashton Dr.	Wednesday, April 19, 2000	7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

PALM SUNDAY EUCHARIST (April 16, 2000)

St. Andrew	Saturday at 5:00 p.m.	Sunday at 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:00 noon
St. Dominic	Saturday at 5:30 p.m.	Sunday at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.
St. James	Saturday at 7:00 p.m.	Sunday at 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. (Italian), 11:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m.
St. Michael	Saturday at 5:30 p.m.	Sunday at 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m.
St. Matthew	Saturday at 6:00 p.m.	Sunday at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m.
Mary Mother of God		
	Saturday at 5:00 p.m.	Sunday at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

HOLY THURSDAY - MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (April 20)

With the exception of St. James Parish (7:00 p.m.) and Mary Mother of God Parish (7:30 p.m.) all celebrations of this liturgy begin at 8:00 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY CELEBRATION OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD (April 21)

All parishes will celebrate this liturgy at 3:00 p.m.

HOLY SATURDAY CELEBRATION OF THE EASTER VIGIL (April 22)

With the exception of St. Dominic Parish (9:00 p.m.) all parishes will celebrate this liturgy at 8:00 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY: THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD (April 23)

All parishes will celebrate the Eucharist as on Palm Sunday with the following exceptions: The Easter Vigil replaces the regularly scheduled Saturday evening Mass in all parishes. St. Dominic Masses at 8:30 a.m.; 10:30 a.m.; 12:30 p.m.; St. James - no 5:00 p.m. Mass; St. Michael - add 7:30 a.m.

For other schedules, call St. Joseph Parish (Portuguese) 825-2043; St. Anthony Parish (Polish) 845-6067; Holy Trinity Parish (Croatian) 842-2386.



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