

Local



—Wayne Cuddington, Citizen
That's what friends are for: Jennifer Small, right, and Sandra Wilson, both 15, race in a three-legged event on Dow's Lake, part of Glebe Collegiate's school carnival.

Ottawa votes to lease or sell 5 firehalls

By Doug Kelly
Citizen staff writer

After months of discussion, Ottawa Council voted Wednesday to dispose of five of its seven vacant firehalls.

In a heated four-hour debate, council decided three firehalls should be sold or put up for long-term lease to developers, two should be made available to community groups for about two years and then disposed of, and one should remain under city ownership.

The future of the seventh hall remains up in the air, pending a staff report.

Mayor Jim Durrell warned this isn't the end of the debate.

With the properties now zoned as public, the city must decide what kind of development it

wants on the land and what the corresponding zoning will be.

He said council must decide whether to sell or lease on a long-term basis.

Ottawa's chief administrative officer, Alcide DeGagné, said the city stands to profit just as much by leasing some of the properties over several years as it does selling. Leasing is seen as one way of keeping the city's options open on the properties.

Last month, a city committee decided against considering a \$5-million offer for the firehalls, which city officials estimate are worth only \$3 million.

That was rejected because much of the zoning requested as a condition of sale was unrealistic. Council policy also requires city properties up for sale to be advertised and then sold by public auction or tender.

Ald. Michael McSweeney hopes Ottawa will follow through with the sale of the land to offset the \$14-million cost of building new firehalls around the city.

The firehalls, three of which have been vacated, while the others are to be vacated this year, have been eyed by various community and private groups for pet projects.

Wednesday's voting breaks down as follows:

- The firehall at 386 Church Ave. will be made available to a senior citizens' club located next door and eventually sold or leased on the condition community space is provided.
- The firehall at 280 Bay St. will be sold or leased for housing. A multicultural centre is to be a condition of any development.
- The firehall at 179 Clarence St. is to be sold or leased, al-

though not necessarily to the Institut Canadien-Français d'Ottawa as was recommended. The building will be used as a fire museum this summer as was promised.

- The firehall at 405 MacKay St. will be sold or leased for housing.
- The future of the firehall at 715 St. Laurent Blvd. will be decided after completion of a study in March of recreational needs in the Forbes area.
- The firehall at 1463 Prince of Wales Dr. will be used by a local Italian congregation in need of space. Eventually, the land will be either sold or leased, along with connecting land owned by the National Capital Commission, which the city intends to buy.
- The city will keep the firehall at 424 Parkdale Ave. for use by the Queensway Social Action Group for various community uses.

Ottawa rejects alderman's bid to stop renovation

By Doug Kelly
Citizen staff writer

Ottawa Ald. Diane Holmes has lost an attempt to have the city revoke a building permit for renovations that will result in the eviction of tenants of a MacLaren Street apartment building in her ward.

Ottawa Council Wednesday rejected a request by the Wellington alderman that the building permit issued in June to convert 36 two-bedroom apartments in the Bonaventure Apartments to 54 one-bedroom apartments be rescinded.

Under provincial regulations, the owner can evict tenants if "major renovations" are being done to an apartment.

Holmes argued the permit should never have been issued because once the additional 18 apartments are built, there won't be enough parking under Ottawa's bylaw requirements.

But city staff disagreed, saying by the time the renovations are done next year, parking now slated for three floors of offices in the building will be available for use by tenants.

The lease for the office parking will not be renewed when it comes due in April 1988.

Holmes, who was angered by council's decision, said building permits should not be issued for conditions which don't exist and may never come into being.

Ald. Nancy Smith supported Holmes, urging council to "err in favor of the tenants."

Ald. Darrel Kent, although commending Holmes for supporting the tenants, said the amount of parking to be provided has met the city's bylaw. He questioned the wisdom of revoking the permit once it had been granted.

Gerard Lavelle, an 11-year resident of the building, said he was appalled by council's decision.

Lavelle said there is clearly not enough parking for the number of apartments proposed for the building.

Michel Pierrot, another tenant, said it's obvious "the city does not care about protecting tenants."

Pierrot said the tenants will be meeting to consider what they should do next.

Dan O'Leary, vice president of the Centretown Citizens' Community Association, said in a letter to the mayor that "examples such as this will pave the way for further injustices" if not dealt with properly.

O'Leary supports having the permit revoked.

Man charged with obstructing justice

Citizen staff

A 24-year-old Ottawa man awaiting an Ontario Supreme Court trial for attempted murder has been charged with obstructing justice by trying to dissuade witnesses from giving evidence.

Glenn Wiseman, of Draper Avenue, was charged after a man telephoned witness GINETTE GORE Jan. 14 and told her Peter Seymour, another witness, was going to be harmed.

Wiseman appeared briefly in provincial court Wednesday and has been remanded out of custody until Feb. 11.

He was charged with attempted murder and possession of a weapon after 27-year-old John Charette was stabbed once in the abdomen during a fight at a west-end party April 19.

Maze to show finding housing no game for low income earners

By Jacquie Miller
Citizen staff writer

An Ottawa agency is seeking a \$40,000 provincial grant to build a public maze to demonstrate the frustrations involved in finding affordable housing for low-income people.

The portable maze would be set up in shopping malls and other public places to illustrate the red tape and problems encountered in finding inexpensive housing in Ottawa, Housing Help official Aline Akeson said.

Housing Help provides one-stop shopping for housing advice, including forms for subsidized housing, information on landlord tenant law and building standards, and lists of vacancies and rents in the Dalhousie neighborhood.

The maze, which would be built of nylon strung between poles so it could be easily taken down and set up, would include

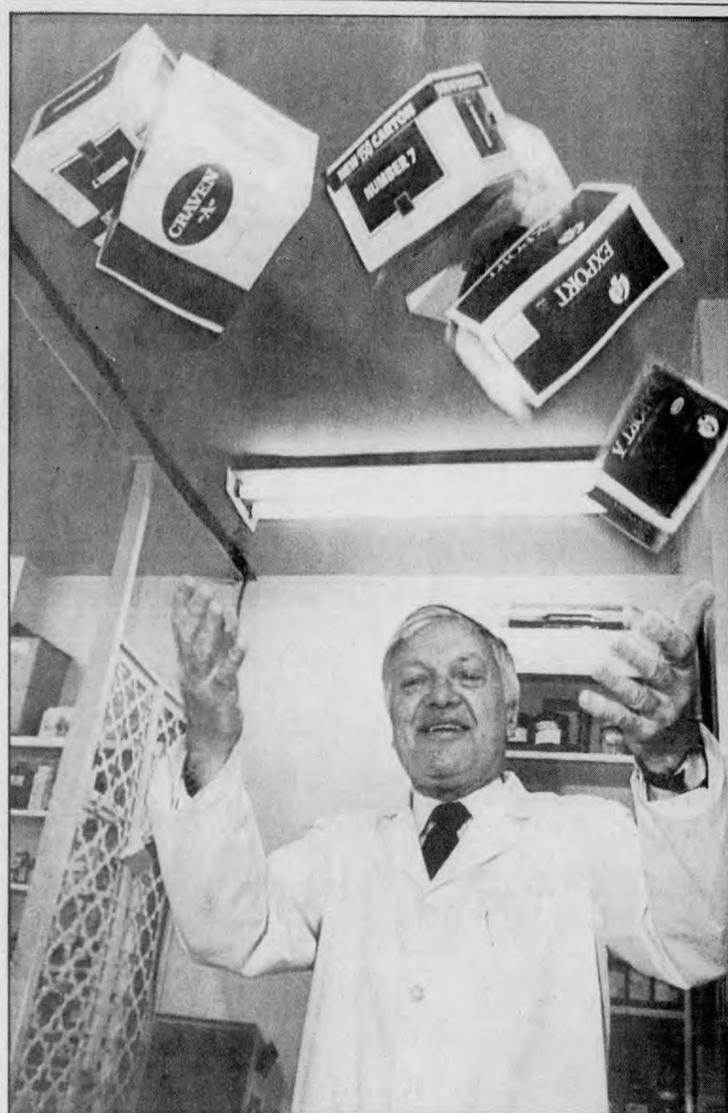
a series of passageways within a 12-metre diameter circular enclosure with two-metre high walls.

Props, such as heavy suitcases to carry and rickety stairs to climb, are all part of the game.

As they wander through the maze, people would encounter signs spelling out some of the problems faced by tenants, such as eviction, high rents and long waiting lists for subsidized housing.

"We're trying to explain how people become homeless and to try to impress upon people that these could be your neighbors," said Housing Help board member Dorothy O'Connell.

It isn't known exactly how many homeless people there are in Ottawa, but a national survey found 245 people sleeping at shelters for the homeless in Ottawa on one day last month.



—Lynn Ball, Citizen
Jean-Paul Desjardins puts an end to cigarette sales in pharmacy

Druggist opts to quit selling cigarettes

By Brad Evenson
Citizen staff writer

Sick of the irony of selling both health-care products and cigarettes, an Ottawa pharmacist quit selling smokes Wednesday and has banned smoking in his building.

Jean-Paul Desjardins, owner of Desjardins Pharmacy at Clarence and Dalhousie streets, said he will return \$750 worth of cigarettes to wholesalers and throw out what they won't take back.

"It's crazy for us to sell cigarettes when on the other hand we're delivering health care to patients," said Desjardins, 61, who quit smoking nine years ago.

"I realized the harm that smoking is doing and the carcinogens it gives off."

Although the store sells about \$1,000 worth of cigarettes a week, he said he doesn't care about the money.

"The good that it'll do to a lot of people will be worth it," he said.

He said quite a few of his friends and customers had recently told him they'd developed spots on their lungs, the telltale signs

of cancer. Early this week, he made up his mind to ban the offending fags.

"I mean, we're a pharmacy, not a tobacco shop."

Desjardins inherited the store from his father in 1950. He said the pharmacy was opened in 1871, and "there have been cigarettes around here for as long as I can remember."

"It will maybe give us a bit of incentive to stop," conceded Gerry Leduc, 35, the store's purchasing manager.

Leduc, who smokes one pack every two days, he wasn't surprised Desjardins decided to quit selling cigarettes.

"He tried about two or three years ago to drop cigarettes, but people weren't ready for it. It wasn't the right time."

There are about a dozen other pharmacies in the region that have stopped selling cigarettes, said Leo Desormeaux, an official with the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association.

Desjardins said he hopes other pharmacies will follow his example.

OSSB overreacting to letter to Catholics, says OBE trustee

By Doug Yonson
Citizen staff writer

Francophone separate school trustees have overreacted to a legitimate effort by the Ottawa Board of Education to attract tax support from Roman Catholics, OBE Trustee Robert Bélanger said Wednesday.

Bélanger, chairman of the OBE's French-language education council, said a letter sent to the parents of the 4,000 Catholic students, mostly francophones, who attend OBE schools inviting them to change their tax support to the public board was "fair and well balanced."

Francophone trustees on the Ottawa Separate School Board have been vehement in their condemnation of the letter, terming it a "stab in the back."

Bélanger noted anglophone OSSB trustees have reacted in a "conciliatory" manner, accepting that the two boards are directly

competing for students now that separate schools are funded through Grade 13.

However, Carmen Gervais, Bélanger's OSSB counterpart, said she believes the OBE is simply making a grab for the tax support of Catholic students to increase its size when declining enrolment is affecting both boards.

Had it bluntly stated that intent in its letter to the Catholic parents, she said, parents could objectively choose and she would not have reacted so strongly.

Bélanger said the OBE letter was just a marketing tactic, similar to recent advertisements by the OSSB lauding its high schools and OSSB letters to Catholics who are public school supporters.

But Gervais said there was a key difference in the two approaches — the OSSB was only trying to market to its natural audience, Catholics, and was not aiming at the OBE's natural market, non-Catholics.

Doctor urges hospitals to help obtain organs

By Cathy Campbell
Citizen staff writer

The absence of an organ-donation policy in many local hospitals is the main reason for a shortage of suitable organs for transplants, says the director of the National Capital Organ Retrieval and Exchange.

There are enough potential organs to meet the needs of all Canadians awaiting transplants, but they go to the grave with the potential donor because doctors don't approach the families or know how to get the organs to people who need them, Dr. Shiv Jindal told medical students Wednesday at the University of Ottawa. It was the third day of the school's organ-donor awareness week.

"There is a tremendous gap between what is actually done and what is potentially available," said Jindal.

"A big percentage of the potential donors are missed out."

The organ retrieval and exchange matches up available organs with patients who need transplants.

It's now on the lookout for a human heart for Jean-Louis Richard, a local man who became Canada's third artificial-heart recipient Monday in an operation performed at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute at the Civic Hospital.

But Richard, like thousands of other Canadians who need new organs, is facing a situation where demand far exceeds supply.

More than 500 people wait for heart transplants every year and about 1,300 people are on lists across Canada for kidney transplants.

During one year, more than 2,750 kidneys suitable for trans-

plant are buried with the potential donor; about 245 are made available for transplant.

There have been more transplants performed at the Ottawa Civic Hospital during the past five weeks than in any other five-week interval in the hospital's history.

"I have no explanation why we have all of a sudden got a flood of kidneys and other organs," Jindal said in an interview.

However, greater public awareness of the need for organs may be a factor, he said.

During the five-week period, there have been nine kidney transplants and one heart transplant at the Civic. The hospital has also sent a heart to Toronto and another to London, Ont., for transplantation. It has sent a lung to Toronto and a liver to Cincinnati, Ohio.

Potential donors are most often victims of motor vehicle accidents, who are brain dead but whose hearts continue to beat.

Although Jindal said people are becoming more aware of the need for organs, he said many doctors in small hospitals don't know how to go about getting consent from the patient's family. He said they also aren't sure how to get the organ to a suitable recipient.

Jindal said most small hospitals in the Ottawa Valley and the Outaouais don't have an organ-donation policy that would aid doctors.

He said he's organizing a day-long seminar for doctors from 17 small hospitals in the Ottawa Valley and the Outaouais in early March to tell them how to establish an organ donor policy. This policy includes a complicated list of procedures that must be followed before an organ is donated. He will also tell hospital officials how to tie into the national capital organ exchange.

Venezuelan vacation lands Ottawa tourist in dingy jail

By Brad Evenson
Citizen staff writer

A relaxing week in sunny Venezuela turned into a nightmare for an Ottawa man who was robbed twice and then jailed for a night as a drug suspect.

Norman Denault, 25, and his friend Mario Serré from Montreal spent Friday night in a dingy jail in Macuto, a small coastal village. They say they were threatened with beatings and electric shocks by Venezuelan police and prevented from calling the Canadian embassy in Caracas.

Denault, the owner of Norm's Taco Stand at 87 George St., arrived back in Ottawa on Sunday.

He said he thought the Venezuelan police were going to beat him during questioning. They shouted at him in Spanish, "drugs, you have drugs, don't you?"

In a nearby room was a Venezuelan youth Denault had met on the beach a week earlier, Jan. 23. The youth, whom he knew as Joel, was thought by police to be involved with drugs.

Both Denault and Serré, a 27-year-old welder, had been seen with Joel.

After three hours in the police station, Denault was handcuffed and taken to a nearby jail, where Serré later joined him.

"The cell was about eight by eight and stank terribly," Denault said.

The next morning they were fed some dry beans and rice — no water, no utensils. Then they were



Norman Denault
Threatened in jail

taken back to the police station for more questioning.

"They wanted to know if we'd do a urine test, if we were Catholic. Would we swear on a Bible? We said 'yes' to everything, but they still wouldn't let us phone the embassy."

Said Serré in a telephone interview from Montreal: "Nobody knew where we were."

"We could have been there a month without anybody knowing."

By evening Saturday, when it was obvious they had no drugs, Denault and Serré were set free. But their flight had left without them.