

# Local news

## Woodward's food dept. sale eyed

**Citizen news services**  
Canada Safeway Ltd. is negotiating to add the 26 food stores owned by Woodward's Ltd. to its stable of 258 supermarkets in Western Canada, officials of the two companies said Thursday.

Woodward's president Frank Robertson said a sales agreement should be complete within a week to transfer ownership of the company's 16 stores in British Columbia and 10 others in Alberta.

One or two of the outlets may be shut down, Robertson said, but most of the 1,100 full-time and 2,100 part-time employees can expect to keep their jobs.

In Prince George, Food Floor sales are excellent, according to local Woodward's Manager John Farris.

"In recent months, our performance has been the best in the company." On Thursday, the Woodward's board of directors met to discuss the possible deal, but no statement was released.

The only unionized staff at Woodward's are those in its Victoria store, plus meat-cutters at all other outlets. The rest are almost certain to seek the same union status enjoyed by all of Canada Safeway's workers.

Robertson said Safeway has agreed to keep operating Woodward's food stores under their current name and stocked with current products.

News of the sales talks prompted a halt in trading of Woodward's shares on the Toronto and Vancouver stock exchanges. The price of Woodward's stock rose sharply on the Toronto exchange before trading was suspended Thursday.

The company reported a \$7.5-million loss last year. Financial data for its food stores — usually housed within its department stores — are not calculated independently. It's known the outlets have not been earning any money.

Robertson said Woodward's is one of two remaining major department store chains in North America that still operate food outlets. He said the increasingly competitive grocery market has forced the department chains to streamline.

Woodward's has faced tough competition in the Vancouver area in recent months from Save-on-Food outlets owned by millionaire Jim Pattison.

Larry McLennan, Canada Safeway's public affairs manager, said discussions with Woodward's have been going on for several months but nothing has been completed.

"There's no deal yet," McLennan said.

Ironically, news of Safeway's impending expansion comes amid speculation the whole company is for sale. The New York investment firm of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Co. reportedly needs the cash to pay for Canada Safeway's parent, Safeway Stores Inc., which it bought for \$4.5 billion US.

Analysts estimate the value of Canada Safeway at between \$700 million and \$1 billion.

The firm has seen profits slide by 16 per cent since 1983, to \$46 million from \$59 million, and sales by eight per cent to \$2.46 billion from \$2.68 billion.

## Hearings scheduled in caboose dispute

Trains of the future may be cabooseless if Canadian railway officials are successful in a bid to prove them unnecessary.

Hearings to determine whether cabooses are needed as a safety feature have been going on across the country since Oct. 2 when the first was held in Hull, Que.

Due to the response from railroad workers in B.C. and Saskatchewan, who are at the forefront of a campaign to save the caboose, most hearing dates have been rescheduled to allow more time for presentations.

"The evidence presented in Hull took seven weeks instead of the expected three," explained Pierre Trotter, spokesman for the Prince George caboose committee, set up by Local 1271 of the United Transportation Union.

While railway workers contend the caboose crews provides safety features through sight, sound and smell which can never be replaced by mechanical means, CN and CP officials are convinced replacing the caboose with end-of-train units to detect any safety hazards like smoke or flat wheels are not only safe, but essential if railroads are to provide economical transportation.

New dates for hearings include Toronto, Jan. 6, Moncton, Jan. 19, Edmonton, Jan. 27, Vancouver, Feb. 2 and Winnipeg, Feb. 17.

"This time extension has been

# ANCIENT WEAPONS DISCOVERED NORTH OF HERE

by DAVE PAULSON  
Staff reporter

An archeologist has discovered artifacts which he believes are among the oldest found in B.C.

Three spearheads which experts agree were used for hunting a now-extinct species of bison about 10,000 years ago were found recently in the Pink Mountain area, 150 kilometres northwest of Fort St. John.

Ian Wilson, a professional archeologist from Victoria, made the

discovery in only 10 centimetres of soil during a natural gas pipeline survey last summer. Archeological studies are a standard practice before pipeline construction. Wilson was working in co-operation with Westcoast Transmission Co. Ltd., and the Ministry of Tourism, Recreation and Culture.

Wilson said the find represents the second-oldest example of human habitation in B.C., the oldest being a 10,400-year-old site at Charlie Lake, just outside Fort St.

John, discovered in 1984.

Blood residue from the spearheads is being examined at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby and it should be possible to identify within a few days what animal was hunted. An accurate date for the latest finding should be known early in 1987.

The spearheads are about two inches long and one inch at their widest point, with a distinctive channel running along the length to speed the animal's flow of blood

and its death, Wilson said.

The Pink Mountain and Charlie Lake sites support the theory that the eastern foothills of the Rocky Mountains through the Peace River country was a major travel route for North America's first inhabitants.

"It's nice to find something this significant once in a while," Wilson told The Citizen. "A lot of the time it's kind of humdrum."

The earliest evidence of man's

habitation in North America dates to 11,500 years ago in New Mexico.

The oldest archeological evidence in the Central Interior dates to about 4,000 years ago, Wilson said, but he's convinced man was in this area much earlier.

"Absolutely. Older (than 4,000 years ago), but probably not as old as those in the Peace country," said Wilson, who is interested in probing the Central Interior next year.

## MONEY SOUGHT

### City services tied to gov't generosity

by MALCOLM CURTIS  
Staff reporter

Faced with the possibility of reduced city services next year, Mayor John Backhouse wants the province to give Prince George more money.

Commenting on the provisional budget reviewed by city council for the first time Thursday night, Backhouse said there may be a noticeable cut in the quality of city services if more revenue isn't found.

The unknown factor in 1987's city finances is the B.C. government's largesse, which won't be known until late February or March.

Because of declining revenues elsewhere, treasurer Bill Kennedy has proposed a \$36.2-million budget for 1987 — more than \$700,000 less than this year.

"I'm hoping we will be getting a little bit more from the province," the mayor told The Prince George Citizen.

Victoria handed the city \$2.67 million in unconditional grants last year which are used to offset the general operating budget.

A number of other factors cloud the city's financial outlook and Backhouse said he was not willing to make any assumptions about a tax increase beyond the 3.8-per cent increase calculated by the treasurer.

But the proposed 1987 budget reflects the past three or four recessionary years when "we cut to the bone and if we go any further we'll be cutting into the bone," the mayor said.

"The city's in a position where many external costs are going up that our virtually beyond our control," he said, citing spiralling insurance and energy bills as examples.

"This is leaving us with less and less discretionary money."

Kennedy estimated that council last year had control over about only one-tenth of the operating budget.

Backhouse said council will have to decide whether to continue dipping into its financial reserves to balance revenues against costs.

"We can't continue to do that year after year... we have to think of future councils."

## CART study under wraps

A study that will determine the future of the Centre for Advanced Resource Technologies in Prince George is in the hands of provincial cabinet, but its recommendations are being kept under wraps.

"I can't comment because it is before cabinet and therefore confidential," said Sandy Peel, deputy minister of economic development.

He said he hopes provincial ministers will review the report of Woods Gordon, the consulting firm hired to look into CART's operations, at next Wednesday's cabinet meeting.

Intergovernmental Affairs Minister and Prince George South MLA Bruce Strachan said he has seen a summary of the recommendations for CART, but also refused comment.

The future of the privately-run computer manufacturing and training centre has been put in doubt because it is out of cash.

The federal government has committed money for the centre, providing it is matched by the province.

The provincial government has provided temporary financing to the centre to keep it afloat while Woods Gordon reviewed the CART concept, structure and business plans.

Neither Peel nor Strachan could say if the consulting report will be made public once cabinet has acted upon it.

"That is up to cabinet," said Peel.

## MAN GETS LIFE TERMS IN KILLINGS

A 40-year-old Prince George man was sentenced in B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver to two life sentences with a recommendation of no eligibility for parole for 10 years for killing two Miworth residents in 1983.

Ronald Jack Stone was found guilty of two counts of second-degree murder for the August, 1983 shooting deaths of his wife, Alma Stone, 48, and Stewart Sackner, 71. Their bodies were found in a Miworth house, about 13 kilometres west of Prince George.

Stone received the same sentence in 1984 but a new trial was ordered in January of this year.

## Oberle leaves Ottawa hospital

Federal Science Minister Frank Oberle was released from an Ottawa hospital Thursday, but an aide says he may have to return next week for more tests.

John McMillan said Oberle was released in time to attend a science ministers' conference beginning today in Montreal.

"It was extremely important, in terms of the policy decisions he has been making in the last year."

Oberle, veteran MP for Prince George-Peace River, was admitted to hospital last week for tests because he had not been feeling well for some time.

"I don't think it is that serious," said McMillan, in an interview from Ottawa this morning, pointing out that Oberle is well enough to attend the Montreal conference.

## Father jailed on sex charges

A 40-year-old Prince George man was sentenced to nine months in jail when he appeared in the County Court of Cariboo in Prince George Thursday on two counts of sexual assault involving his daughter.

The man was found guilty in November of the offences, which took place in July of 1985 when the girl was 16 years old and after her 17th birthday the same month.

Judge Richard Low banned the man's name from being published because it would identify the victim.

In speaking to sentencing, Crown counsel Neil Lauder said the incidents involved fondling the girl.

The judge said although the jury heard evidence during a six-day trial of an incestuous relationship between the man and his daughter from 1979 to 1981 when the girl was 10 to 12 years old, he could not sentence the man on those offences. Charges were laid in 1982, but were stayed because the daughter couldn't testify.

When the Crown counsel office tried to revive the 1982 charges following the 1985 offences, the judge ruled there was an unreasonable delay under the Canadian Charter

of Rights and Freedoms and the charges could not be revived.

The accused is no longer at risk for the previous offences and remains untried and unconvicted, said Low.

Vancouver defence lawyer Ken Young said his client had no remorse as he maintained he was innocent throughout his trial.

"Your client has an attitude toward his plea which doesn't assist him in sentencing... he was found guilty by the jury," the judge said.

"The accused was assaulting a child of his he knew was fragile having been assaulted before... he was dealing with a child who was emotionally fragile and he knew she was fragile."

The man is supported by his family, but "the attitude, which unfortunately is present, is it couldn't happen in our family (and) therefore it never happened," said Judge Low.

"I take offence from the family

getting on the bandwagon, as evident in the probation officer's report... pounding on the table and demanding his innocence," he said.

This attitude is unfortunate because the victim doesn't need their condemnation but needs their support, said the judge.

The man was sentenced to nine months in jail on each of the two counts but the sentences will be served concurrently. He also received two years' probation following his release from jail.

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