

BORN AND RAISED IN PORT CREDIT

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'Big Daddy' is an all-round family man

By DON EDWARDS

Peel County's first 'Big Daddy', chairman of the regional council, is a young, energetic native of this area who, in the past six years, has made a meteoric rise up the political ladder.

Born and raised in Port Credit, Lou Parsons first put his foot into the political ring back in 1959 — when he was only 26 years old. He ran for the Ward 7 seat on the old Township of Toronto council but lost by 24 votes to Art Barker.

Two years later, Mr. Parsons tried for the Ward 2 seat, but lost out to Bob Harrison.

For the next six years, Lou Parsons stayed out of the election picture and devoted most of his time and energy to his real estate business and his family.

Mr. Parsons and his very attractive wife, Carol, have five children, Tom, 14, Mike, 13, David, 12, Joyann, 10 and Tim, eight. They reside on Welwyn Dr. in Clarkson.

1967 ELECTION

When the 1967 election rolled around, a more mature Lou Parsons moved back into the picture and this time he was on his way. He won the Ward 2 seat on council this time, defeating incumbent Frank Webb. In 1970, the people of Ward 2 showed their confidence in their representative and returned him to council by acclamation.

The quick witted and personable Clarkson resident developed a surprisingly quick knowledge of the workings of council and he was soon recognized by fellow council members here, and in surrounding municipalities, as a leader.

YOUNG LEADER

In 1971, Peel County Council, made up of representatives from all municipalities in the county, elected Lou Parsons as the County Warden. At 37, he was the youngest person ever to reach the top rung on the county political ladder.

To add to his laurels, Mr. Parsons was re-elected to lead the county, by acclamation, in January of last year. This was the first time in 98 years that anyone

had ever served two consecutive terms as Warden of Peel County.

Shortly after the death of former Mayor Bob Speck, early last year, Reeve Chic Murray was elevated to the position of Mayor of Mississauga and council then paid tribute to Lou Parsons' leadership qualities by electing him to fill the Reeve's seat.

Now, less than six years after his first election victory, Lou Parsons has won the appointment, from Premier Bill Davis, to lead Peel County into its first years of regional government.

"I certainly intend to serve the people of Peel County to the best of my ability," Peel's Big Daddy said after being informed of his appointment. "This, I suppose, is the realization of a dream which started when I was elected Warden for the first time in 1971. I recognized then that municipal reorganization was upon us and that we had to set out to develop a plan which was workable and fair for everyone."

RIGHT PLAN

"Contrary to the thoughts of some people," he said, "I feel that the plan which has been implemented by the province is right. I feel that the citizens of this county can be well served under this form of local government provided the people who are elected at the regional level are prepared to take a broad purview and address themselves to the needs of the total region, and not just the area which they represent."

A well rounded individual, Mr. Parsons has been active in nearly all phases of life here. His attention has been focused on the interests of senior citizens, minor sports — he was quite active in the negotiations which wound up with the construction of the Clarkson Arena and Community Centre — church work, etc.

Now, he is faced with the tremendous task of getting the wheels in motion in preparation for the first meeting of the new Peel Regional Council on Oct. 15 of this year.

There is much to be done in this regard, but 'Big Daddy' Parsons is, as might be expected, prepared for the job.

"I must focus my attention on organizing a plan to

determine what staff requirements are needed at the regional level to fulfill the obligations which have been assigned to us," he said.

"A second major requirement is the consideration of facilities to be used for regional responsibilities. We must have office space, council chambers, works yards, etc., which will be necessary to serve the people of the Peel region," the new regional chairman said.

POLICE CHIEF

As far as chairman Parsons is concerned, the appointment of a Police Chief to head the new Peel Regional Police Force, which will come into being on Jan. 1, 1974, will not be made until sometime around the first of November.

"I hope I will be invited to sit in with the police committee working on the organizational work for the new regional police force," he said.

"The actual responsibility for the establishment of the regional police force will be vested in the police commission which will be composed of a County Judge, two civilian appointments and two members of the regional council. It would seem most likely that the Chief's job would have to await the first meeting of the new regional police commission," Mr. Parsons said.

UNITY

Going into his first week as chairman of a council which has not yet been elected, Mr. Parsons said that his sincere hope is for a council that will pull together and not be divided over parochial interests.

He noted that "there is so much at stake for the citizens of the region, now and in the future, regarding their life style here. I really hope that they will take a real interest in the coming elections and in the candidates who will be offering themselves."

"I see myself as the coach of a team that will score many goals and earn a record as the championship region in Ontario. This is something which can't happen overnight. It will require sincere dedication by all the people involved to achieve this goal," Peel's newly-appointed regional chairman said.



FROM POLITICS . . .

Early last year, Lou Parsons had the honor of being chosen Warden of Peel County for a second straight term — a feat which had not been matched in almost a century. Mr. Parsons is shown being helped on with his colorful robe of office, which he wore with distinction. Now, the former Mississauga Reeve has been appointed to head the first regional council for this area.



. . . TO SPORTS

Politician, businessman and family man, Lou Parsons has also displayed a real flair for sportsmanship. He is shown here blocking a shot during a recent exhibition hockey game which he played with the same type of vigor he uses in all other facets of his very busy life.