

If Hopes Were Horses

By Pete Clark

Hope is a desire for the positive outcome of a future event such as getting that raise in pay that has been long delayed or receiving that bicycle you wanted for Christmas. What if instead of hoping for a pay raise at work or a bicycle at Christmas you wished for them? Would wishing mean that you almost automatically would not attain the things you desire? Many people react to the word wish as if it is an evil incantation to excuse others for not striving for their goals often using the timeworn ditty "If wishes were horses all beggars would ride."

Neither hope nor wish applies to the past or the present. The two words only actively apply to the future, for their fulfillment or failure can only be realized when the future becomes the present. Hope and wish have the same meaning expressed in different syntax. The word hope is a positive and except in limited circumstances the word wish has negative implication but both words demand a positive future result.

Language use has degraded the value of the word wish particularly where it becomes intermingled with economics. The belief that those who may use the word wish relating to the acquisition of money, goods or services are too lazy to work is fairly widespread in a society that is supposedly based on Free Market Capitalism. And those of us who use the word wish know it is up to us to make our wish happen. "If hopes were horses all beggars would ride" is just as true as its other form quoted above.