

Editorials

Tribune

It's your meeting — be there

I wonder what your reaction would be if, to-morrow morning, you turned on the cold water tap and a thick slimy liquid oozed into the sink?

Naturally, you'd be alarmed - you and a few thousand others in Stouffville. You'd phone the P.U.C., the clerk or the reeve - demanding an explanation.

Oh yes, you had heard something about a liquid waste disposal site, somewhere north of town. But the location was in Whitchurch, not Stouffville! How could it possibly affect the water here?

Well it hasn't - at least not yet. But

there's no guarantee that it won't. And to make sure that it doesn't, a public meeting has been called for next Tuesday night at 8 p.m. in the high school auditorium to learn just how much of a threat this problem poses.

We say, the dumping of industrial liquid waste on this property, less than two miles from Stouffville's water reservoirs, must be stopped - not next month or next year, but NOW.

So far, all pressures exerted by municipal officials have been in vain. The time has come for action at the citizens' level. Be there and show that you care.

Worth a try

The York County Board of Education will consider a summer program whereby schools, or at least some schools, will be utilized as 'drop-in centres' for young people throughout the vacation period.

We feel the plan is worth a try, at least on an experimental basis and we wish it luck. But we don't think it will work.

This rather pessimistic approach is based on the fact that, in Stouffville at

least, there just aren't enough teenagers around with nothing to do, to make the scheme practical.

In larger centres, like Richmond Hill, Aurora and Newmarket, the need may be apparent. In Stouffville, it's not.

But nothing ventured, nothing gained as the saying goes. And a program, properly organized, could surprise us all.

Time to organize

A downtown businessmen's organization is needed in Stouffville. It is the only practical way to cope with any project, be it large in magnitude or small.

The obvious lack of executive leadership was noticeable at a meeting, April 14, called by Planning Board. Only eleven business places were represented, although the topic, an important one, dealt with re-development of the entire downtown business area.

Just how important does any discussion have to be to create interest? Certainly nothing should capture the

imagination of merchants more than altering the centre shopping core.

It has always been our opinion that one association, not two, would be best for Stouffville. For, on most occasions, the programs proposed effect all the village and not just a part of it. Also, it tends to bring the Plaza and Main Street merchants closer together instead of one pulling against the other as has occurred in so many municipalities.

Whatever the decision, one organization would be better than none at all. And the time to get it organized is now.

For all that — a better teacher?

A good teacher made better through one year of university?

The Minister of Education, William G. Davis, thinks so.

It has always been our opinion that teachers are born, not made. Particularly is this true, we believe, in elementary ranks where, excluding principals, the prestige of listing letters after one's name should not be of prime importance.

According to the Minister's most recent edict, the new ruling becomes effective, Sept. 1, 1971. Fortunately, it is not retroactive.

It is apparent that more and more stress is being placed on book learning.

It is obvious too that increased significance is attached to that almighty B.A. degree. But this does not guarantee that knowledge gained through this means is knowledge that can be imparted to someone else - say a child in Grade 3 or 4.

And does the Minister realize that higher qualifications will also bring demands for higher salaries? If more teachers are to spend more time in acquiring more knowledge, then it is safe to assume they will demand more money - and rightly so.

But can we the people afford more? With almost sixty cents of every tax dollar now going towards education, any added burden for such an impractical purpose is unacceptable.

Editor's mail

Dear Sir:

The letter concerning the operation of the Whitchurch Highlands School which appeared in your April 9 edition merits a reply.

In the early part of January, my husband and I became quite alarmed when we found that our 7th grade daughter was doing very poorly in grammar and mathematics, and little or no work at all in any other subjects. Mr. Gray gave me an appointment for an interview at my convenience on January 6, when he told me there was nothing to worry about as both children were doing fine, and that our fifth grade son was working above his grade level. He did not seem to know that our daughter was having serious problems with her mathematics. He denied having said that our son was at the end of grade six level in January 1969 until I showed him a letter which he had written to me at that time after he had given the child special tests. If the child was at that level while enrolled in grade four a year ago, why has he been kept sitting in grade five all this year when this school is supposed to be allowing each child to progress at his own speed? Sir, since my husband and I have seen no evidence of any progress having been made by our son in more than a year, we question this progress-at-your-own-speed theory as it applies to this school.

In February of this year, I contacted Mr. Ron Hall, Mr. Sam Chapman and Mr. Arthur Starr. Mr. Starr was the one who finally got an adequate course of

study for our children. He telephoned me on the evening of April 25 to say that he was very upset by what he had read in the local Press as he had been led to believe that the situation at the school regarding our children had been satisfactorily remedied immediately following a meeting of four parents, Mr. Chapman, and Mr. Starr on February 19, and that we were now very happy with the conditions at the school. In fact, nothing had been done at the school as a result of that meeting.

The first day the children returned to school after that telephone call, they were given desks, text books, time tables, and a planned course of study. This course includes Grammar, Creative Writing, Mathematics, History, Science, Geography, French, Spelling, Music, Art and Phys. Ed. The children also have the use of the library facilities, and so are not missing out on anything. They now sit at desks with their feet on the floor, and their posture correct, instead of sprawling on the floor in an unladylike manner. The teachers mark their books, and insert written instructions which the children must follow.

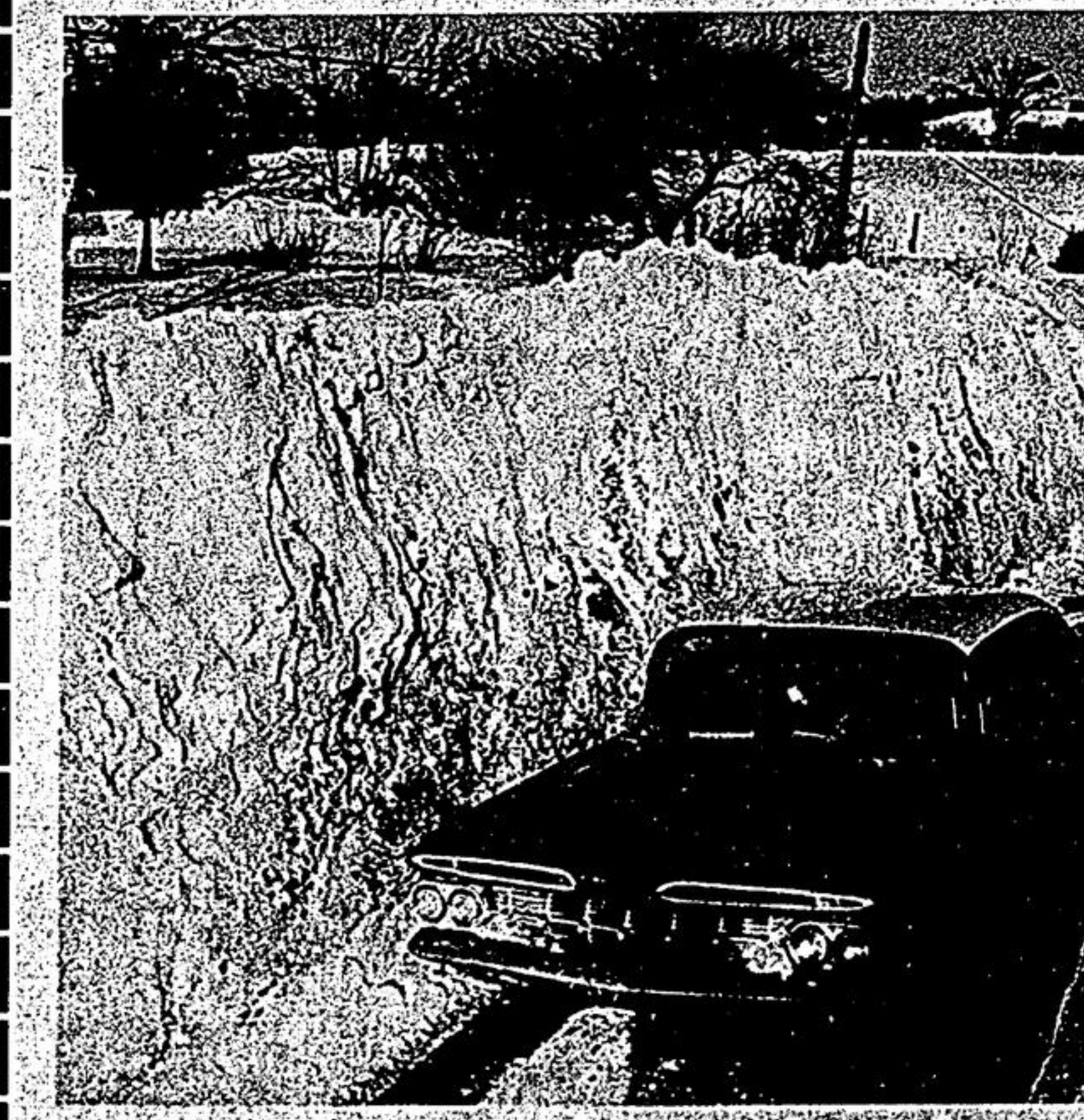
Yes, I may be 'old fashioned' as your correspondent states, but I wonder if she knows about the marble games on the classroom floor during school hours, or the Grammar and Mathematics tests given to the grades seven and eight about a week ago where the class average for Grammar was about 12 percent, and the pupils were not even



Out fishin'

- A feller isn't thinking mean —
Out fishin';
His thoughts somehow are mostly clean —
Out fishin';
- He doesn't knock his fellow-men,
Or harbor any grudges then;
A feller's at his finest when —
Out fishin'.
- The rich are comrades to the poor —
Out fishin';
All brothers of a common lure —
Out fishin';
The urchin with his pin and string;
Can chum with millionaire and king;
Vain pride is a forgotten thing —
Out fishin';
- A feller gets a chance to dream —
Out fishin';
He learns the beauties of a stream,
Out fishin';
An' he can wash his soul in air
That isn't foul with selfish care
An' relish plain and simple fare —
Out fishin'.
- A feller's glad to be a friend —
Out fishin';
A helpin' hand he'll always lend —
Out fishin';
The brotherhood of rod and line
An' sky an' stream is always fine
Men come real close to God's design —
Out fishin'.
- A feller isn't plotting schemes —
Out fishin';
He's only busy with his dreams —
Out fishin';
His livin' is a coat of tan
His creed to do the best he can;
A feller's always mostly man —
Out fishin'.

Compliments of MORLEY SYMES



Portraits from the past

So you thought the winter season just concluded was long and hard? What about 1967? This picture at Hodgson's Hill, west of Altona, may revive a few memories. Several days following the storm, Feb. 19, residents were still digging themselves out.

—Jim Thomas

SUGAR AND SPICE
by BILL SMILEY



Hugh broke his middle finger

Can you whistle a Bach prelude and fugue without a memory slip? Can you hum a Beethoven sonata without sliding into falsetto or basso profundo.

Darn right you can't. But I can. Almost. And it cost me only about \$12,000.

Trouble is, and this is a touchy point in April, none of it is deductible. That's what it has cost me, over the years, to provide a musical education for my family.

After all that, I can whistle and hum, both of which I could do before. There's something wrong here, but I can't quite figure out what it is...

I wish I had the '2 G's in bonds at eight per cent. But my wife doesn't agree. We could have taken a trip around the world for that, but she still doesn't agree.

As far as I'm concerned, I could have taken that \$12,000, thrown it off the end of the dock, and been just as far ahead. Once again, the only one who agrees with me is I.

Both my kids have degrees in piano. Both were talented: Near, but not quite at the concert pianist level. Both eschewed (I like that word) a career in music, because they wanted to be first. And they wanted to be free.

Well, they're free. Hugh broke his middle finger, and can play I Went Down To St. James Infirmary, with only a few bum notes. I think Kim could play The Happy Farmer, with a couple of days' practice.

But perhaps it's all been worth it. They've learned something. Hugh has realized that you can't practice the piano when you're waiting table at the Chateau Frontenac or selling vacuum cleaners in Calgary, and Kim has realized that "her" piano won't quite fit into a three-room pad in Toronto, unless you want to sleep on top of it.

What brings all this to mind, and without bitterness, is the fact that my wife, a former piano teacher, has become hooked once again, after a lapse of a couple of years, on the local music festival. She's going every day and listening intently to her former students.

But her reports have cheered me. Things are just the same as they always were. I went through years of them, and I know the scene intimately. The festival mothers are still as friendly as an R.C. bishop and a Mormon lay preacher.

The adjudicator is still rotten, giving the first-place certificate to the girl who played worst. Except when it's your daughter, or your pupil. Then he (or she) shows an insight into music that is superb.

The kids are still sailing into their pieces at breakneck speed, which they can't possibly maintain, and breaking down in the middle, while their mothers and teachers turn purple as the youngsters fumble, and throw up their hands, and burst into tears.

But perhaps the Old Lady is right. Those moments at the music festival, in other years, were the closest to heaven and hell that I've ever experienced, with the possible exception of shooting at a concentration of German tanks, which were firing back at you with bigger guns than you had.

I've stopped breathing for as much as a dangerously long two minutes while my son or daughter weaved through a sonatina. I have gone out afterwards and smoked a complete cigarette in two drags.

I have called the adjudicator a slob, a cretin, moron, and, sometimes, a brilliant judge of music.

Maybe the Old Battleaxe is right. Maybe it was worth \$12,000. Anyway, I can whistle three bars of Tschaiovsky's something or other.

ROAMING AROUND

Daddy... What is war?

By Jim Thomas

Every home has one - a storage room, where everything you don't need but refuse to discard, is packed away for safe keeping.

At our house, this private domain is located in a little-used section of the basement. With the exception of Mom and Dad, no one ever enters this area. It's not that it holds any deep dark secrets. At least none that I'm aware of. It's just that a child can often find trouble during unsupervised escapades.

But all laws are made to be broken, and the curiosity of a seven year old can only be contained so long. On Saturday, he yielded to temptation and embarked on his own private treasure hunt.

What he found was his father's old hockey duds - sweater, pants, shin pads, the works. While the socks were holey and the sweater smelly, he didn't mind. In fact, the realism of wear and tear appeared to impress him all the more. He paraded the moth-eaten regalia around the yard, showing it off to every boy in the block. What a sight!

Barry - that's his name, is not a good skater - at least not yet. But what he lacks in physical prowess, he makes up in spirit. He loves the game and watches it on T.V. at every opportunity. It only goes to prove what a tremendous influence television has on people today.

But while he was rummaging about for odds and ends of equipment, he uncovered something else - something he hadn't seen on the T.V. screen or heard about from his parents. He held it up, the discolored remains of an old scrap book, the cover missing but most of the inside pages still secure. Say Dad, he said, what is W-A-R?

His question shook me a bit, but I recovered quickly, hoping he hadn't noticed. I held out my hand to take it, but he hesitated to give it up. Let's sit down here together, you and I and look at the pictures, he insisted. I've never seen anything like this before, I knew, he hadn't and I hoped he never would.

The book was one I had pieced together myself. The year was 1940. I was 11 at the time.

The photos, some actual and some artists' conceptions, related events that included the fall of France and the Battle of Britain. That was thirty years ago. How soon we forget.

Barry sat very still, unusual for him, as I thumbed through the pages, dog-eared and yellow. I read the following items, some out loud and some to myself:

— Germans capture Paris and the Government of France has been moved to Bordeaux. The French High Command has decided against a street by street defence of the city in hope of saving it from destruction.

— Despite severe losses, the Germans have not ceased their pressure. Apart from the loss of Boulogne, the Allies have withstood it everywhere, according to latest reports received.

— France has capitulated and has asked Hitler for an armistice to discuss peace terms.

— Paul Reynaud has appealed to the President of United States for aid. In reply, President Roosevelt said the United States would do its utmost to assist the French Republic but that only Congress had the power to declare war.

— The Battle of France is over and the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Winston Churchill told the House of Commons.

— Prime Minister Mackenzie King voices Canada's determination to fight Nazi tyranny to the bitter end. His words go straight to the hearts of the Canadian people. And so on.

While such clippings may have meant very little to a 7 year old, the pictures made a tremendous impression.

He stared wide-eyed at a now historic photo of five German planes plummeting earthward in advance of long trails of smoke and flame; pictures of the battleship H.M.S. Hood, her 15 inch guns trained out across the North Sea; whole sections of cities levelled by bombs; barbed-wire barricades around the London House of Parliament; the sinking of a German submarine following a direct hit and long lines of refugees searching for food and shelter.

He sat in silence for several minutes, trying to understand enough to ask more questions.

I interrupted his thoughts. Now, I asked, do you know what is war?

I think so, at least a little bit, he answered slowly, but why?

Who can explain that one?

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