



The Tribune

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Editorials

New board unknown quantity

When the dust settled in the recent elections for school board, it was apparent that, with 10 new faces, York County Board of Education would see some dramatic changes in the next two years.

There weren't really that many upsets. Only four incumbent trustees were defeated. Six of the 10 new members were elected to fill spots left by retirement of six trustees.

But there are some significant changes in the make-up of the board. Unfortunately it took a traumatic event such as a teacher strike last spring to arouse public awareness.

The defeat of Merna Colbourne in East Gwillimbury can be accounted for by things other than a "reformist" trend in the electorate. Mrs. Colbourne had been a long-time board member from Markham, and as such had prestige at the board level, but was relatively unknown to the people of East Gwillimbury. This was her first contested election. In 1972 she was acclaimed.

Whitchurch-Stouffville shows a different pattern. Here a prominent businessman, Colin Barrett, put on a strong campaign and defeated a relatively lacklustre candidate, incumbent John McMurray.

We feel that the election produced many encouraging signs of voter interest in school board elections, but there is also some fear that this board could be more divided and less sure of itself than any since the York County Board was created in 1968.

There is a potential for rash decisions and acrimonious debate that could make the last two years look like a children's Christmas party. Once the forces of change gain momentum, the results can be far-reaching and often extreme.

As 1975 begins, the one inescapable fact is that this board is an unknown quantity, with the most new members since its inception. It could be constructive and progressive or could degenerate into ideological battles at the expense of the children.

Only time will tell.

Spot checks one way fatalities cut

Statistics dealing with traffic deaths in York Region have certainly been impressive so far this year. The accident death toll has been cut in half over the same period in 1973.

One reason for this dramatic decrease in deaths has been the vigilance of York Regional Police and their spot-check program. This is being stepped up again for the Christmas season.

But spot checks do not prevent deaths. It is drivers, who realize their cars are deadly weapons, driving more carefully, being a little less impatient in traffic.

This Christmas drive carefully. Watch that you don't get behind the wheel and become a killer. Drinking and driving don't mix. These are all cliches, but nonetheless true.

Take it easy so that this Christmas can be a merry one.

Test results are misleading

A certain fuss has been made about test results of students in York County Schools. The matter was brought up at a board of education meeting about a month ago and some of the criticism levelled at the schools was defended by board chairman, Merna Colbourne, in a letter to The Tribune.

The situation regarding whether or not

children today are getting a proper education is a complex one, more complex than people make out.

After all the methods and structures used 30 or 40 years ago are not necessarily appropriate for today. Times are changing, and the old structured system which emphasized basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic just may not be adequate to meet the needs of our present-day society.

As far as skill development goes, children in schools today are probably not as good as their counterparts of 20 years ago. That fact in itself is not enough to condemn the whole system. After all, children today are more sophisticated and more aware of the world around them than children 20 years ago.

The school serves two functions. It prepares youngsters to be good citizens in a democracy and provides certain training in learning to deal with various job requirements of the adult world. To say that the schools are doing this less well now than before is missing the point.

I believe that the system tends to be less skill-oriented and more interested in the child developing in a wholesome and well-rounded way. In the old system, the child's personal needs were subjected to the need to learn skills.

It comes down to whether one sees the individual as important or whether one just want to deal with everybody in the same way. Is the emphasis to be on the child or the subject? To our way of thinking, opting for the interest of the child is the only way

Recycling depot off to a good start

There has been a heartening response to Stouffville's attempt to establish a recycling depot. In the first morning it opened over 40 people came to deliver various kinds of material to be recycled.

Enough volunteers have signed up so that the depot will be able to operate two days a week. Each volunteer will only have to serve once a month, so many have come forward.

This shows that people are willing to go to some trouble to recycle bottles, papers and metal. The problem may be that the small garage on Market St. will not be big enough.

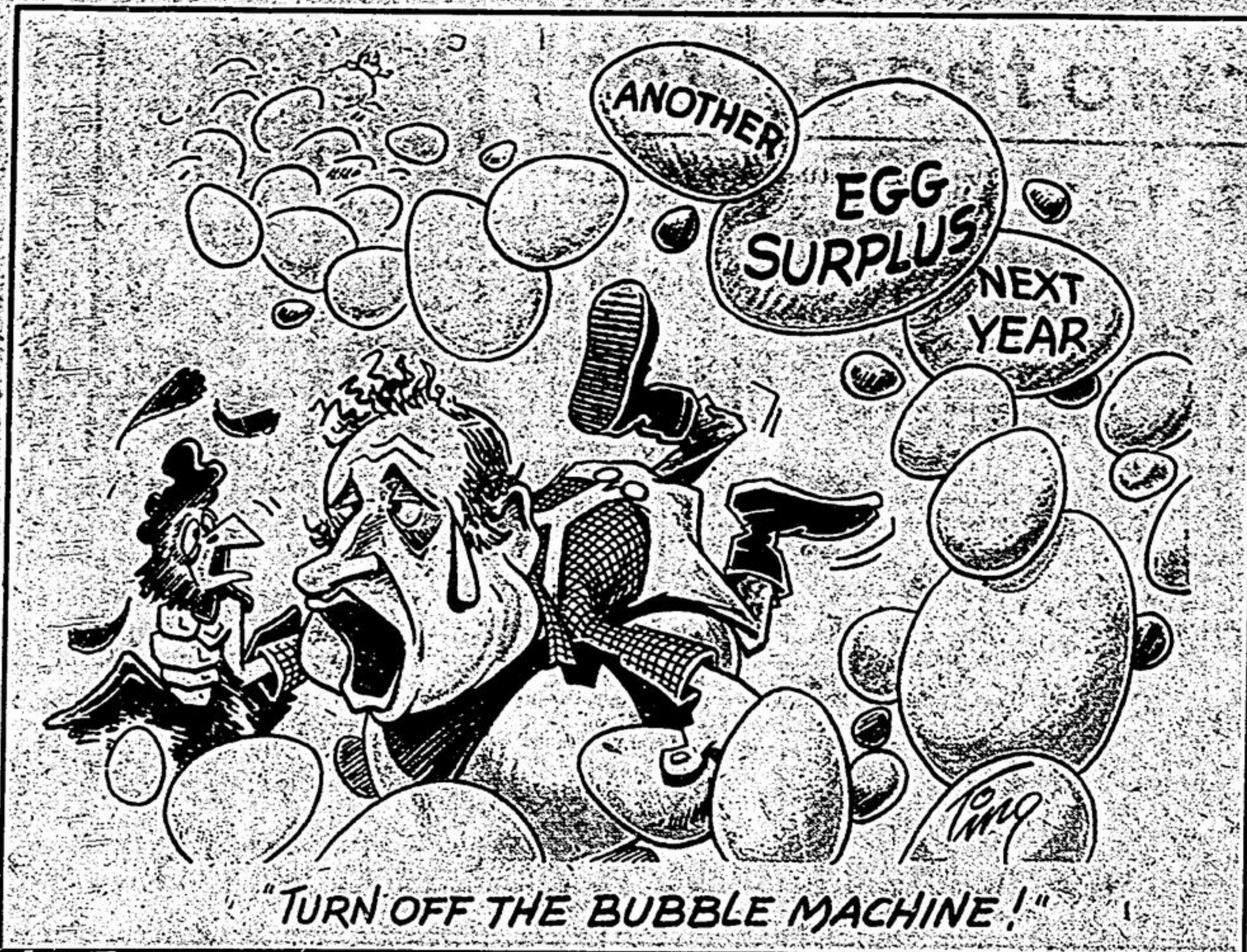
It appears that the depot is off to a good start. If it quickly outgrows the temporary quarters on Market St., a permanent home for the depot should be found.

It is an encouraging beginning.



These two cows are playfully romping, hopeful the owner of this corn field realizes what is happening. The cows must be keeping active on these cold wintery days, and just

want to see what is on the other side of the fence. As with people, the animals will probably find that faraway pastures aren't really greener.



Bible thought for the Week

from The Living Bible
 As Paul gathered an armful of sticks to lay on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, fastened itself onto his hand! The people of the island saw it hanging there and said to each other: "A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live!" But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. The people waited for him to begin swelling or suddenly fall dead; but when they had waited a long time and no harm came to him, they changed their minds and decided he was a god. Acts 28:3-6

SUGAR AND SPICE

Carriers are disappearing breed

By BILL SMILEY



In THE so-called good old days, a great many who are now middle-aged men were in the newspaper business. That is, they had a paper route and made a bit of spending money, even in the depression years.

I was closely associated with a paper route myself, although I didn't exactly have one. My kid brother did. I was sort of his business manager or financial adviser.

Every Saturday night, after he'd made his weekly collections, I would inveigle him into the bathroom, lock the door so nobody could hear, and give him some sound business advice.

I'd remind him that he was too fond of candy and pop and other tooth-rotting confections, that he had no willpower, and that he'd only squander his hard-earned fifty cents if he didn't invest at least part of it every week.

He didn't know much about investments and wanted to put some of his money into a piggy bank. I'd tell him severely that that was no way to make his money grow. He should give it to me and watch the interest pile up.

He'd bawl a bit, but then he'd come around after a bit of arm-twisting, and see the point. The point was that I was stronger than he was.

I'd always let him keep part of it, maybe twenty cents. I'd take the other thirty cents and invest it. I invested it in the Saturday night movie, a bottle of pop, and a chocolate bar. It was a wise investment and paid good dividends. The many movies I thus enjoyed enriched my experience of the human condition, enlarged my vocabulary, and added to my personal pleasure in life.

It took him about two years to catch on, two of the best years of my life. There was, of course, a confrontation. He swore I had conned him out of at least sixty dollars. I scoffed at this and told him it was only about fourteen. But the little devil had been keeping his books.



VIEWPOINT

Planning is the name of the game

By DON BERNARD

It seems that we have entered a period that might be called the "Age of Planning", in which local councils spend most of their time involved in planning procedures of one kind or another. In fact it is almost the only thing that local councils have much say in anymore.

Last week, I dropped in to a planning committee meeting, and out of that, there grew some inescapable conclusions concerning future growth in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Things have changed as to who decides what will be built, and where, in the town.

To look at things in a clear way involves some analysis of just how much things have changed in the last four years. The pivotal points have been the introduction of regional government and the gradual intrusion of Queen's Park into local planning.

There was a time when people could sever off lots almost at will, without having to be worried about planning controls of any kind. In those days, no one seemed aware of the problems, created by so-called "strip" development and random development in rural areas.

During that time many lots were created, that have become burdens to those that own them. These include 10-acre lots that are so long and narrow that the back half of the properties are virtually useless, and become a headache to maintain. The tax load increases because they are taxed for the full 10 acres.

The institution of regional government has had two basic results. The first was to establish a level of government above the local level and provide more objective criteria for judging new development. The other affect

has been to strip local councils of much of their previous responsibility.

In the old days sewers and water were looked after by the local council, now the region has taken that over. Fire protection, garbage pick-up and planning are the only things left for local politicians. Almost everything else is decided at the regional or provincial level.

Planning has also come to the fore because there is increased interest in this area for development. Subdividers are discovering the vast rural stretches of Whitchurch-Stouffville, and trying to cover the area with prestigious developments that come under the general heading of "estate residential".

These kinds of subdivisions involve building relatively large homes on lots of two or three acres. The houses are on wells and septic tanks and therefore need no servicing. They can be established anywhere as long as soil conditions permit.

These subdivisions are relatively modest proposals, usually numbering 30 or so lots, and are considered to be "safe", environmentally. Services such as schools, garbage pick-up, etc. are not expensive because the numbers of people are relatively small. Local councils like this type of development because it brings in assessment and middle-class families that will be an asset to the community.

If there are problems, they are "social" in nature. The people who are here now on lots larger than two or three acres feel it is unfair that they pay taxes on large lots when people in a subdivision pay taxes only on the small acreage. People with say 10-acre lots cannot subdivide them further because in most cases

hard day on the assembly line at the pupillage, to take off my jacket and my shoes, and take on a cold beer before proceeding to pursue my paper.

This entire routine has been spoiled, not to say desecrated, by the new delivery method. I still go through the first parts of the procedure, but the beer tastes flat as I stew around, waiting for the paper. It arrives any time between four and seven. That means I have put back on my shoes and gone out in my shirt-sleeves in the winter wind to search around in the snow for my paper as many as four times.

This is not conducive to lowering a man's blood pressure. At least they put the thing in a plastic bag. But this is covered in three minutes when it's snowing, which it always seems to be when I go out to look for my paper.

To add insult to injury, I receive a letter from the circulation department of the big, fat, rich, lousy newspaper telling me that the price is going up and that "We feel this is a reasonable price to pay for dependable delivery to your driveway six days a week."

Well, let me just say to the circulation manager that I don't want the paper delivered to my driveway, but to my house. My car can't read.

And let me add that the service is not dependable, in its present condition. And let me further add that if you can't do better than that, I will shortly tell you what you can do with your newspaper: Sideways.

This is a direct appeal to all parents. Please cut off your children's allowances, so that at least some of them will be available to peddle papers in the old way. This is a cry from the heart. Civilization is sinking. Must this last vestige of normalcy go down with it?

they are long and narrow and could only be divided in the length.

Well the problem has arisen only recently. First of all, ratepayer awareness of the situation has increased and the number of estate residential proposals had escalated.

So what should be done? I feel that we will see a greater division between urban and rural in Whitchurch-Stouffville in the next 10 years. The hamlets will grow substantially and the former village of Stouffville will perhaps double its population in that time.

But very few houses on small acreages will be built in rural areas. The ratepayer opposition has been too persistent and seems to pop up wherever a new development is proposed. Council has made it clear that the wishes of neighboring ratepayers will be a major factor in whether estate residential proposals are given the go-ahead.

This to me spells the end for someone wanting a piece of land in the country. New 10-acre lots will soon be impossible to obtain, and will turn out to be costly to own as market-value assessment raises the valuation of the land and subsequently taxes to be paid.

Things look grim for the people on these lots. New development will be in such places as Ballantrae, Vandorf, etc., where two or three acre lots are acceptable. Large development will be restricted to Stouffville, which has the services available for them.

Yes planning is the key now. But with public input, the face of Whitchurch-Stouffville will change in the next five or 10 years, but in the process stretches of rural landscape will remain unchanged, and farms will not so quickly be taken up with housing.

To our way of thinking this is sensible, and in the long run, could be beneficial to all.