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Editorials

A heart-warming response

Stouffville's first refugee family from the Far East arrived on Friday from Vietnam. This particular group consisting of two married couples and a sister of one of the women, an 11-year-old, is being sponsored by an independent committee that is made up of a couple of ministers and other interested citizens.

This is just the beginning of a worthwhile response to human need and suffering, with others expected to arrive under the sponsorship of the Missionary Church, Gormley Missionary Church, Wesley United Church, Springvale Baptist Church and other religious denominations.

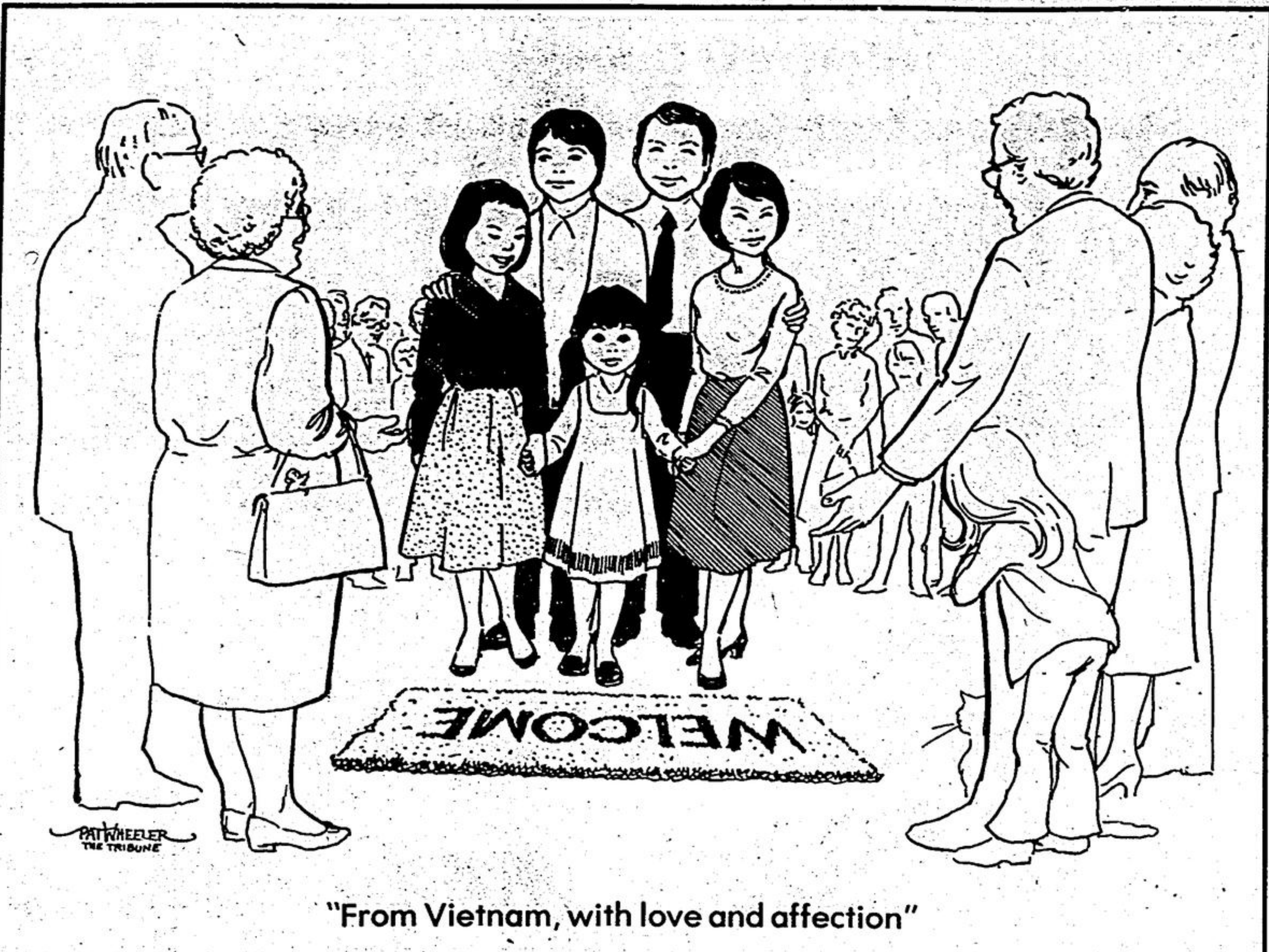
Canada is known around the world for its humanitarian image, and we see it portrayed here in our own area, a community working together for the good of human beings less fortunate than ourselves.

Every effort is being made to make these people welcome in their new homes. While the

first family to arrive in Stouffville last week was not church-sponsored, the churches here are to be commended for their response. The first family to arrive in the area last summer, was sponsored by Wideman Mennonite Church, Steeles Avenue Mennonite, Hagerman Mennonite and Cedar Grove Mennonite.

There is a minority of Canadians who oppose this influx of new citizens, some who think only Anglo-Saxons or Europeans should be allowed in, and others who fret about lost jobs. However the truth is that there are thousands of unfilled jobs, the type that home-grown Canadians scoff at. These refugees will quickly fill these positions and be more than happy to do so.

Canada is a very large country, an extremely wealthy country, sparsely populated, well-equipped to help, and we commend all those who are working together in this humanitarian effort.



"From Vietnam, with love and affection"

St. Nick arrived in style

There are times when we've quietly questioned the benefits of a Santa Claus Parade—the expense, the time, the work and the worry, all for a procession that passes by a given point in less than an hour.

Is it worth it? Undoubtedly the sponsors as well as the participants have posed the same question to themselves.

Is it really worth it? We'll ask ourselves no more and neither should those who take part after Saturday's promenade; without a doubt, the best ever in Stouffville.

This is not just our opinion. Everyone we

talked to (or heard talking to each other), said the same. In fact, if anything, it was too good; bordering on the professional and a hard act to follow when another year rolls around.

The Kinsmen and Kinette Clubs of Stouffville are to be congratulated. So are the other service organizations, the schools, the churches and singular entries.

What one event could possibly attract more people to town? What one event could possibly muster greater co-operation? What one event could possibly create more enjoyment? None.

The Stouffville Santa Claus Parade remains the year's foremost attraction. Long may it last.

Bypass-lesser of two evils

Gormley residents are greeting with mixed feelings, the approach of Hwy. 404. Some see it as a blessing. To others, it's a disaster. Certainly, the community will never be the same.

Initially, the thought of blockading the old east-west route through the hamlet seemed unthinkable. And we still don't like it. However, the alternative, a bypass around the built-up area, now seems the lesser of two evils; certainly better than knocking down homes and forcing people to move.

There'll be inconvenience, sure. There always is when men and machines combine forces in the name of progress. But there'll also be benefits, most of which won't be appreciated until the project is completed.

If you approve; if you're opposed or, like many, just confused, attend the public meeting, Jan. 8 at 2 p.m., in the Regional Engineering Office, Woodbine Avenue, north of the Aurora Sideroad, and obtain the facts first hand.

Roaming Around

Jogging critic with no heart



By Jim Thomas

Every morning I see him; around 6:30, maybe earlier. He's a friendly chap, always waves, often speaks if close enough to be heard.

I don't know him, nor does he know me, not personally. It's just that, well, the pedestrian traffic's not overly congested at that hour, so one tends to talk to everything—the squirrels, the rabbits, even an occasional skunk if the season's right.

It's a great time of the day; the best. The exchange of greetings between this guy and myself may occur anywhere between William and Edward Streets. Our timing's never so exact that we cross paths at exactly the same place. Why? Because we're both movers—on foot. I'm a walker and he's a runner or jogger as they're called today. He sets a torrid pace, long easy strides with no apparent exertion. Sometimes he carries a hockey stick, for balance, I guess.

While I've attempted to appreciate what this gentleman's obviously trying to accomplish, I've been cynical, not just to him but to others like him—even in front of my kids.

"Look at that," I've said over and over again, "what's he trying to prove?" And often, you must admit, they do appear kind of foolish—full-grown men (and women), plodding up and down the roads and sidewalks. As so often happens, my children have adopted a similar attitude; to the point where they expect a ride to the corner store

for a jug of milk. They also laugh, like these people are all a little bit nutty. And that's bad. But I've no one to blame but myself.

Now, it seems, my cynicism's coming back to haunt me. And indeed, believe it or not, I may be joining Stouffville's growing group of joggers, by necessity if not by choice. For I've been told, in no uncertain terms, I'm in terrible shape. A recent test bears this out.

It was Paul Roney, the puller of purse strings at the Bank of Nova Scotia who coerced me into attending a Lions-sponsored Fitness Clinic at Latcham Hall, Friday afternoon. To be honest, I was glad he asked, for I considered myself a 160 pound version of Charles Atlas—in the peak of condition.

And why not? I don't smoke, don't drink and don't over-eat—what better care could I take of myself than that?

This, I was soon to learn. Irene Korgul, a graduate Kinesiologist (one who deals in body movement), welcomed me into a rather secluded section of the auditorium and unashamedly requested I bare myself from the waist up. Which I did. She then proceeded to take my blood pressure, not once, but twice. That alarmed me a little, but there was no cause. Everything was A-okay. So was Irene. She talked like she'd known me all my life; the type of work I did; how many kids; any serious illnesses and so on. Then she got down to the nitty-gritty. How active are you? she asked.

Quite, I answered. Such as? she asked, and here I thought I'd really shine. I told her between walking the dog, delivering papers and going to and from the restaurant for coffee, I'd travel maybe two miles a day.

But she only frowned. Walking doesn't do your heart any good, she stated bluntly, no continuous exertion to strengthen the muscles.

A-ha, but I'm taking up golf, I shot back confidently. Like it too; lots of exercise there. Golf! That's no good either, she replied, frowning still more.

Do you ride a bicycle? she asked. No, I answered. Do you swim a lot? No again. Do you jog daily? Never.

On completion of the third degree, she wired me up to some kind of machine and requested I run up and down three steps for three minutes in tune to music. That was simple; didn't bother me a bit. But the results did—32.2 the graph read, the bare minimum. I felt faint, so woozy, in fact, I had to sit down. The terrible truth was too much to take.

But I've learned a lesson. I've joined the Stouffville Joggers' Club. You can see me every morning, panting up and down Rupert Avenue, between Westlawn Crescent and the Ninth.

And don't dare laugh or you'll catch a running shoe in the ear—if I have the strength to throw it that far.

Sugar and Spice

Becoming a nation of slobs



By Bill Smiley

There has been a tremendous change in the manners and mores of Canada in the past three decades. This brilliant thought came to me as I drove home from work today and saw a sign, in a typical Canadian small town: "Steakhouse and Tavern."

Now this didn't exactly knock me out, alarm me, or discomobulate me in any way. I am a part of all that is in this country, at this time. But it did give me a tiny twinge. Hence my opening remarks.

I am no Carrie Nation, who stormed into saloons with her lady friends, armed with hatchets, and smashed open (what a waste) the barrels of beer and kegs of whiskey.

I am no Joan of Arc. I don't revile blasphemers or hear voices. I am no Pope John Paul II, who tells people what to do about their sex lives. I am not even a Joe Clark, who rushes up to a barricade prepared to jump for some votes, then decides to go back to the starting-line and send in a real athlete, Robert Stanfield, an older and wiser athlete, to attempt what he knew he couldn't do. And the "he" is Joe.

I am merely an observer of the human scene, in a country that used to be one thing, and has become another. But that doesn't mean I don't have opinions. I have nothing but scorn for the modern "objective" journalists who tell it as it is. They are hyenas and jackals, who fatten on the leavings of the "lions" of our society, for the most part.

I admire a few columnists: Richard Needham of the Toronto Globe, Allan Fotheringham of Maclean's, not because they are great writers, but because they hew the wood for which this country is famous, and let the chips fall where they may. That's the way it should be.

Let's get back on topic, as I tell my students. The Canadian society has roughened and coarsened to an astonishing degree in the last thirty years.

First, the Steakhouse and Tavern. As a kid working on the boats on the Upper Lakes, I was excited and a little scared when I saw that sign in American ports: Duluth, Detroit, Chicago.

I came from the genteel poverty of Ontario in the Thirties, and I was slightly appalled, and deeply attracted by these signs: the very thought that drink could be publicly advertised. Like any normal, curious kid, I went into a couple, ordered a two-bit whiskey, and found nobody eating steaks, but a great many people getting sleazily drunk on the same. Not the steaks.

In those days, in Canada, there was no such creature. The very use of the word "tavern" indicated iniquity. It was an evil place. We did have beer "parlours", later exchanged for the euphemism "beverage rooms". But that was all right. Only the lower element went there, and they closed from 6 p.m. to 7:30, or some such, so that a family man could get home to his dinner. Not a bad idea.

In their homes, of course, the middle and upper class drank liquor. Beer was the working-man's drink, and to be shunned. It was around then that some wit reversed the old saying, and came out with: "Work is the curse of the drinking class", a neat version of Marx's (?) "Drink is the curse of the working classes."

If you called on someone in those misty days, you were offered a cuppa and something to eat. Today, the host would be humiliated if he didn't have something harder to offer you.

Now, every hamlet seems to have its steakhouse, complete with tavern. It's rather ridiculous. Nobody today can afford a steak. But how in the living world can these same people afford drinks, at current prices?

These steakhouses and taverns are usually pretty sleazy joints, on a par with the old beverage room, which was the epitome of

sleaze. It's not all the fault of the owners, though they make nothing on the steak and 100 per cent on the drinks (minimum). It's just that Canadians tend to be noisy and crude and profane drinkers.

And the crudity isn't only in the pubs. It has crept into Parliament, that august institution with a prime minister who used street language when his impeccable English failed, or he wanted to show how tough he was.

It has crept into our educational system, where teachers drink and swear and tell dirty jokes and use language in front of women that I, a product of a more well-mannered, or inhibited, your choice, era, could not bring myself to use.

And the language of today's students, from Grade one to Grade whatever, would curl the hair of a sailor, and make your maiden aunt grab for the smelling salts. Words from the lowest slums and slummiest barnyards create rarely a blush on the cheek of your teenage daughter.

A graduate of the depression, when people had some reason to use bad language, in sheer frustration and anger, and of a war in which the most common four-letter word was used as frequently, and absent-mindedly, as salt and pepper, have not injured me to what our kids today consider normal.

Girls wear T-shirts that are not even funny, merely obscene. As do boys. Saw one the other day on an otherwise nice lad Message: "Thanks, all you virgins—for nothing."

The Queen is a frump. God is a joke. The country's problems are somebody else's problem, as long as I get mine.

I don't deplore. I don't abhor. I don't implore. I merely observe. Sadly. We are turning into a nation of slobs.



Snow, snow beautiful snow

While the first real snowfall of the winter, Saturday afternoon, didn't please everyone, the kids were ready and waiting, even to the point of sister pulling sister. Ten

year old Michelle Watkins of Market Street, Stouffville didn't mind a bit and neither did Candy, age six.

Jim Thomas