

Editor's Mail

Save arena building

Dear Mr. Thomas:
I read with interest the Page 1 story related to the future of the present Arena. It would appear, on the surface at least, that both Mayor King and Councillor Kamps are anxious to make some kind of move towards the creation of a Community Centre in Town 1; for one, see this as a priority project.

Whatever the decision, I feel it would be a shame to demolish the present rink since the building itself is sound.

With the ice plant having served more than 30 years (well past the maximum endurance of most), that end of it should be scrapped, but not the structure itself.

If at all practical, the floor should be repaired so roller-skating can be accommodated. That seems to be what the kids here want. There could be other functions too if a committee was set up to do the organizing.

While I agree with Councillor Kamps that "good money shouldn't be invested in a bad building," such is not the case here. Only the ice plant is antiquated.

Structures such as this (or any kind), are too expensive and hard to come by, to simply roll over them with a bulldozer. Its days as an ice rink may be limited but not for other purposes.

Thanks for allowing me space to air an opinion.

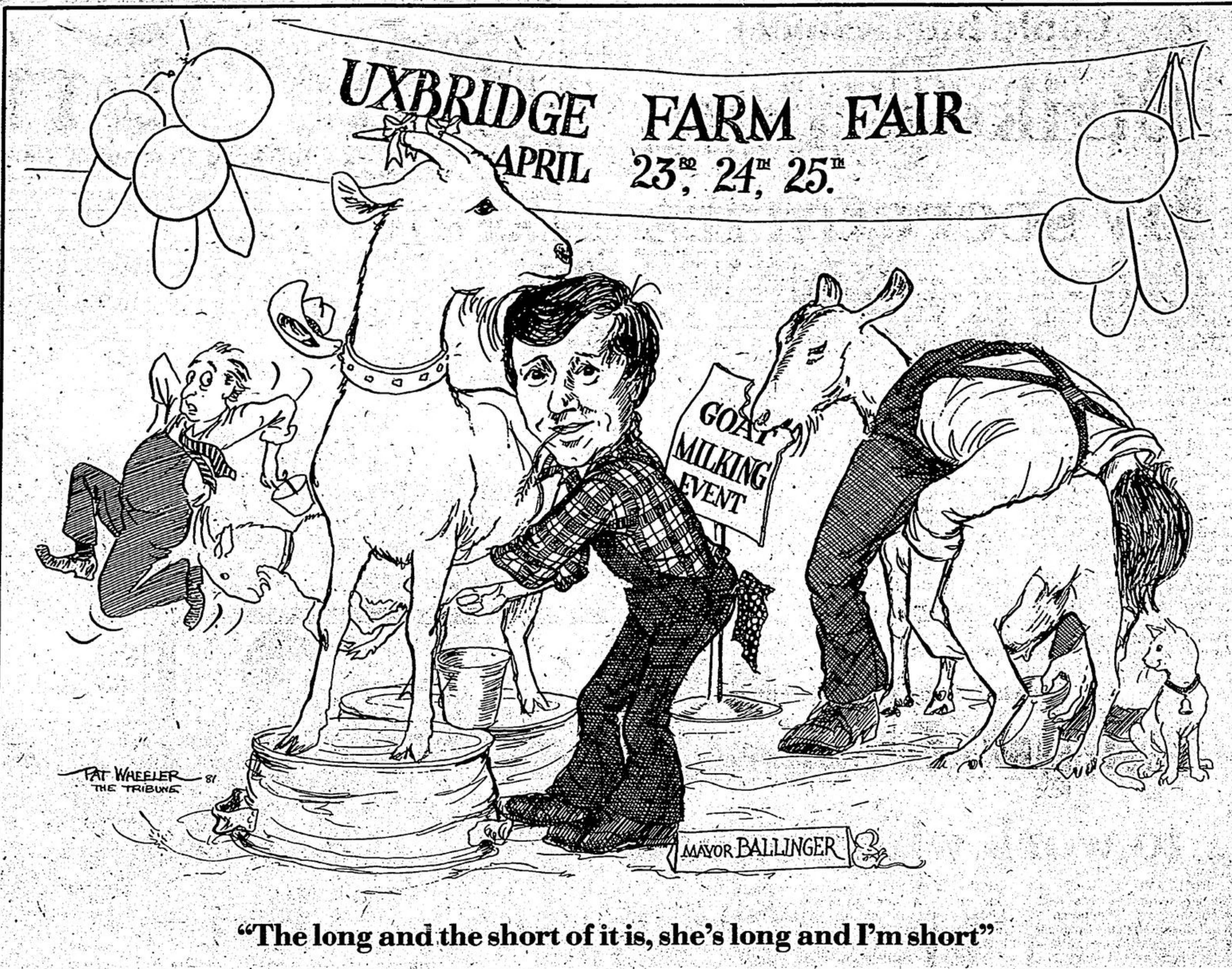
Sincerely,
Michael Morrison,
Elm Road,
Stouffville.

Hazardous intersection

Dear Jim:
Through your newspaper, I wish to point out to the engineering department of York Region, the need for improved lighting at the intersection of Hwy. 48 and Davis Drive, north of Vivian.

Even when driving conditions are good, the corner's difficult to see. Please do something soon.

Brenda Nelson,
R. R. 3, Newmarket.



"The long and the short of it is, she's long and I'm short"

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Roaming Around
Still a country girl at heart
By Jim Thomas



Few weekly newspaper offices stay open Saturdays, The Tribune included.

The main reason, I guess, is that staff employees dislike working weekends. And who can blame them? What with snowmobiling and cross-country skiing in the winter; cottages, golfing and gardening in the summer, who wants to work?

However, such was not always so. Thirty years ago, turning the key in the door on a Saturday was rare; only in cases of emergency, like a death in the family or worse. The same on Friday nights.

I can't ever remember business being that brisk, a few farm folk dropping in to pay overdue subscriptions. The majority, as I recall, wanted only to sit and talk; learn all the news without having to wait until Wednesday.

While Stouffville's changed considerably since the early 50's, I haven't. I still consider Saturday the busiest day in the week, if not in the office, then certainly round and about. For that's when things are happening; Sundays too.

Between self-appointed pictorial assignments, I get to spend a little time at the typewriter. Invariably, that's when the phone starts ringing and people begin popping in, some for the strangest of reasons. Most, it seems, want only information - are there any apartments for rent? Any auctions today? Which direction to the Sales Barn? Things like that. I enjoy helping them out. After all, that's partly what a newspaper office is for - giving

information. However, it's the telephone callers that amaze me most. They're really interesting.

Like three weeks ago, a Toronto lady, who didn't know me from a fence post, said she'd been attempting to contact Burnett and Lillian Jamieson of Balsam (east of Clarendont), without success. She thought perhaps they had moved or she'd been dialing the wrong number.

The party identified herself as a Mrs. Alloway; the former Myrtle Chapman of Conc. 4, Uxbridge and later of Balsam. She now lives in Forest Hill Village.

"I'm thinking of spreading my wings and taking flight," she said, revealing a desire to move back to her old neighborhood where she grew up as a girl.

As the one-sided conversation continued, her story became all the more intriguing.

If my placement of locations is correct, her father (Melburne Chapman), owned what is now the residence of former M.P.P., Bill Newman, directly across from the Jamieson farm.

"I remember that place like it was yesterday," she said. The house, she recalled, had an upstairs hall "big enough for a reception." Also upstairs was, what she described as a "silo." This enclosure held rain water and provided the pressure for a water system. Drinking water, she said, was carried by pail from a spring in the bush.

Myrtle remembers the solid hardwood floors, the stained glass windows and the slate

roof. She remembers also, attending classes at Clarendont Continuation School, a long walk even in the best of weather.

"I always bought my books at Storey's Drug Store in Stouffville, she said.

Any boyfriends back then? I asked.
"The only time I went out was with my parents," she said. "We were a quiet family and I was a book worm." Her mother and dad, she said, were "total abstainers." "We never drank anything stronger than ginger ale."

Sixty-six years "young," Myrtle recalled such familiar names as Will Coates, Dr. Nels Tomlinson, Enid Cook, May DeRusha and Lillian Empringham. Oscar Shaw operated the Balsam General Store.

She remembers how her father and Dr. Tomlinson sang in the church choir. Her father also played in the Clarendont Citizens' Band.

The mention of Mt. Zion Church brought to mind the day she walked there from home, carrying a dozen lemon pies in an egg-crate.

Myrtle Alloway has one daughter, living near Woodbridge and a granddaughter. She's totally independent, managing her own apartment and doing her own shopping. Still, she'd like to "spread her wings and fly"; back to her home neighborhood of Balsam and recapture the good times she once knew as a girl. Maybe she will. If so, I hope she calls again. For, after thirty minutes on the phone, I feel I've gained a friend.

It's contacts such as this that make working Saturdays so much fun. Sundays too.

Window on Wildlife
Welcome harbingers of spring
By Art Briggs-Jude



Although the bluebird has been rightly called the traditional harbinger of spring, robins and some other bird species now share that optimistic title. And whereas the beautiful bluebird has also disappeared from many of its former haunts, these other birds continue to announce each year that Old Man Winter has finally picked up his frigid blanket and whooshed his last icy blast for this season.

High on the list of early bird sightings around open pastureland ploughed fields and golf courses, is the most common member of the plover family, the Killdeer. This robin-sized shorebird with the long legs is back with us as soon as the warming sunshine opens up bare patches in the neighboring fields. With its white underparts and two striking-black neck bands it runs ahead of you in the moist landscape, keeping its brown back towards you, yet displaying its orange-colored rump. When pushed too hard or when an intruder appears in the form of a dog etc., it becomes

airborne uttering a loud and noisy "Killdeer", from whence the bird was named.

Killdeers as mentioned have long legs similar to sandpipers and other such waders, yet close proximity to water is not a top criteria for their breeding habitat. Actually any close grazed farmland, gravel bed or sandpit seems to suit their nesting needs. Occasionally though they will nest in the most unexpected places. Only last summer on an outing to Peter's Woods Nature Preservation Area north of Coburg, we luckily discovered one of these unusual nests. Arriving in the small parking lot adjacent to the woods proper, we stopped the vehicle and as my wife opened the door she gasped, "Don't move". I didn't. Not the car or any part of me as I wondered what it was all about. "You won't believe this", she continued, "but there's a Killdeer's nest right below my foot where I was going to step. I don't know how we missed it with the wheel." Closing the door carefully we both exited from the other side while Ma

Killdeer sat all calm and collected on we discovered later, two speckled eggs.

So while she sat so still and inconspicuous on that patch of crushed stone, we gathered together some sticks and pieces of brush to make a bit of a barrier between the brooding bird and any further traffic. And when we left that day after a ramble beneath the canopy of those centurian forest monarchs, the little Killdeer was still sitting tight in of all places, the middle of the parking lot.

I suppose if we had pressed her a little too close we would have been treated to one of the best broken wing acts in the bird world. For the Killdeer takes the academy award when it comes to making a potential enemy think they've got a lame duck in their grasp for easy pickings. Staying just a little tantalizing distance from the intruder, the acting bird lures it away from its nest. At the appropriate time, it rights itself and flies away, leaving the predator with nary the taste of a feather.

Editorials

Large crowds everywhere

Auction popularity grows

Like the real estate market, public auctions appear headed for a tremendous season. If the early ones in the area are any indication, crowds will set records all summer and into the fall.

Despite complaints of "hard times," more people seem to have more money to spend today than ever before. And they're spending it, determined to get the item they want regardless of cost.

Those who stop short of mortgaging their home, are finding local auctions tremendously entertaining. They enjoy being in on

the action and it doesn't cost anything to look. Last week, we attended four auction sales in two days - two in Whitchurch-Stouffville, one in Markham and one at Uxbridge; big crowds at them all.

Because of the apparent interest, this newspaper plans to follow the sale circuit closely, quoting prices wherever possible. This will serve as a guide as to how articles are selling and give would-be buyers some idea as to how much they can expect to pay.

The auction ring is a unique world unto itself. You're part of it and, because of you, so are we.

Secretaries are underpaid

Seldom, if ever, has this newspaper supported strike action. Instead, we have taken the hard-line approach. We have said, any person not satisfied with his (her) job or the salary it pays, should look for something better that pays more.

Admittedly, this type of policy will never endear us to trade union organizers. Most fairly bristle at the thought of it. Regardless, that's the way it is.

There comes a time, however, when facts and figures force us to admit the workers' cause is right. The current York County secretaries' squabble is a case in point. These people are grossly underpaid.

Because of who many of them are (married women), and what most of them do (secretarial duties), they've been tossed the crumbs, the scraps from the system's banquet table. Sooner or later, this kind of treatment must stop.

The 300 secretaries in the County lack solidarity. Many, merely supplementing their husband's income, feel a little's better than nothing at all. The others, forced to "go it alone," are finding a little is no longer enough.

They're barely existing on the salaries they're paid, a shocking situation at best.

The board may feel its elementary and secondary schools can carry on; and they can, for awhile. But it won't be long before this strike will make itself felt and a greater appreciation of the secretarial staff will hopefully be the end result.

New life

The re-opening of the Marguerite Shoppe, the coming of the Villager Men's Shop, the opening of Rich's Kitchen Bin, the improvement to the front of Stedman's and the re-modelling of John Lord's Books, has added a fresh 'new look' to Stouffville's Main Street.

The owners and operators of these businesses are to be commended. Despite past problems, they are showing faith in the future of the downtown core. With the continuation of the Business Improvement Area program and the support of the buying public, that faith will be rewarded through increased sales.