

Editor's Mail Incredible

Dear Mr Thomas:

The story concerning the resurrection of an eight-ton bulldozer from a bog north of Lemonville was interesting. Raising the machine was one thing. Making it operational again is another. I wish the owner luck and hope your paper will do a follow-up in a few weeks' time, giving us the end result of this 'mission'.

The fact the dozer was underground nine years and yet appeared in fairly good condition, is boggling to the mind, at least to my mind. I've never heard of anything like this before.

If John Bolender is successful in getting the bulldozer started, he'd be wise to contact the John Deere Company and tell them of his accomplishment. Think of the advertising value, even better than a ticking Timex following a plunge over Niagara Falls. Yes, Mr Bolender may have accomplished more than he realizes.

Frank C. Spalding,
Lindsay, Ont.

Complaint

To the editor:

Snow-clearing is undoubtedly a problem for the Town Works Department when parked vehicles get in the way. But I see no reason to tag cars on "snow routes" when there is no snow to clear. This is what happened to me.

As far as there being 'warning signs' at either end of Main Street, one would need a high-powered telescope to read the wording, if, in fact, one could see the signs.

I'm not complaining about the bylaw but I feel police should use some discretion when it's obvious a car is in no way hindering snow removal operations. Be it January or July, a little commonsense can go a long way in solidifying public relations between people and police. Where my car was parked, road conditions were as much like July as January.

Gordon Pringle.

STOUFFVILLE LIONS TOLL DAY



PAT WHEELER '84
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ROAMING AROUND

Cost nothing to look

BY JIM THOMAS



We're a nation hooked on the automobile. Necessary or not, few families would choose to be without one. It gives us a feeling of independence, to come and go as we wish. That's why dozens and dozens of single-minded commuters pass through Stouffville every week-day morning. It's an addiction.

On Saturday evening, I joined hundreds of auto addicts at the 1984 Car Show held in the huge International Centre at Malton. There were acres and acres of cars on display, every size, color and description.

While most spectators were your usual tire-kickers and door-slammers, some were serious, at least serious to the point of talking to a salesman. But not me. Why? Because, to be honest, I'm not all that struck on the current crop of motorized four-wheelers that have been dumped on the market today. To me, they're ugly, and too limited in size, color and style; a far cry from the chrome-belted beauties that graced our roads (and driveways) back in 40's and 50's. Those were the days when a car was purchased and displayed with pride. Now, it's merely a means of transportation that's measured in kilometers to the litre rather than ownership egoism.

While I've nothing against the downizing that's occurred in recent years, pricing practices have not kept pace. Rather, they've gone the other way—higher and higher. And the makers don't mind flaunting this feature either. One

gorgeous gal, with more curves than the model she was discussing, spoke in terms of \$20,000 like it was twenty thousand cents. Sure, the turbo-powered Datsun that rotated round and round was a beauty, (if black is to your liking), but it sported about as much exterior chrome as our hand-me-downed baby carriage.

It was this one point, the prices, that caused my head to spin; some equal or surpassing the value of our house. For example, a two-door turbo Porsche, \$80,032; a Jaguar SS-100 replica, \$75,000; a Lotus turbo Esprit, \$59,850; a Detomaso two-seater, V-8, \$59,500; an Avanti special touring coupe, \$54,635; a Cadillac Eldorado convertible, \$43,529 and a Jaguar XJ6, \$41,590.

Fortunately, it didn't cost anything to look or to dream. And look and dream is what most folks did. However, on the practical side, the biggest crowd-pleasers were the Dodge and Plymouth Magic Wagons. Chrysler has undoubtedly cornered the market with these smartly designed vacation compacts. The cost is attractive too, between eight and eleven thousand, depending on what model (and equipment) you choose. Toyota has a similar van that also attracted much attention. Its price, however, is about five thousand more.

As I walked between the rows of fibre glass and steel, it became obvious that General Motors, American Motors, Chrysler and Ford have just cause for

import concern. The truth is, the show would have seemed just as much 'at home' in Tokyo as in Toronto. There were Japanese cars everywhere—Hondas, Datsuns and Toyotas, not to mention market-crashers from Italy, Germany, Sweden and Russia.

I find this all kind of confusing. The choice is too great. The basic Chev, Ford and Dodge are still available, of course, but there are so many variances of each under different names like Escort, Fiero, Aires and Topaz, to mention only a few. I'm having difficulty keeping up. And there's no guarantee that a top seller this year will even be available next. Remember the Edsel, the Corvair and the Pinto?

While son Neil and I spent close to three hours, Saturday, viewing the beauties on display, we suddenly became separated in the throng. After considerable searching, he found me, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with other 'old timers' in an area set aside for antiques. "What's so great about these, Dad?" he asked.

I pointed to a 1912 McLaughlin Buick and the inscription below that read: Four cylinders, thirty horsepower, tail lights, gas head lamps, generator, horn, foot rest and complete set of tools. The price—\$1,530.00.

He stared for a moment at the car, then at me, and posed the inevitable: "Did you own one of these?" Suddenly, I felt as much like an antique as the car.

Editorials Meaningless petition

Protests in the form of signed petitions aren't worth the paper they're written on.

We're all the more convinced of this fact after receiving a copy of one, related to a protest concerning an application to build nine estate homes at The Maples of Ballantrae, Conc. 7, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The initial green form, (it should be yellow), is signed by no one. Yet it blatantly asks residents on the 6th and 7th Concessions, (and beyond), to add their names to the list.

SPEAK OUT NOW, the pamphlet requests—register your objections to 'small lots'. The writer(s) then proceeds to drag out all the old bug-a-boos so time worn, their beards are dragging on the ground. For example: Health Study not started; uncertain water quality; dump still open; destruction of natural environment and so on. Emotional hand-wringing and cries of complaint that are

heard every time an enterprising citizen tries to proceed with a residential project anywhere in rural Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The hand-out speaks of 'small' lots. However, as subdivisions go, these lots aren't small. Estate lots never are.

Further, of the 68 names associated with the petition, at least 23 carry the address of R.R. 3, Newmarket, an area some distance from the subdivision site. Others are located on Concessions 5 and 6. Two signatures give no addresses at all, only phone numbers.

In recent years, homes abutting golf courses have become popular. Would-be owners pay a premium for the privilege. We trust Mike and Shirley Wade will have the opportunity of making this privilege available, just as many of the subdivision's opponents were accorded similar privileges when they requested permission to set up housekeeping here.

Positive side to traffic

To some, the Saturday-morning 'through' traffic along Stouffville's Main Street is a source of irritation. The majority of motorists, it's assumed, are travelling to the Sales Barn. Few stop, except perhaps for a fill-up of gas or a cup of coffee.

For years, business people here have been scratching their heads, (tearing their hair out), wondering how they might utilize this vehicular flow to their advantage. Nothing positive has resulted.

Last Saturday, however, the Stouffville Lions Club took the direct approach. With caps, (containers), in hand, they requested donations for worthwhile community work. There were few refusals.

While local merchants can't force Saturday visitors into their stores, the Lions' project proves where there's a will, there's a way. Receipts in excess of \$1,400 proves the will was strong and the way was right. We trust they'll try it again. Double the traffic could mean double the return.

Our concerns ignored

It was back in January 1983, that Dr. Ronald Lees, Director of the Health Resource Centre at Queen's University, Kingston, released a Health Study Report related to 50 families in Whitchurch-Stouffville as compared to a like number in East Gwillimbury. While claiming 'no cause, for panic', Dr. Lees admitted to higher incidents of certain types of cancer here and recommended a more concentrated investigation by the Environment Ministry. The cost was estimated at a half-million dollars.

That was more than fourteen months ago. In recent weeks, action (or inaction) by the government has been repeatedly mentioned by ratepayers opposed to further residential build-up in the area of the Hwy. 48

landfill site, prompting this newspaper to enquire as to what, if anything, has happened with regard to "a more concentrated investigation".

We find that, after all this time, nothing has happened. The Ministry, we presume, is still undecided if the half-million dollar expense is warranted. A decision, one way or another, is expected in March.

For a municipality and its citizens to be subjected to this kind of foot-dragging is unforgivable. It shouldn't take a government, even the provincial government, fourteen months to respond "yes we will" or "no we won't". Is it any wonder residents become exasperated and take the law into their own hands? Sometimes, it seems, this is the only way anything is accomplished.

WINDOW ON WILDLIFE

Kills without mercy

BY ART BRIGGS-JUDE



A sure way of telling if there's a hawk or a shrike in your backyard is by the behavior of songbirds gathered at your feeder. Usually, they're as busy as beavers, especially in the morning and afternoon, or all day long if the weather is threatening. However, when one of these predator bids puts in an appearance, each feathered friend seems to put itself on hold. And while some seek safety in nearby bushes and evergreens, many remain motionless. In fact, looking out in the yard at just such a moment can be likened to a picture puzzle wherein you have to search carefully for all hidden objects.

Yet, of all the winged predators that frequent backyard feeders, none is as sinister as the northern shrike or butcher bird as it's often called. Attracted like some of the smaller hawks because of songbird concentrations, the shrike arrives dressed like a wolf in sheep's clothing. At first glance, he may be mistaken for a mockingbird or, in the north, a Canada jay. Often, it requires a closer look on your part to notice its black mask and heavy hooked bill.

So, with most of the basic features of a grey songbird, including frail legs and feet it can use only for perching and hopping, the shrike appears to be just

another birdseed client. Even its initial actions do not always suggest its sinister motives. Frequently, it sits patiently surveying the situation. I'm sure the first time or two that a shrike shows up near a feed shelf, the element of surprise is one of its greatest assets. It is only after several terrorizing attacks on the smaller birds that they quickly learn to be wary of the grey masked ghost in their midst.

You see, the shrike does not swoop in like a sharp-shinned hawk in a power dive, to clutch its prey in steel-like talons. Instead, it manoeuvres into position behind its intended victim, then, with heavy bill, strikes a stunning blow to the back of its head. Now, while the chickadee or a similar-sized songster is rendered helpless, the black-masked opportunist moves in to complete its lethal task. However, if the attack is not successful on a sitting bird, this avian scourge will pursue its prey in flight. Oft-times, its dogged, persistent chase will exhaust the smaller creature to such an extent, the shrike will have little trouble closing to within striking distance.

If you have a shrike in your area any length of time, you will see first-hand how your more desirable feathered friends try to escape becoming its meal ticket. Apart from the mentioned 'freez-

ing' or remaining inconspicuous, the chickadees, for example, try to stay in the thick briars or thorn bushes. And as long as they dart back and forth within these confines, they are relatively safe. However, when the shrike flutters into the midst of their hideout, one or two black-caps will usually fly out and are immediately singled out as potential victims.

The cleverest birds we've noticed so far in dealing with the butcherbird's lethal advances, are the white-breasted nuthatches. These head-down tree-climbers, simply slip into a nearby birdhouse. The small entrance hole prevents the predator from following. Quite frequently, the shrike will sit poised over the nuthatches hiding place or perched off to one side, waiting out the little nut-crackers.

Late one afternoon recently, as I was in the barn checking on our new-born lambs, something swished overhead in the failing light and landed on a feed barrel close by. Much to my surprise, I recognized it as a shrike. It paid me little heed, taking off in its continuing pursuit of a grain-fat house sparrow. I guess, with the temperature hovering near minus 30 degrees Fahrenheit, it pays to be persistent.