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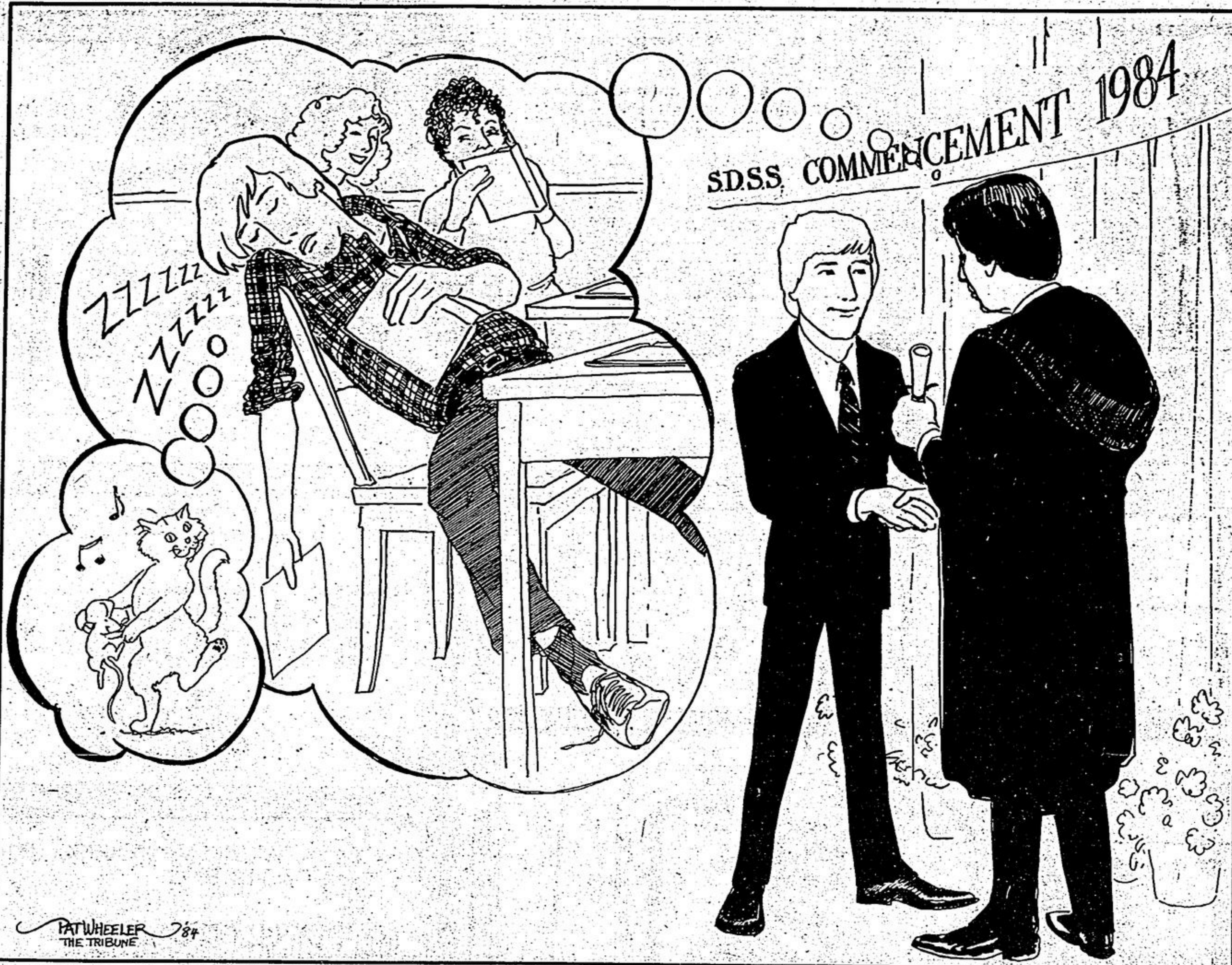
Dear Mr Thomas:
Your comments concerning the sale (or lease) of the present arena were interesting, certainly food for thought.
I doubt very much if Town Council will consider either proposal. The reason, as you pointed out, is obvious—the owner (or tenant) would undoubtedly cut the ice rental fee drastically.
In my opinion, all things would even out. Those wishing to utilize the new facility would be willing to pay more. Those not willing to pay the higher rate, would use the old rink, simple as that.
Rather than destroy the structure as occurred in Uxbridge, I feel the Town should consider its sale. And may the owner-operator be successful.

Judith Ceronne,
Stouffville

A service

Dear Mr Thomas:
You and I must have been talking to the same people. On Saturday, (Nov. 3), while attending the Intermediate game in Stouffville, several persons mentioned the fact the present arena "might be sold." I'm not sure where they obtained their information, but they seemed to know what they were talking about; even to the name of the possible purchaser.
I think it's great someone's willing to take this gamble. A thirty-year-old building is a definite risk, not to speak of the longevity of the ice-making unit.
I agree with you that a lease arrangement would be best, both for the tenant and the town—say ten years at a dollar a year.
The operation of a second ice pad would be a definite 'service' to the community that Council should consider.

Sincerely,
Bryan Coulter,
Manitoba Street,
Stouffville



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WINDOW ON WILDLIFE

One disillusioned dog

—BY ART BRIGGS-JUDE



How do you tell your bird dog it's the deer season? How do you explain to an excited bundle of energy at 5:30 in the morning she has to stay home? She just doesn't understand. I bet if we put ourselves in her forepaws, we wouldn't understand either.

A slumber-shattering alarm wakes the whole household and sets the dog in motion. But that's not an entirely new phenomenon for, since the start of the duck season, that up and at 'em jingle has been frequently heard. And therein lies the rub as far as she's concerned. Why only last week the dog was being blessed and urged on to great expectations. But this week, she senses something wrong as she charges in to greet you, eyes bright, stubby tail doing double time on the wag. Instead of an encouraging ear rub and a head pat, a somewhat strained voice suggests she spend a little more time in bed. Bed, her brown eyes ask? You must be kidding. Her pleading looks of inquiry receive only more of the cold shoulder treatment, and a terse reply, "Not today Kim."

So, for the first part of breakfast, she lays prone on her mat, watching every morsel on its course, like a spectator at a tennis match. Then, when it gets too much, she stirs and ends up with her head on your lap. Feeling only a slight pat of affection, she wonders what she's done wrong. His head nuzzles deeper; so you make a half-hearted attempt to console her. "Next week, wait til next week, then you can go". So she wags her tail, hoping you mean wait til after breakfast. But the obvious answer is that today's plans do not include her.

Because the weather is wet, you decide to put on your hip waders to keep the soggy evergreens from soaking your legs. Did I say hip waders? As soon as you begin putting them on, the dog erupts again. She knows those long boots are for duck hunting. However, as you gently but firmly push her back, you tell her for the umpteenth time, "not today Kim, back to your bed". Shattered, she turns towards her mat, pauses, looks back and questions your decision, just one more time. Gathering your gear together you pretend not to notice the hurt in those big, brown eyes. You close your ears to that disgusted sigh that occurs as she flops disillusioned on the mat.

The lunch is in the haversack, a handful of shells, knife, matches, compass, and a piece of plastic to sit on. Now it's on with the blaze orange jacket and equally bright hunting hat. But as you step back to pick up the gun, the dog is right there again to step along with you. She just can't get it through her hairy head she's not going. So you try to outsmart her by giving her a bowl of her favorite food. This morning though, she seems down right disgusted that you would offer her a second choice to her favorite pastime. It takes only a quick sniff to bring her back under your feet. Picking up the rifle, you head for the door with her protesting and acting like a lamprey eel attached to a lake trout. Finally you force your way out into the dawning day, leaving her to whimper on the inside.

Its dusk when you return. Your steps are slower, your shoulders drooped. You're not exactly humming your favorite tune. You sink into your regular easy chair and the story unfolds. The big buck that should be hanging on the beam, escaped. You had him cold turkey and you missed. Your eyes strained; half closed can see nothing but that big rack swinging around after you shoot. Your mind is clouded with the sight of that enormous whitetail bounding away. You still can't believe you missed, even though a thorough search reveals the sad fact—you shot underneath.

Tugging at the straps on your boots, you feel something bump against your elbow. It's the dog again, pushing her nose up to your leg. You reach down and scratch her velvet ears. Her head comes up and that damp nose touches your hand. She sits on her slowly wagging tail and reaches out with one flecked paw. Taking it gently in your hand you look almost apologetically into her face! Her inquisitive eyes seem to say, "Maybe I could have helped." You pull her up with the other paw and you nod in mutual agreement. Then you speak softly to her, "Maybe you could help; but not out there. The fact is, you're helping an awful lot right now". In a couple of moments, both dog and man are fast asleep.

Editorials

A royal performance

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair was once described to us as "nothing but a bunch of cows and horses." And for years, we believed this to be true; until last year. That's when we attended The Royal for a first time. We discovered how wrong that descriptive was and how much we had missed during the intervening time.

Certainly there are cows and horses plus pigs and chickens and oats and corn and hay. This is all part of the agricultural community and deserving of a place of prominence at an agricultural fair. But there is more, so much more. The truth is, the few hours we spent, Saturday, allowed us time to see only a small part of what this world agricultural exhibition has to offer. We felt cheated on having to leave so soon.

Despite the distance factor involved, exhibitors from this area are enjoying excellent success. Red ribbons were prominent on entries by Allin Lewis of Markham; Ivan, Marion and Murray Norton of Goodwood; Jim Cowieson of Queensville; Jennifer Tribbling of Uxbridge; Bruce and Alex Davidson of Stouffville and Jim McWilliam of Pickering.

Top honors at The Royal don't come easily. Said General Manager Andy Stewart: "If you're a winner here, it means you have the best in the business."

There's still time to see the "best in the business". The Royal closes its doors for another season, Saturday night.

Better safe than sorry

Familiarity breeds contempt. The rabies warning has been broadcast through the media (including this newspaper) so many times, few people pay it any heed.

Only when a child is confronted by an all too friendly fox or a neighbor's cow dies from the dread disease, do folks become alarmed.

Health officials and veterinarians aren't fooling when they report incidents of rabies in the Whitchurch-Stouffville, Markham, Uxbridge and Pickering areas. Nor are they "outlooking for business" when they urge anti-rabies vaccinations. It's just plain common sense to have it done rather than risk the terrible consequences.

However, vaccinations cost money, money that's not always readily available. Other necessities take priority.

To assist in this regard, the York Region Public Health Branch, in co-operation with the Stouffville Veterinary Centre, is holding a Rabies Immunization Clinic this Saturday, (Nov. 17), from 1 to 5 p.m. The cost is only five dollars. Only dogs and cats will be accepted.

Residents here are urged to take advantage of this service. Every pet worth keeping, is worth protecting.

The correct decision

There was no service at the cenotaph in the Town Square, Sunday. Instead, the wreath-laying ceremony was conducted in the Veterans' Memorial Hall.

While cancellation of the parade and outside activities that normally follow, caught some people by surprise, including York-North MPP Bill Hodgson, it was the only sensible thing to do. In fact, there have been occasions in the past when participants would have been better served by holding the complete ceremony inside.

Due to the fact changes in plans were made on short notice, (we found out about it at 1:30 p.m.), there was no way of spreading the word. Certainly, a few were disappointed but no one, with the exception of Mr Hodgson, was inconvenienced. Even our Provincial Member had an opportunity to join the gathering later.

Loking back, veterans of two world wars endured miseries of far greater magnitude than were experienced Sunday. However, as Stouffville Legion Branch president Ivan Goudie put it, "all of us are getting a little older"—some 45 years older.

We would suggest that, in the future, when conditions are such as experienced this year, the service at the Hall be automatic. This way, no one will feel left out in the cold.

Whether battling the enemy or the elements, discretion is sometimes the better part of valor.

Stouffville boy, region's top orator

Laborious lessons

Twelve-year-old Jason Brock, Duchess Street, Stouffville, was the Intermediate Division champion in the York Region Public Speaking Competition, Nov. 6 at Aurora Heights Public School, Aurora. The title of his speech was "Lessons". It is published here:

It was an overcast and rainy morning. Footsteps echoed along the hall. "Jason, you're late, get up!"

"Mom, you can't make me do this! I'll quit! I won't do anything! I'll be rude! Love them or hate them."

I'm not talking about school. I'm talking about lessons. Life is nothing but a bowl of lessons, some firm, some soft. But as far as I'm concerned, all come with pits. Early in life there are so many lessons one has to learn. As I remember it, these were relatively painless. Everyone learned how to get up of their knees and be suddenly dropped into a turtle pool. But I just learned to crawl.

You instinctively know that from here on in, it just gets deeper.

"Jump," she yelled, "Just jump—I'll take care of you!"

Who doesn't remember the smell of chlorine or the clang of the change room lockers and the wet slime underfoot? Then the freezing shower and that familiar grip of panic. And finally, standing, teeth chattering, lips blue, at the edge of the pool, a beaming teenager, clutching a clipboard, asks: "Having fun? Well, everyone into the pool." After half an hour of swallowing water and gasping for air, you struggle out of the pool and grab for your towel. Your parents drop a quarter into your hand to alleviate their guilt for all your suffering and off you go to the corner store.

Collecting hockey cards began the phase when I thought I wanted to be a hockey star. Bundled up in my little snow suit with a helmet on my head so I wouldn't knock my brains out if I fell, I looked like something from another planet. But that didn't bother me until I stepped on the ice where all the girls wore cute skating suits and danced circles around me while I shuffled for an hour to reach the other side of the rink. I could tell I wasn't going to be another Wayne Gretzky.

So much for lessons involving physical activity. How about some intellectual stimulation?

"No one should go through life not knowing how to read music," lectured my mom. "Since we happen to have a piano, wouldn't it be fun to learn how to play it!"

The first few lessons were fine. You thought scales were only on fish! Then, I began complaining.

"Jason, this has got to stop," nagged my mom, "what do you want to do with your life?"

"I wanna rock!" So came the electric bass and a great big amplifier. I'm the only kid in Stouffville who practices while grounded. Once a week I struggle to my lesson, dragging my 200 pound bass and spend half an hour in a small smoky room, learning how to keep the rythmn. It sure beats the piano and a heck of a lot lighter.

During the course of these lessons, it became evident to my mom that I sure could act. I could look deathly ill when it was time for swimming lessons, exceptionally tired when it came to skating and suffer cramps in my fingers when lessons loomed.

"Jason, you're too much. You should take acting lessons," declared my mom. So off to the Young People's Theatre we went every Saturday. A dusty old room playing frozen tag and pretending to be a flower wasn't my idea of a good time, until the audition calls were handed out and I found myself cast as Tiny Tim, and later acting in Jacob Two-Two. Wow! That was all right!

Swimming, skating, music, theatre, art, cooking, singing, dancing, computer typing, tennis, wood-working, sewing lessons anyone?