

Weekender

Comment

Farm land should be left alone

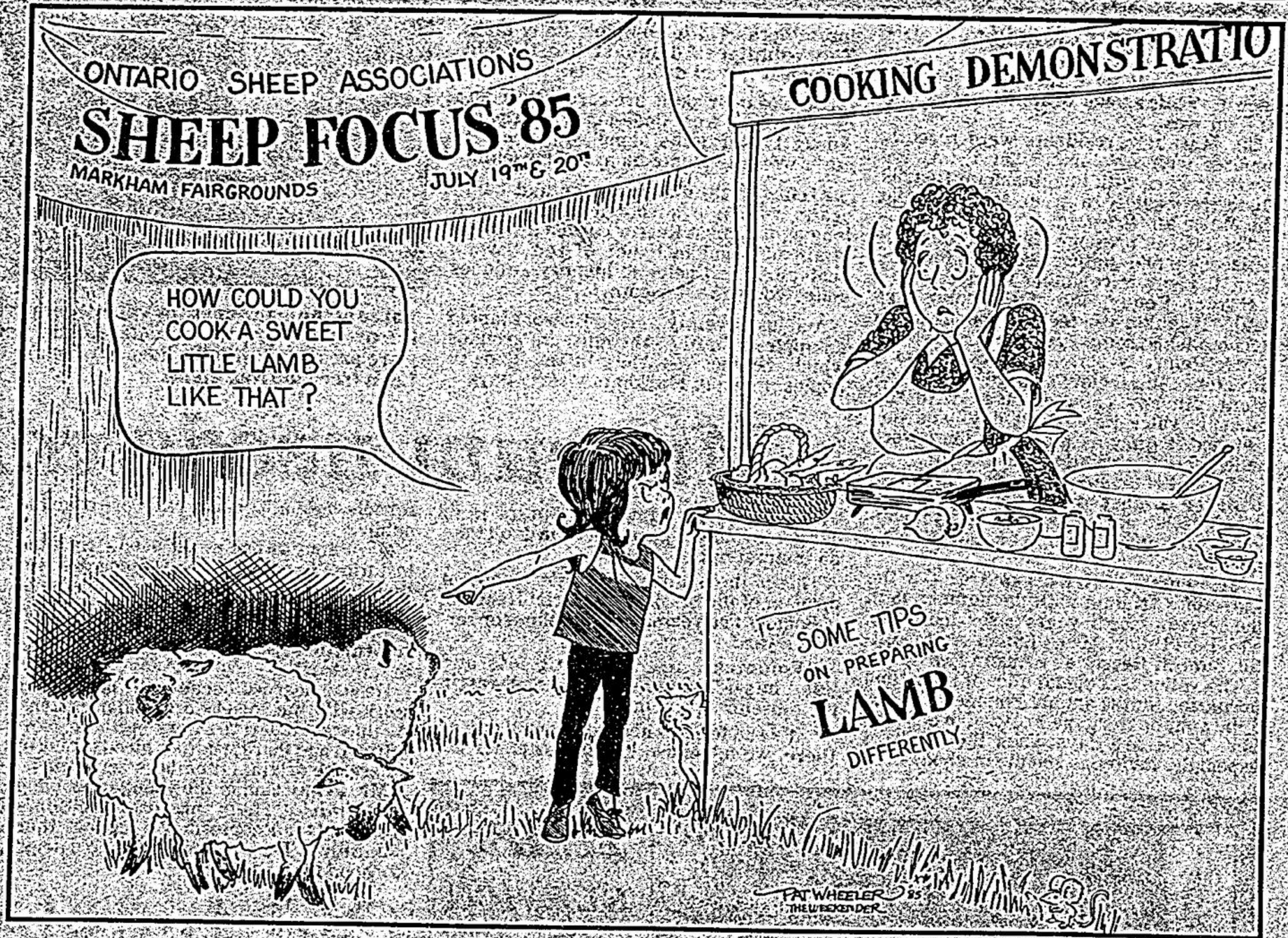
Governments love studies. They would rather study something than make a firm decision. And, the current study of the Pickering Airport lands — 18,000 acres some of which includes eastern section of the Town of Markham — is a case in point.

The Federal Government has hired a University of Guelph research team to conduct interviews of people living on the Airport lands — which were expropriated 13 years ago for a new international airport to serve the Metro Toronto area.

However, intense opposition from local residents, declining air travel due to rising energy costs and opposition from the Ontario Government finally forced the Federal government to put the airport on hold.

But the land is still owned by the Federal Government — and is rented out to farmers and others. Most of the land is being profitably worked by young tenant farmers who are better able to rent land than purchase it.

There is no reason to change the situation and a study is a waste of taxpayers' money. If, however, the land is retained, the Federal government must give a firm guarantee that the Pickering Airport will never be built.



Speaking Out

Do you prefer the new Coke over the old Coke? (Asked on Wooten Way in Markham and Main St., Stouffville)



Shawn Cuthill
Markham Student
"I like the old Coke better. The new Coke tastes more like Pepsi."

Jeremy Pompilio
Markham Student
"I can't really tell the difference."

John Marshall
Stouffville Teacher
"I can't really notice any difference."

Krista Cummings
Stouffville Student
"I like them both the same."

Weekender Letters

'Don't cancel, vote'

Dear Sir,
I would like to respond to the Weekender article "Some Hospital Donors Canceling."

I am in full agreement with Mr. Cosburn, the hospital chairman, who suggests that voting at next year's meeting would be a better form of protesting the outcome of this year's election than cancelling pledges.

I would just like to point out that signing a pledge does not necessarily imply membership or the privilege to vote at the annual meeting.

My husband and I attended the meeting last month and we were shocked when some of the long-time, dedicated trustees were not re-elected. We were in the frustrating position of being unable to vote.

This was not because we are disinterested in the hospital project, quite the contrary, I was one of the volunteers who went door to door gathering contributions and pledges during the fund raising campaign. At that time, my husband and I signed a pledge which has been paid promptly and regularly.

Unfortunately, the intricacies of membership did not come to our attention (they were not in effect when we signed our pledge). We could not vote because our annual installments were too small to entitle us to an automatic life membership, although they were way in excess of the nominal \$5 annual membership fee. We simply neglected to stipulate that part of our annual donation should be specifically for a membership.

I therefore encourage people in the same position, and I am sure there are many, not to cancel their pledge but rather to re-examine it, and then do one of the following two things to ensure they are eligible to vote next year:

1. Either pay up their pledge in full, if the balance owing is \$1,000 or more, and receive an automatic life membership for themselves and their spouse or stipulate that \$5 each annual contribution be specifically for an annual membership.

2. Once these details have been attended to, (it must be done three months before the next election of trustees) come out to next year's annual meeting and join the democratic process of electing the hospital board.

It is not enough to urge them to attend and vote at the meeting next year. The technicalities must be dealt with first to avoid the frustration of being a donor without a voice.

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Published every Saturday by Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing at 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, Ontario, L3P 1M3, Tel. 294-2200.

Second class mail registration number 1247.

The Weekender is one of the Metroland group of suburban newspapers which includes The Acton Free Press, Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, The Aurora Banner, Brampton Guardian, The Burlington Post, The Burlington Weekend Post, The Etobicoke Advertiser/Guardian, The Georgetown Independent, The Markham Economist and Sun, The Milton Champion, The Mississauga News, The Newmarket Era, The Willowdale Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Friday Beaver, Oshawa/Whitby This Week, Oshawa/Whitby This Weekend, The Richmond Hill Liberal, Thornhill Liberal, The Scarborough Mirror, The Stouffville Tribune and Vaughan Liberal. Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing is a division of Harlequin Enterprises Ltd. NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE — Metroland Corporate Sales, 493-1300.