

Editor's Mail Location

Dear Editor:
I don't believe people donated to the Markham Stouffville Hospital Fund with a particular site in mind. They gave because they felt such a facility was needed somewhere in the Markham-Stouffville area.

In my opinion, location, (with reason), is not of prime importance. All one need do is check hospital sites in other communities. Most are in what one might consider 'out of the way places'. However, such facilities are constructed with the future in mind. What's 'out of the way' today could be the centre of population tomorrow.

Sincerely,
Walter Brennan,
R.R. 1, Markham

Assumed

Dear Jim:
I am writing in reference to the article in The Tribune of July 17, related to gravel truck operators being charged with fraud and obstructing police.

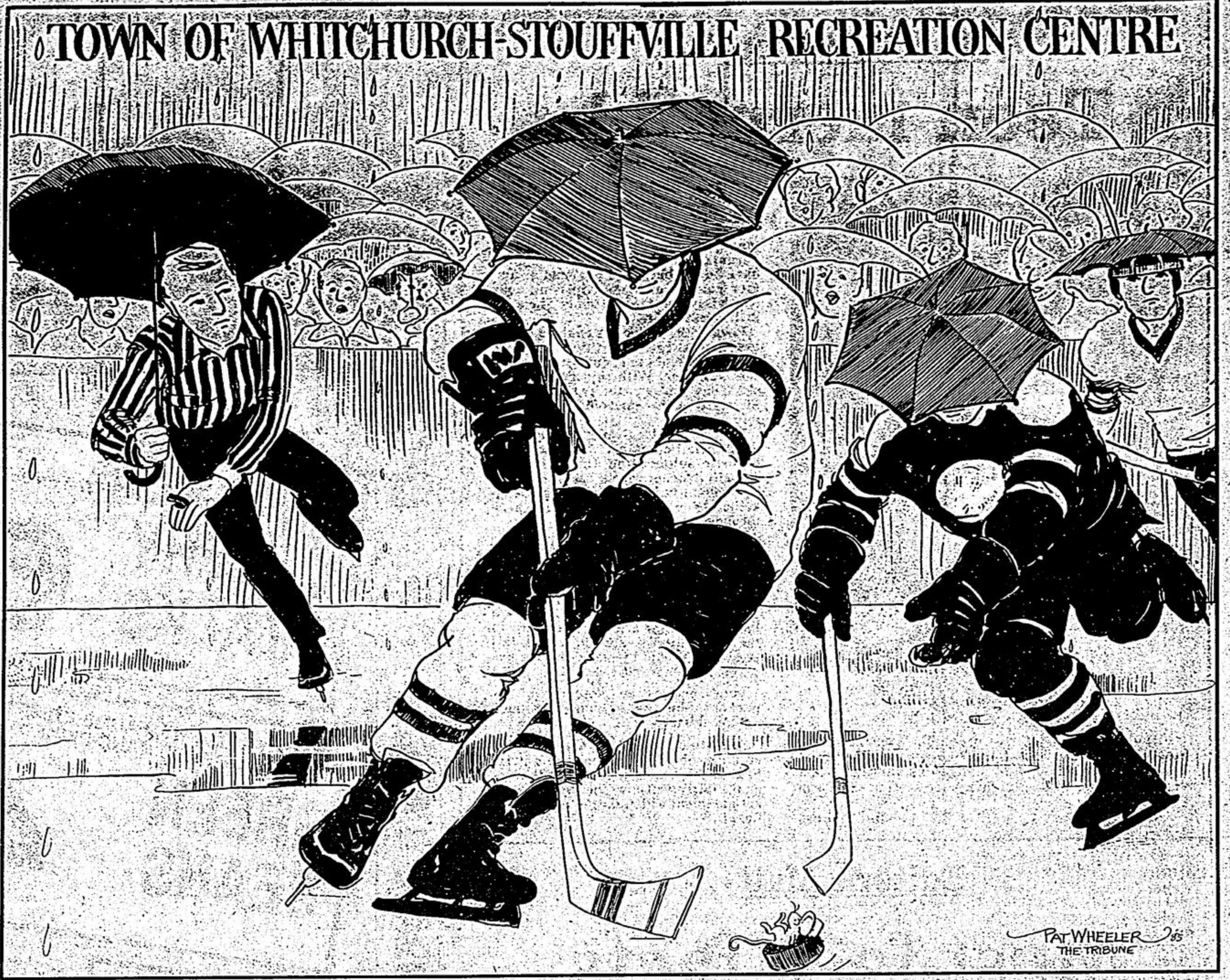
In the story, two of the accused were said to be living on North Street in Stouffville.

As it is your newspaper's policy not to publish the names of accused, I think you should also omit other identifying information.

This item caused my next door neighbor, also a gravel truck operator, much embarrassment. He is not the accused, but since his truck is the only one visible on North Street, many people, of course, may have come to the wrong conclusion.

In future, perhaps, the only identifying information should be "resident of Whitchurch-Stouffville."

Sincerely,
Fran Baker,
North Street,
Stouffville



ROAMING AROUND

Julia started it all

BY JIM THOMAS



With due respect to 'Susie', our family beagle, I have to think horses are the most intelligent animals in the world; also the most beautiful.

I care not the breed, the color or the class, there's something about a horse that commands attention.

While more acquainted with the 'work' variety—Clydesdales, Belgians and Percherons, I'm just as attracted to pacers, trotters, hunters and jumpers; even mares when the occupant in the sulky or the saddle is someone young and inexperienced.

Whitchurch-Stouffville has many of these for even the Cathi Hargraves, the Cindy Kennedys and the Julie Roys didn't attain champion status overnight. Practice makes perfect, years and years of practice.

Aiding the cause is the Ballantrae and District Lions Club. The Ballantrae Lions hosted their 6th annual horse show, Sunday. It was a tremendous success.

Although time wouldn't permit me to spend the entire day there, I was pleased to view the morning classes. Also watching from the sidelines was a lady who, more than anyone, is responsible for this competition.

"She started it all," said a club member, pointing in the same direction I was looking. The centre of our attention was Julia Plewes, formerly of Stouffville and

now manager of Lincolndale Farms, R.R. 1, Goodwood. Minutes later, I'd cornered Julia and, under the shade of an old maple tree, we talked about her association with horses and young people, bringing the two together to form a mutual admiration society.

Born on a farm in England, Julia was practically raised seated in a saddle.

"I did pretty much the same as these kids are doing," she said, reflecting back on her pre-teen years.

Then at age eighteen, she came to Canada, but horses took a back seat for awhile. However, the interest was still there. As a public school teacher in the Region of Durham, she established a horseback riding course involving students from five high schools. As many as twenty young people a night would gather for personal instruction at The Hockey Ranch in Pickering.

Then daughter Suzanne, (now twelve), arrived on the scene and Julia put aside her classroom career in favor of full-time motherhood.

While this remains all-important to Julia, so also are horses. She finds she can combine the two interests.

After 2 1/2 years as manager of the Eglinton Equestrian Centre in North York, Julia was offered the position of manager at Lincolndale Farms, Goodwood. She sees this as the best of two

worlds—working with horses and raising her daughter in a rural environment.

Will Suzanne be an avid equestrienne like her mother? I asked.

"I don't push her," Julia replied, "right now she's enjoying it; that's the main thing."

This is what Julia stresses—enjoyment. "Participation is more important than winning," she says. And this is what she likes about the Ballantrae Show. Participation is top priority.

One thing incenses Julia; those people who insist on being paid for everything they do. She fears this is a trend today and it bothers her. This is why she holds Lionism in such high regard. Everything the members do is volunteer. "They're terrific," she says.

Julia says people helping people is important. "This practice is disappearing in a monetary world," she notes, somewhat dejectedly. She's pleased such is not the case with respect to the Ballantrae Horse Show and she hopes the event will continue.

Members Dave Probert and Charlie Warden are prime pushes behind the project. However, both Dave and Charlie are the first to admit that, except for the enthusiasm shown by one Julia Plewes, it may never have got off the ground.

The Town says thank you

WINDOW ON WILDLIFE

Ring-tailed robbers

BY ART BRIGGS-JUDE



He's been called a lot of things, depending on the occasion. Ring-tailed cat, black-faced bandit and little masked bear are all common names for the well-known raccoon.

The Indians named it 'Arougheun', which means, "he scratches with his hands." They prized it for food and its thick fur for warmth. It's one of the few examples of wildlife that seems to thrive in the face of encroaching civilization.

It's equally content in woodlands, the suburbs or metropolitan centres. In all likelihood, the raccoon is more numerous today than it was when the early explorers first charted this continent. It ranges over most of the south and central parts of our province and its hand-like tracks often lead from a hole in a tree to a heap of big trouble. In the cities it's garbage cans, gardens, attics and chimneys that command their mischievous attention, while in the country, its corn crops, feed bins and melon patches. Naturally inquisitive, this trait often leads it to a tasty lunch.

In three different sets of circumstances recently, I have observed the results of ravaging raccoons. The first was the robbing of a second-brood bluebird nest.

Situated close to the house, I felt a specially constructed raccoon guard wasn't necessary. How wrong I was. Fortunately,

the parent birds escaped, to nest nearby where protection was available.

Unfortunately, this type of thing often happens when a raccoon discovers such nest boxes are potential meal centres. It makes periodic visits. Wood duck nests are particularly vulnerable. They require a large metal collar on the supporting pole, even when these units are placed in the water.

The second example involved birds of a different species.

In the steep side of our sand pit, dozens of bank swallows and a pair of kingfishers had excavated tunnels for nesting. Later, we noticed some of these holes had been enlarged and a few dug out completely, resulting in losses of eggs and young. Under each clawed-out cavity was the tell-tale fingerprints of a raccoon.

I expect the kingfisher caused the investigation when it left an aroma of fish after feeding its young.

Other evidence suggesting raccoons are more than a little nosy, are turfed-out turtle nests.

We're never sure just how many survive because those I find have already been victimized. Such disrupted nest sites are usually located in sandy places with clusters of broken white egg shells scattered about. A close look at the prints identifies the culprit.

One nest that has so far escaped becoming an egg omelet for these light-fingered fur-bearers, is a snapping turtle's clutch near our house. A last ritual every night is to put a wire cage with heavy rock weights over the site.

There's a fine balance here. While the raccoons are busy searching for turtle eggs, they're allowing the wild ducks to hatch.

There is always speculation as to why animals have certain colors or features. In the case of the raccoon, it's thought the black mask cuts down the glare when foraging beside a stream, much the same as a football or baseball player applying shadow under his eyes.

The tail rings also stand out against the greyish-brown body fur, signalling a mate or its young.

While the raccoon population nose-dived after a severe distemper outbreak several years ago, there's no shortage of them now. Trappers in the Carleton Place district, for example, harvested close to 2,800 during the past season. The average pelt price is about thirty-five dollars.

The switch to corn from other crops in some parts of Ontario, has been a boon to these sometimes mischievous and often playful creatures that can grow in access of thirty pounds apiece.

The Tribune

ESTABLISHED 1888

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DISPLAY ADVERTISING DEPT: Lois Wiseman
REAL ESTATE CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING: Joan Marshman
DISTRIBUTION: Doreen Deacon
NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE: Metroland Corporate Sales 493-1300

Published every Wednesday by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing at 54 Main St. Stouffville, Ont. Tel. 640-2100. Single copies 50¢, subscriptions \$17.00 per year in Canada, \$47.50 elsewhere. Member of Canadian Community Newspapers Association, Ontario Weekly Newspaper Association, Ontario Press Council and Suburban Newspaper of America. Second class mail registration number 0896.

The Stouffville Tribune is one of the Metroland group of suburban newspapers which includes The Action 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 Milton Champion; The Mississauga News; The Newmarket Era; The Willowdale Mirror; Oakville Beaver; Oakville Friday Beaver; Oakville Whirly This Week; Oakville Whirly This Weekend; The Richmond Hill Liberal; Thornhill Liberal; The Scarborough Mirror; The Markham Economist and Sun and Woodbridge Liberal; Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing is a division of Harlequin Enterprises Ltd.

640-2100

649-2292

Editorials Priceless commodity

A property with a polluted well is worthless until the situation is corrected.

In the Ballantrae area of Whitchurch-Stouffville, 76 wells have been, or are being tested for contaminants. Forty-one of these have been condemned while 28 others are listed as "not desirable."

Property devaluation is one thing. This can be rectified.

Health problems are another. The risks are great.

Where a well, any well, is suspect, residents should be advised NOT to use the water.

But for how long? This is the question members of Council want answered.

If the situation facing home-owners at Ballantrae is comparable to that of residents in Claremont, we'd suggest a long, long time. The Claremont situation has been going on over two years with no solution yet in sight.

While Public Health authorities of the Region of York and officials of the Provincial Environment Ministry have amassed a volume of facts and figures on the Ballantrae case, we're mystified

by two missing links with respect to Friday's meeting. One relates to an incomplete test-drill report, particularly with wells tapping into the middle and lower aquifers. The other was the absence of a representative from the Ministry of Transport. Since it's a known fact that highway salt is a main pollutant, an official from that Department should certainly have attended.

As for an immediate permanent solution, forget it. The Environment Ministry doesn't have the money and neither does the Town. At this time of year, home-owners too might find additional funds in short supply.

The main requirement, as Chief Administrative Officer Edward Lundman pointed out, is to submit an application prior to the Oct. 1 deadline so money can be allocated in 1986.

In the meantime, residents with suspect wells must buy their water and keep the bills.

Who will pay? Directly or indirectly, we all will. But who can put a dollar figure on pure water. It's a priceless commodity.

Paying for stupidity

Two fire vehicles and two police cruisers were dispatched to a private demolition derby, Sunday, near the intersection of Conc. 5, (Warden Avenue), and the Stouffville Road.

While the alarm wasn't called in by any of the participants, the fact one car burst into flames was reason enough for someone to summon assistance.

So, who pays? The same people who keep on paying for others stupidity.

From what we've been able to learn, this high-risk event was held without authority. Few, if any precautionary safeguards were taken. Organizers are for-

tunate no one was seriously injured or killed.

Town Council is continually criticized for negative attitudes. Most of us feel we're over-regulated and over-legislated. However, if the green light was granted every request, major problems would result. If there were no regulations, chaos would occur.

Had organizers of Sunday's derby asked permission, they undoubtedly would have been turned down. So it was held without approval and the municipality was called in "after the fact."

It was obviously an error on someone's part for which he or she should pay.

Town needs a motto

Our Town needs a motto. While the recommendation has prompted little interest among the general populace, we're convinced an identifiable feature is required.

Other municipalities have one, why not Whitchurch-Stouffville?

To this end, Mayor Tom Wood has a suggestion—"The Friendliest Town in Ontario. We like it. It's all encompassing. It stirs community pride. And it's true. A

survey, conducted recently, indicated we are indeed "the friendliest town in Ontario."

Through The Tribune, Mayor Wood puts his suggestion forward as just that—a suggestion. He wants to know what others think and so do we.

So please let us know. If you agree, say so. If you don't, then offer alternatives. We feel the motto's ordination should be made part of our Festival program in 1986.