

Weekender

Comment

Tragedy can be avoided

A six-year-old boy is dead. Another man lies injured in hospital. A family's heart is broken and another man's life has a scar that won't heal.

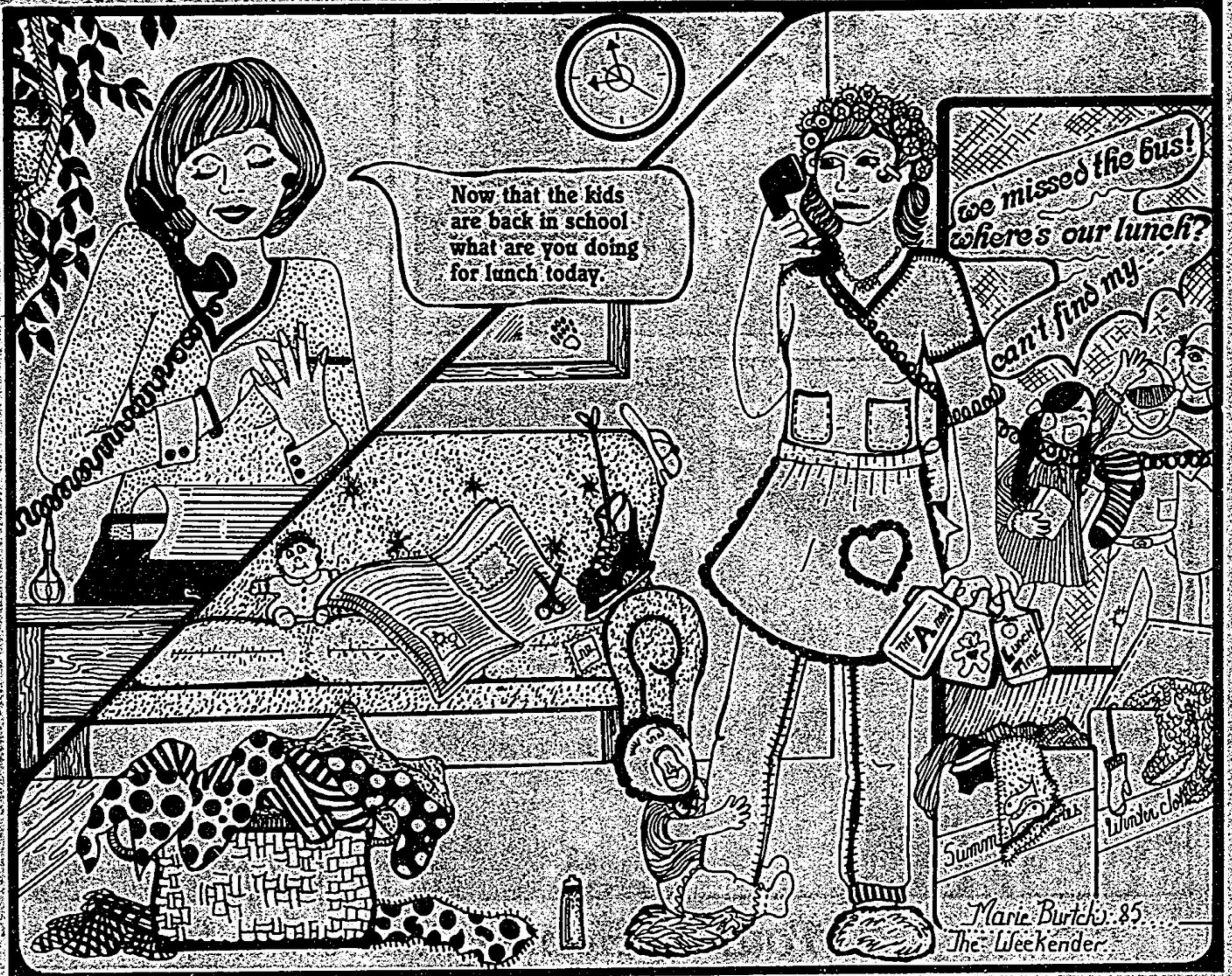
That, pretty well, sums up the tragedy that occurred last week on Hwy. 48 when a Markham man, who had had too much to drink, swerved from the northbound to the southbound lanes causing a head-on crash. Naturally, the perpetrator of this unthinkable crime managed to escape without serious physical injury, but isn't that usually the way?

What do we, as society, have to do, to get it through some peoples' skulls, that drinking and driving don't mix? It seems no end of carnage and death can alter the course of those bent on the destruction of themselves and others, so its about time the courts in this country, woke up. Society demands it.

Maybe the legislative bodies in this country should try the following on for size:

- Conviction of impaired driving, first time, a one-year jail term, a \$5,000 fine and a three-year licence suspension. A second conviction, a two-year prison sentence and a lifetime licence suspension.
- Should an accident take place, with no loss of life or serious injury, and be proven the fault of the impaired driver, double the preceding penalties and charge the driver with impaired.
- Should an impaired driver be the cause of an accident causing death or serious injury, a five-year jail sentence (no parole or time off for good behavior), a \$25,000 fine and a lifetime licence suspension.

Maybe those type of penalties won't completely stop drinking and driving, but they will sure make people stop and think. At least while they're serving time, they won't be on the roads jeopardizing the lives of others.



Speaking Out

Do you think the provincial government should allow beer and wine to be sold in grocery stores? (Asked at Stouffville Plaza and the Markham Dominion Store at Hwy. 7 and McCowan Rd.)



Freda Poplar
Sales Rep
Unionville
"It certainly should. I think the distribution should be taken away from the government as such. I don't think it would affect prices the way everyone thinks it would."



Leonard Spatola
Hair Stylist
Scarborough
"I disagree with it. It would contribute to a shabbier lifestyle in Ontario. Toronto would turn into another Buffalo. Then where would it stop?"



Helen Vutskos
Store owner
Unionville
"If anyone could go to the store and get it, it would draw younger people towards drinking and they would end up drinking more. We should think more about the future."



John Deshaies
Woodworker
Toronto
"Yes I think they should. It would give the average store owner a chance to make a little more money and not just the government."

Weekender Mailbag

'Star Wars decision is victory for Canada'

Dear Sir,
On Saturday, Sept. 7, Brian Mulroney announced that the Canadian government formally rejected the offer by the United States to participate in Star Wars research. We who count ourselves as members of the international peace movement applaud this part of the Prime Minister's statement.
It is important to realize that this decision was arrived at because people all across Canada clearly stated their opposition to this country's participation in the latest scenario of nuclear madness.
There are many scientific experts who have spoken out against the concept of Star Wars and against Canada's participation in it. But most of those who addressed the government on this issue were "non-expert" citizens, some of them your neighbors and fellow workers, like Margaret Searle and Doris Schwar of Markham, who spoke before

the Parliamentary Committee.
When the headline in the Toronto Star states, "Mulroney rejects Star Wars", understand that this is saying, that Canadians have rejected Star Wars.
I know that many of you who have agreed with the goals of the peace movement in the past have felt powerless to act when faced with the immensity of the arsenal of nuclear weapons now present in our world.
I have been told of the futility of writing letters, of going on peace marches, of trying to fight against something so enormous. The recent Canadian decision on Star Wars research is an example of how people can influence government.
Futility lies not with action but with non-action, in the surrender to the false belief that we as individuals cannot shape our own destiny.
Julia Graham Benkofsky
Unionville

Economist & Sun

The Tribune

9 Heritage Rd.
Markham,
L3P 1M3
294-2200
495-9440
640-2100
649-2292

Weekender

BRUCE ANNAN
Publisher

DON BERNARD
JIM THOMAS
Editors

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DISTRIBUTION DEPARTMENT — Vicki Durfield, Sandra Marrier, Doreen Deacon.

Distribution Dept. 294-8244
640-2100

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