

Erin's letter to Town prompts discussion

STOUFFVILLE — Recreation needs of young people aren't being met in Stouffville, according to a 13-year-old resident.

Erin Wilson, Church Street North, has been attending classes at King City Public School for the past three years. Consequently, her closest friends don't live in this community. For her, there's little to do in town.

Back in January, Erin wrote to Mayor Fran Sainsbury, complaining about lack of activities for boys and girls her age.

At a Culture and Recreation Committee meeting, April 15, the letter was included on the agenda. After some discussion, Chairman Wilf Morley agreed to meet with Erin and discuss the matter further. Committee members agreed there aren't enough programs for teens in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

During an interview at her home, Erin told The Tribune: "There really isn't any way to get together with other kids; to make new friends."

She explained: "Teen dances aren't good for meeting new people because most don't attend alone."

Erin admits she spends con-

siderable time watching television when she's not busy doing homework. She points out, however, she'd rather be doing something else—like roller-skating.

An avid swimmer, she says there are only a few months in the year she can use the local pool. In colder weather, she goes to Markham or another community with an indoor facility.

Living with her sister, Sarah, 11, and parents, John and Susanne, Erin spends many hours with fantasy books.

"After three years of not doing very much and complaining about it, my parents suggested I write the mayor," she said.

Her letter follows:

Your Honor:
I am a girl of 13 years of age and I live in Stouffville. I am taking a special education program in King City. I've been taking this program for three years and all my friends live in Aurora and Oak Ridges.

My parents and I have been investigating the local recreation facilities and have found them to be extremely minimal. If you do not skate and do not feel the arcade is an appropriate place to

hang out, your only option is the Summitview Youth Club dances.

It's very hard to find anything to do in this town. More than once I've been forced to go to Aurora to see a movie or go roller-skating with my friends.

For once I thought the Town was going to respond to what the people wanted by turning the old arena into a roller rink. I guess I was wrong. Stouffville really needs more storage room.

When I have written to other people of high status in Stouffville, all I've received in return is a list of all the sports and Brownie related leisure activities available. I have been involved with many of these activities, but I don't think many of the teens in this town appreciate such facilities.

I believe I'm speaking for many other teenagers and children who have not voiced their opinions. Please try to do something about this situation.

Sincerely,
Erin Wilson

Erin's mother said: "It's not often children are listened to. She commended Council members for their interest."



Veteran firefighter honored on retirement

It was 25 years ago that Grant Turner, (centre), joined the Stouffville Volunteer Fire Department. Following his announced retirement last month, he was honored by the Town and the fire-fighting fraternity including fire committee

chairman, Councillor Ron Robb, (left), and former deputy-chief Fred Castle, now of Sutton. Grant was presented with a Town Crest and a gold watch.

—Chris Shanahan

"Adopt a grandparent"

Pupils love project

DICKSON'S HILL — Grade 1 and 2 students at Dickson's Hill Public School are embarking on a new experience. They're going to "adopt" grandparents from Parkview Home.

Teacher Dorothy Good said she came up with the idea "while visiting with several friends at the Home, a few weeks ago."

On April 29, students will go to Parkview and present poetry, music and plays. Afterwards, each child will meet his/her "adopted" grandparent. For the

rest of the school year, the children will write letters and draw pictures for their new family member.

Ms. Good said "next year, we hope to get some of the seniors to come to the school. The pupils would like to read to them—they love an audience."

She wants to have the students and seniors "adopt" each other in September next year and eventually extend the program to include the children in Grade 3.

The parents Ms. Good has

spoken with have all been in favor of the "adopt a grandparent" idea. So have the people at the Home.

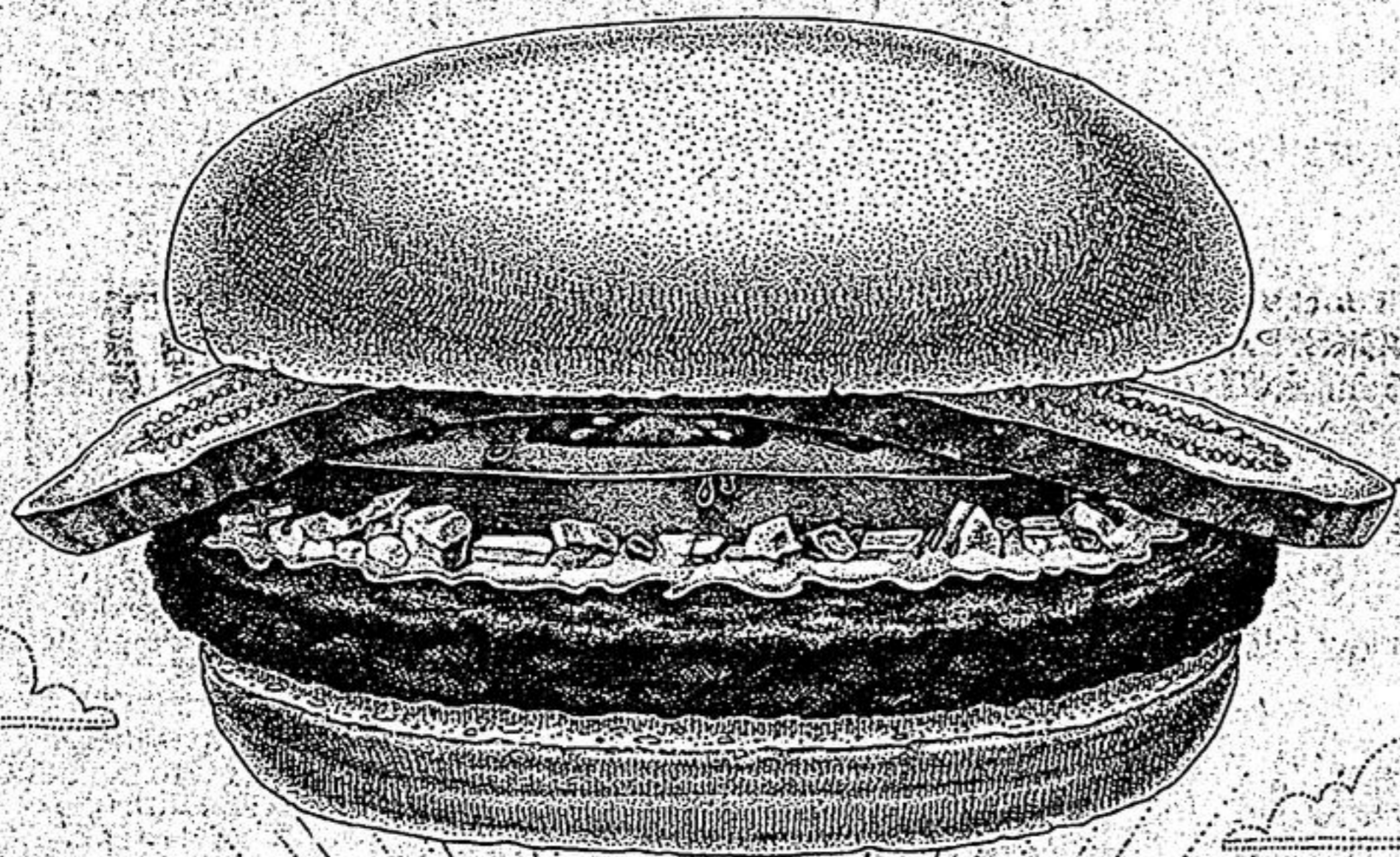
Holly Dart, one of the students, said she likes the idea "because I like to meet new people."

Another student, Kelly Bell, added "everytime I meet a new person I like to give them hugs and kisses."

Student Heather Kennedy said "there's lots of fun things we can do—like playing games."

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