

Weekender

Comment

Country fair is coming

There's a nip in the air. The leaves are starting to turn color on some trees. And Markham Fair is just around the corner.

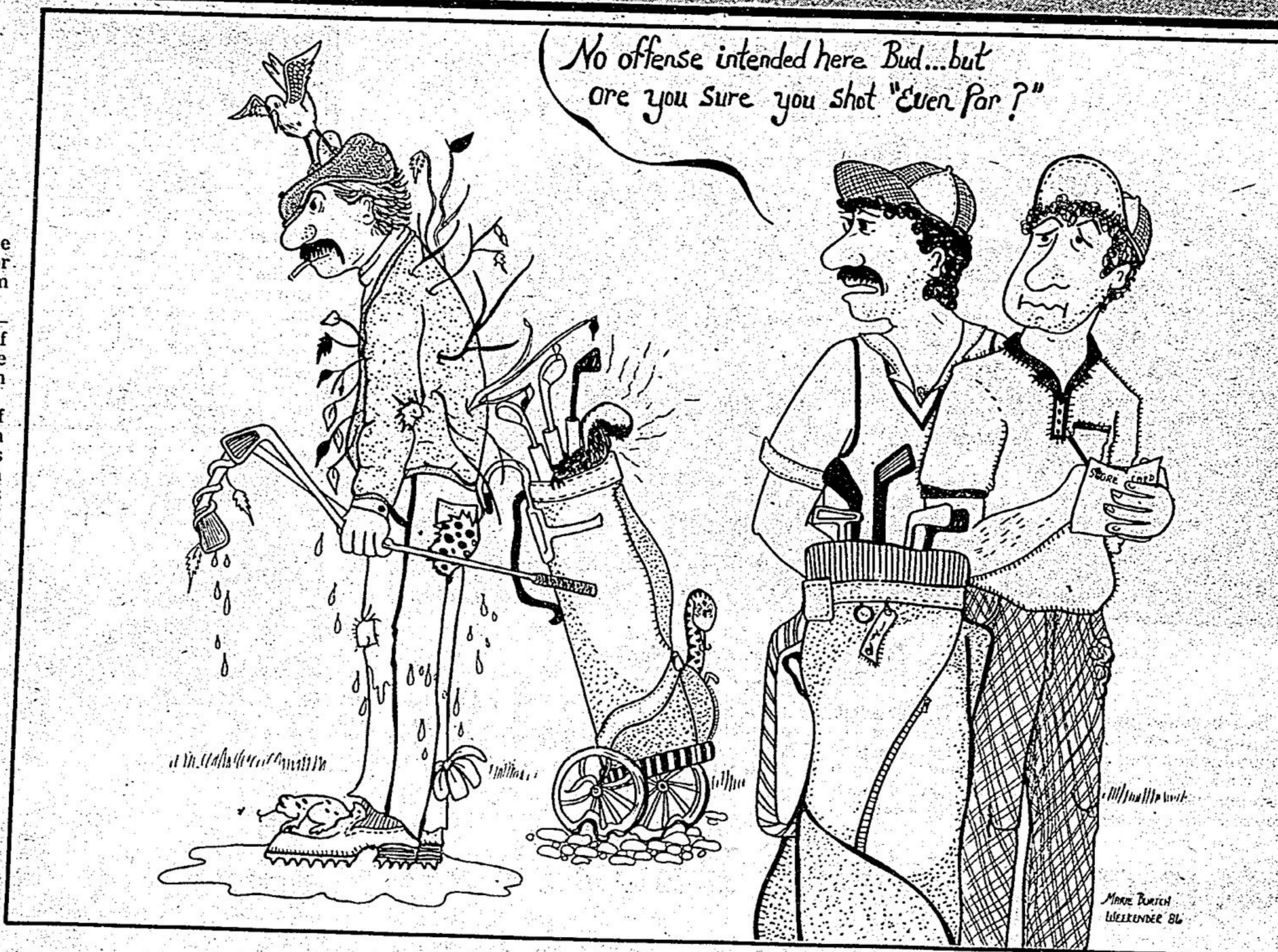
This year, the annual fair — probably the best country fair of its kind in Ontario — starts on the evening of Oct. 1 and concludes on Sunday, Oct. 5.

Although a traditional kind of event, with the usual things such as livestock shows, tractor pulls and harness racing, Markham Fair is much more than that. It is hundreds of volunteers working like beavers to put on a first rate show.

Entertainment and participation go hand in hand at Markham Fair. Got a pretty baby — well depending on her age she can be entered in the Baby Contest or Miss Markham Fair contest.

And there's fun too at the Markham Fair — the midway and games of chance, samples in the food tent and Old McDonald's Barn where children and adults can learn about farm animals and actually touch them.

Markham Fair keeps us in touch with our roots. It's as much a part of our autumn ritual as pumpkin pie, bobbying for apples and harvest time. Mark it on your calendar, it's worth a visit.



Green rare in new subdivisions

Kermit the frog was right. It's not easy being green. Or getting green, as those people who have just moved into a newly constructed subdivision home would attest.

For these folks, there is a certain justification for modifying the old "grass is always greener" cliché to read "The grass is always greener...when you don't have any."

Developers have come to see the laying of sod for a new house as having the same importance as any basic adjustment, such as a dead hydro outlet in the garage, something that can be dealt with at a later date.

If you have never occupied a brand new dwelling, you will be unable to sympathize with the myriad of poor souls in Markham, Unionville, and Stouffville who have recently joined the ranks of the grassless majority.

No big deal, you reply? That's easy to say when one has always been able to feel that soft green lushness under foot whenever



they have stepped out into the yard.

It's sort of like knowing there will always be peanut butter on the shelves every time you go to the grocery store.

But take away this natural carpet of green, and suddenly the experience is one of incredible disorientation, a form of deprivation that borders on the unendurable.

And one by one, we are all falling prey to it. Never has York Region seen such a glut of new homes. In case you hadn't noticed, we're not "country" anymore.

A new house has become like a new car, in that every self re-

specting Yuppie simply must have one. Once moved in, however, the bloom is quickly off the rose when those expensive towels that you bought for the new ensuite bathroom start looking like the ones in the Tide commercial. Yes, kids really do love dirt. Suddenly, those green grass stains on your eight year old's pants don't seem so bad, when compared to mud paths ground into your upgraded carpet.

When the sod does finally arrive, it's like a long awaited rain after a drought, like spring after a forbidding winter.

In fact, some people become so delirious with joy that they tem-

porarily lose the rationality that normally governs their behaviour.

I cite the case of a Markham man, who must, of necessity, remain nameless. I'm sure he's suffered enough already.

This guy was so excited when his grass was installed that he immediately bounded over to his brother-in-law's garage, next door, and borrowed his weed spraying apparatus. His was to be the perfectly attended lawn. After treating his own yard, he continued on over to do his brother-in-law's as well, sporting fellow that he was.

Only to find as he was putting the equipment away that what he had applied to both lawns was kill-all. Your basic suburban version of Agent Orange. Nuclear soil has got nothing on this stuff!

A call to the chemical manufacturer confirmed his worst fears. The guy at the plant just couldn't believe that anyone could actually miss the caution signs placed

all over the label! Such are the powers of perception of a man who has just rediscovered the thrill of green grass.

The poor unfortunate was told to roll up the new sod at once, and to pray all night that the chemical hadn't permeated the soil below. Apparently, this stuff takes 5 years to run its course.

And, just like bricks, sod is in short supply right now, with all the houses being built in the area. Our victim may remain grassless for some time to come. Unless his wife forces him to go with astro-

turf. So if you have any friends or relatives who are suffering from "new house no-green", show some compassion and invite them over. Don't be disturbed when you find them wandering aimlessly in your back yard, staring at the ground.

But whatever you do, don't let them offer to help you spray for weeds.

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Weekender

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