

Weekender

# Comment

## Highway curve is a danger

Something has to be done about the intersection and curve at Hwy 7 and the 9th Line. It must be one of the most dangerous spots in this area.

Last Saturday, one woman was killed and well-known Markham politician and businessman Ron Fenson was seriously injured in a head-on collision on the S-curve just west of Locust Hill. It was just under a year ago that a similar accident claimed the life of a Scarborough man at the same location.

There are two problems with the curve. Firstly, there is virtually no visibility around the bend. If a car is drifting over the centre line, it is impossible to see until the very last moment.

The other problem is the speed limit. It should be cut by at least 10 km/hour. That way, there would be less chance of a vehicle misjudging the curve at high speed and drifting into the oncoming lane of traffic.

More and bigger signs warning about the curve would also be a help. We hope the Ministry of Transportation and Communications takes a close look at the curve — it needs immediate attention before someone else is killed there.



## Prayers, determination helped Tim

I ran into 12-year-old Tim Lavell on Stouffville's Main St. the other day and did a double take. The crutches were gone. He stood there eating pizza with his buddies, a grin on his face. He was just one of the boys — again.

Normalcy can't be fully appreciated until you have endured the depths of devastation, frustration, confusion and fear; and come up on the other side intact. That's exactly what little Tim Lavell and his family have done.

Last March, Tim and his dad were skiing when Tim fell and pulled a hamstring. Usually, that's something you can brag about, the type of injury real athletes suffer.

Little did the Lavells know that a nightmare had begun which would push the family to the limits of its endurance.

For some reason, the pain wouldn't go away. Weeks went by, and the doctor was suggesting that perhaps it was all in Tim's head — until the day the youth was rushed to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children in a state of shock.



Tim's foot was paralyzed. His sciatica nerve was almost totally compressed. Whether or not the pulled hamstring had anything to do with the massive haematoma that had developed may never be known, but somehow one-third of Tim's entire blood supply had leaked into his leg.

Surgery was performed immediately. And, while everyone sat back and waited for healing to occur, no answer could be found as to what had caused the condition.

Several months later, the surgeon would say that it was the worst haematoma he had ever encountered and that the deterioration in

the leg was equivalent to being hit by a car going 40 miles per hour.

A week after the operation, Tim went back to the hospital to have his stitches removed. Routine. Until it was discovered that he had developed another haematoma — once again with no visible cause.

A battery of tests was conducted to try and find out just what was going on — biopsies, catskans, angiograms, you name it. Three loads of radioactive dye were flushed through Tim's system. Still nothing.

Panic set in. Phil and Loretta Lavell were consumed with fear of the unknown. What would the doc-

tors eventually find?

The only one who didn't lose his cool was Tim. He was going to beat it, whatever it was. A second operation was considered, then rejected because of the danger of bleeding.

So they waited, and waited. A lot of sleep was lost. Loretta's hair started to fall out because of worry.

A lot of prayers were said by friends and strangers alike. Magic that kind of power. That, along with Tim's refusal to give up, and his imagining himself on the ski slopes again in true Norman Vincent Peale fashion.

Gradually, healing began. There were no new complications. Subconsciously, Phil and Loretta were waiting for the other shoe to fall. It didn't.

By June the last haematoma had completely cleared up, and the long climb back began. Physiotherapy was started in an attempt to rebuild the now withered limb.

It would be a long haul, such was

the deterioration that had occurred. And, there were no guarantees that Tim would walk again, let alone ski, skate and run. No one knew. Except Tim.

His improvement amazed everybody. He was told that he could ride his bike again — as long as he didn't fall. How does a mother who is already a bundle of nerves handle that one?

But Tim wouldn't be held back. He rode that bike to school, crutches strapped to the frame. At his dad's company picnic, he dropped the crutches to join in the three-legged race, making it solo hobbling along on his good leg.

Phil and Loretta watched in fearful anticipation. Tim won the race.

And now, there he is walking on Main St. with his friends. Sure, there's still a way to go yet. But Tim Lavell is back. The ordeal is over.

You see, even in 1986, some stories have a happy ending.

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The Tribune

9 Heritage Rd.,

Markham,

L3P 1M3

294-2200

495-9440

640-2100

649-2292

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