

# Liberal largess is ironic

On Thursday, the Ontario Liberal government put smiles on the faces of school board trustees in York Region by announcing more than \$88 million in spending on new schools in the Region.

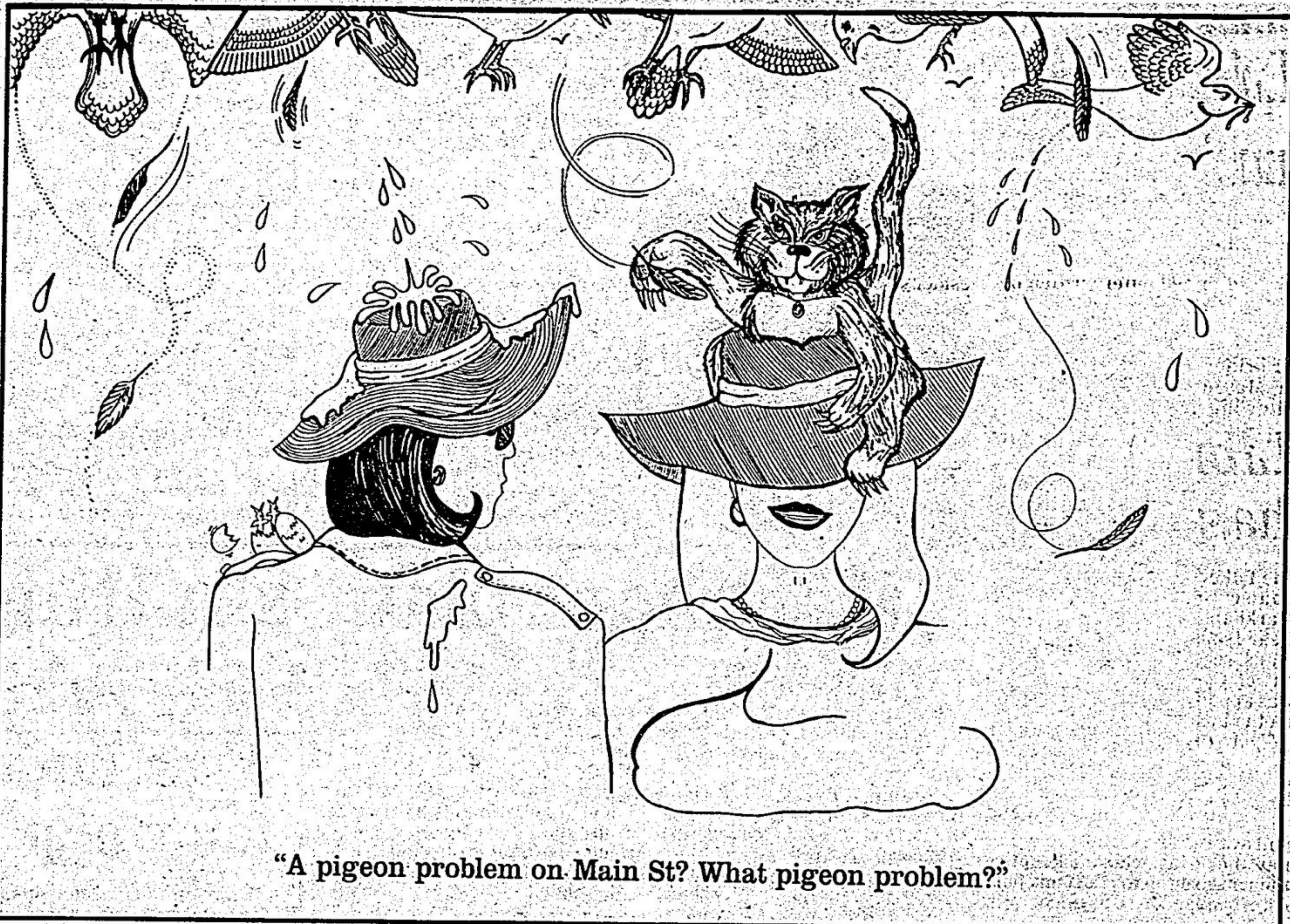
No doubt the schools are badly needed. Overcrowding is endemic in places like Markham which are growing rapidly. But there is more here than meets the eye.

The Liberal largess, an obvious prelude to a provincial election, is made possible because the previous Progressive Conservative administration held money tight during the previous decade.

And, the upturn in the Ontario economy which has brought about a government surplus, is not the result of current government policies. Things were already on the upturn when the Liberals took power two years ago and they're now reaping the windfall.

If the Liberals win the next provincial election, they can thank good management and stringent policies of the Tories who went before them. What an ironic twist of fate.

— Don Bernard



# Real editors just don't watch Leafs

At first I thought I'd been had, the victim of a masterful con by Stouffville Tribune/Weekender editor Jim Thomas.

After all, Jim is reputed for the effectiveness with which he is able to keep his ear to the ground.

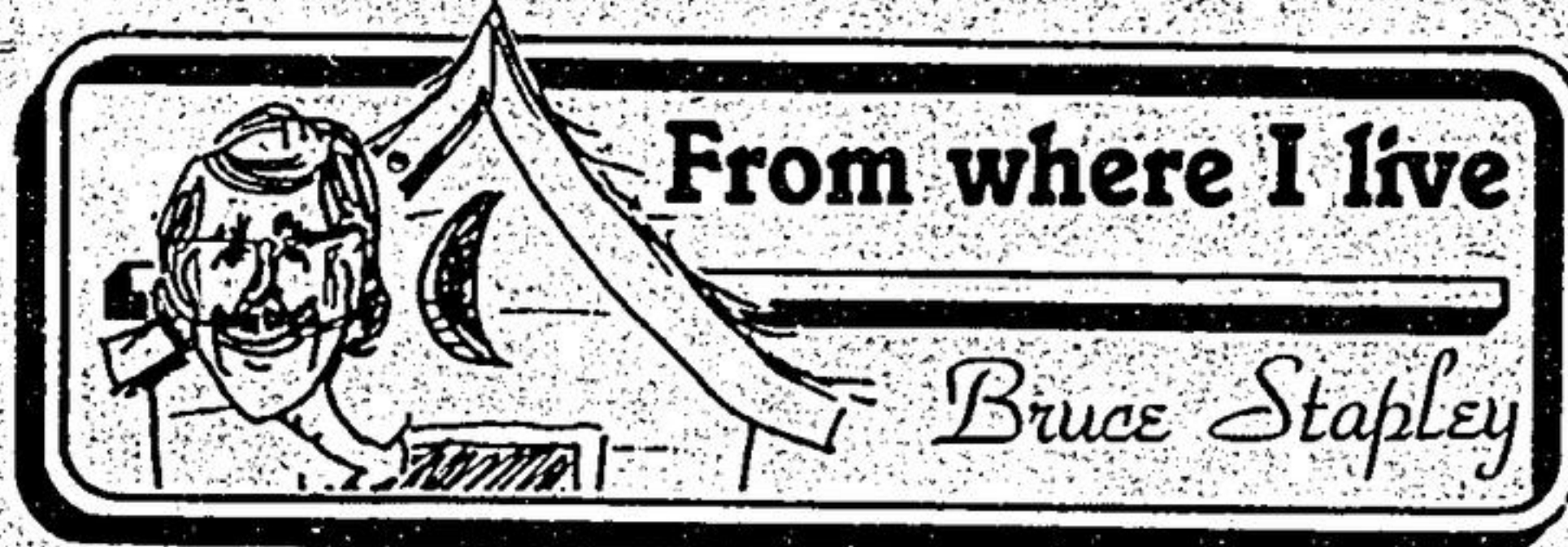
But, I muttered to myself, how on earth could he have known when he called me last Monday morning that I'd been up all hours Sunday night at an "old neighborhood" reunion, and that I just might not have enough wits about me to say no to an assignment for that evening.

It wasn't until an hour, and two or three cups of coffee later, that I began to feel the sting.

There was no way a sports junkie like Jim Thomas was going to head out to Ballantrae on a rainy night to watch a ratepayers group plan a strategy when he could trick me into doing it.

He would then be free to stay home and watch the boys of April, the Maple Leafs, on television.

So I drove to the community centre and went sulkingly about



the business of listening to the ratepayers berate the town plan. But my mind wasn't there.

It was in Jim Thomas' living room, where I could clearly envision him sitting there, feet up on the ottoman, downing cheesies and root beer as he watched the Leafs chase the holy grail that is the division championship.

Driving back to the Tribune office to file my story, I tuned in the game on my car radio. 2-1 for Detroit. Well into the third period.

As I made the swing around Musselman's Lake, the Leafs tied it up. I almost drove into the water.

I again thought of Jim getting to

actually see this goal scored while I had to be content listening to a crazed announcer trip all over his words in excitement.

I pulled up in front of the Trib office and walked in. To my surprise, there was Jim Thomas sitting at his desk, working on a story.

It turns out Jim lives at the office every Monday night, well into the wee hours, hockey game or not.

Yes, the game was crackling away on an old radio in an adjoining room, competing with the short wave set that keeps Jim informed of the whereabouts of the town fire department.

"Looks like overtime," he said, eyes still fixed upon his work.

"Yeah." I replied, trying to hide my feelings of guilt for having thought all those terrible things about this dedicated newspaperman.

We both went about our tasks and I reflected upon the strange nature of the newspaper business. The radio continued to carry the strained play-by-play of what had become a game of games.

Here was a night I wouldn't soon forget, I thought, as I tried to apply my mind to my work, eyes on my scribbled notes, ears on the blaring radio.

"Want a coffee?" Jim asked.

"I'm going to get one."

"Sure." I answered. "Regular."

And it was while he was gone that Mike Allison stuffed the puck ever so barely into the Detroit goal, making dramatic winners of the Leafs, and causing the radio to distort due to the thunderous response of the fans.

Thirty seconds later, Jim came

back through the office door, coffee in hand.

"You just missed it!" I blurted excitedly.

"What happened?" he asked in most eager anticipation.

"It's over. They won."

"No!" he exclaimed in disbelief.

I felt even guiltier now. Not only was poor Jim not watching the game in the comfort of his own living room, he had even missed the euphoric rush that overcomes a fan the moment his team snatches a playoff game in overtime.

I finished my story, said good-night to Jim, and headed out into the midnight air. As I left, an Elvis Presley classic filled the same airwaves that minutes before had carried all the excitement Jim had missed.

The play-by-play boys had gone home to bed. I was going home to bed.

But for Jim Thomas, it was just another Monday night.

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The Tribune

9 Heritage Rd.,

Markham,

L3P 1M3

294-2200

495-9440

640-2100

649-2292

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BRUCE ANNAN  
Publisher

DON BERNARD  
JIM THOMAS  
Editors

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT — News Editor-Jo Ann Stevenson. Reporters: Paula Crowell, Steve Houston, Chris Shanahan, Alan Shackleton, Paul Pivato. Sports Editor-Frank King. Photography-Sjoerd Witteveen, Bill Lanning.

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Distribution Dept. 294-8244  
640-2100

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