

Weekender

Comment

Crunch on for church properties

Churches are prohibited in Markham's outlying areas — lands designated in town are often too expensive for church congregations and some urban sites are being contested by neighbors.

Affordable accessible church sites are at a premium. What's more, Metro has its eye on Markham sites to serve its burgeoning congregational needs.

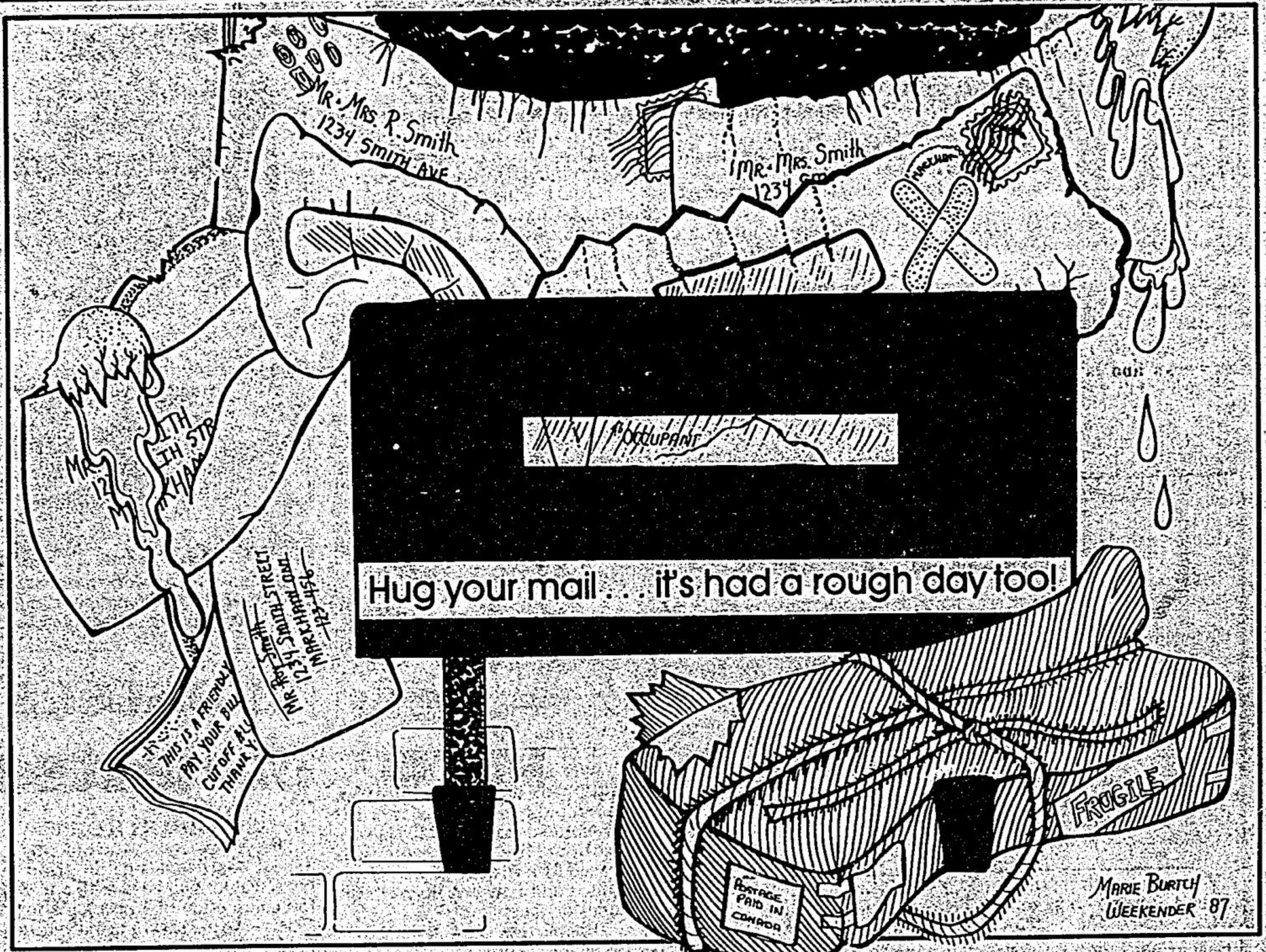
A task force will study religious needs and pave the way for consistent policies about church locations and applications.

Churches pay no property tax but let's not forget they make good urban neighbors — they provide inexpensive weekday space for community activities, go lightly on traffic congestion, noise and pollution. Most of our social service programs were initiated by churchmen and women.

The neighborhood church is part of the stuff our communities are made strong on.

Let's not let pressures of urban congestion force churches into the hinterlands. We should make whatever sacrifices necessary to welcome community churches as good neighbors.

— Jo Ann Stevenson



Uxbridge mishap leaves victim thankful

As I looked at a recent photograph of Steve Navritil and his fiancée on the beach in Acapulco, smiling and relaxed, I reflected on the fact of how it is so often the case that it takes a tragedy to make us aware of so much that is good around us.

At this moment, Steve lies on his back in a room at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. The arm that was severed so brutally in an accident involving a gravel screening machine is reacting well to the aftermath of the seven hour operation which so successfully reattached the limb.

Shoulder and elbow function is expected to return. With a little luck, Steve may regain some use of his hand.

But one thing is certain. Steve won't accept defeat.

For this Stouffville resident is possessed of the toughest sinew, a

From Where I Live

Bruce Stapley

stubborn fighting spirit. Yes, he's got "guts".

"Just tell me I've got one per cent of a chance," he told the doctors after the operation, "and I'll do the rest."

His mom has nothing but admiration for her son. The owner of her own gravel business, Mrs. Navritil has spent each day since the accident at the hospital. Everything else has been put on hold. Thanksgiving Day saw her putting together a take out turkey

dinner that she would take from her kitchen to Steve at the hospital.

He doesn't think much of hospital food, she says. But mom's cooking is an entirely different story. Especially when there's lots of mashed potatoes and gravy.

Steve is anxious to get on with the business of day to day living. He says he's always worked because he enjoys it, not because he has to. The true entrepreneur, he owns a few trucks and runs a

gravel processing business. His first love is working with equipment and machinery. But he realizes he'll have to let that go for a while. No problem. He'll just spend more time on the sales end of things.

Steve looks forward to the endless hours of therapy, realizing that much will depend on his determination and perseverance. Sure, there'll be "down" days and setbacks. But there's a challenge out there that he wants to tackle.

And above all else, Steve Navritil is grateful. Grateful for the employee whose quick reaction saved his life. Grateful for the combined efforts of the local ambulance people, the volunteer fire department, the staff at Uxbridge Hospital and the boys who flew the chopper that took him through turbulence safely to St. Mikes.

He's also extremely thankful

for recent advances in the field of microsurgery. Fifteen years ago, it would have been impossible to attempt the type of operation that the team of eight specialists performed so capably on him.

Remarkably, Steve insists that he won't tremble if he's ever to come face to face with the machine whose powerful rollers literally looked him in the face as he fought so valiantly to keep from being pulled within the apparatus.

Ironically, it was his perfectionist tendencies that caused the accident to happen. He had finished replacing a section of the belt that had worn out, and was making adjustments of a strictly cosmetic nature, when the device grabbed him.

But despite the whole painful ordeal, Steve Navritil is positive and forward looking. He's drawn the line. And he intends to hold his ground.

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