

Markham Heating
 & AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS
 191 Wellington St. E. Unit 7
 Markham
 471-1748
 Craftsmanship
A Fine Tradition

Tribune Community FOCUS

Doug Hackert
 640-5339
Stouffville Aluminum Siding & Windows
 Specializing in Replacement doors and windows

Serving Whitchurch-Stouffville, Uxbridge and area

A Metroland Community Newspaper

Wednesday, April 13, 1988

Surgery and rehabilitation save limb

Steve's picking up after arm severed

By BRUCE STAPLEY
 Steve Navratil is picking up the pieces after a near-fatal accident which almost robbed him of the use of his right arm. He's spent a lot of time trying to get back to normal at his business, City-Wide Outdoor Services, a gravel trucking and processing business. It's his home away from home on Conc. 3, Uxbridge Twp., north of Goodwood.

Love of life

He admits to being restless, but still satisfied with his progress since the accident last fall when the world came crashing down around his shoulders. "From the start I was determined to regain as much use of the arm as possible," he says. Time spent in hospital and the recovery period at home were tough obstacles to overcome. "I almost went crazy. You become depressed just lying there." For weeks following surgery, Steve was plagued by nightmares. "I was afraid the arm would drop off. It felt like dead weight. I kept holding onto it every

time I got up," he recalls.

Nerve graft

However, thanks to the success of the original operation and a subsequent nerve graft, Steve's made significant progress. "Now, the arm's starting to feel more and more like it's part of me," he says with a smile. "The shoulder feels great too," he claims. "I can swing the arm and my elbow's starting to function." But there's still little feeling or movement in his hand. "Doctors say it may take as long as nine months for me to notice progress in that area," he explains. "I take physiotherapy every day to keep everything pliable." While it still gnaws at him that he can't service and repair his trucks and loaders, he remains involved in a supervisory capacity. "My trucks and equipment are everything to me," Steve states. "I do what I can with my one good arm. I like to be there to make sure everything's going right." Steve's main function before the accident was that of chief mechanic and spare driver.

Positive attitude

"I can't do that now and it's driving me nuts," he says. "It's a difficult adjustment." But with the help of his right-hand man, he makes his presence

felt. "The guys are great," he notes, "they find things for me to do."

Steve maintains a positive attitude. "Progression has been very good. I can see something happening all the time," he claims.

As for the scope of what to expect, Steve says doctors have told him he's fortunate to be so young. "If I'd been 10 years older, it would have been pointless to have even attempted the nerve reattachment," he explains.

He says Dr. Mahoney, chief plastic surgeon at St. Michael's, expects he'll get a relatively good grip back.

"I should have perfect thumb action and the wrist movement should return plus some sense of heat sensation," he explains.

Pain has eased

He's now able to sleep most nights without pain. This improvement, in itself, is a relief, he admits.

Steve credits his mother, Eva, with greatly aiding his recovery. "She visited me in hospital every day, and always brought me food. I think that's the only reason I survived," he jokes.

Steve Navratil agrees he's come a long way since Oct. 9, 1987. He admits too, he still has a long way to go. But if courage and determination are combinations to a complete recovery, he holds the key.



On the road back

Steve Navratil of Stouffville is picking up after a near fatal accident last fall. The 26-year-old businessman caught his arm in a gravel screening device, but it was successfully reattached by doctors at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. Now, he's trying to increase the strength and agility of his arm.

—Jim Thomas

March Break may collide with Easter holiday in '89

CLAREMONT — An early Easter date next year could mean an extended holiday for school children.

Claremont's Lyn Craig wants the 1989 March Break combined with Easter holidays.

She pointed out that students will return to school only four days, then go on holidays again.

"Four days of school sandwiched between two long holidays disrupts classroom instruction," she told a Durham Region Board of Education meeting.

Her protests fell on nine deaf ears. Trustees voted 9-6 against the change.

This means next year's March Break will extend from March 13 to 17. Good Friday is March 24 and Easter Monday, March 27.

Several trustees contended the change would cause confusion among parents.

"We'll get a great deal of flak from the clergy," commented Stephen Sweeney of Oshawa.

Trustee Patty Bowman of Whitby agreed the continuous holiday would take families away from

their churches during Easter.

However, Lorna Murphy of Pickering argued many students wouldn't return to classes for so short a period, (four days).

In York region, the public

school board has agreed to combine the two while the separate board is retaining the present schedule. The separate school board in Durham region is doing the same.

Kitty Galt's goal: A home for everyone

By BRUCE STAPLEY

Kitty Galt is not an activist. She's not looking to bring slum housing to Stouffville and she's definitely not entertaining any notions of running for political office.

But ever since she accepted the position of chairperson of the local Committee for Affordable Housing, the British-born mother of four has emerged as a somewhat controversial figure.

She's been trying to pressure various levels of government to address the issue of the shortage of low-rental housing in the Stouffville area. And she insists that was the furthest thing from her mind when she decided to become involved.

"We are simply trying to put the issue under people's noses," she says of her committee's continuing attempts to initiate action from governments. "We want to pressure council, and educate people as to the type of housing we would like to see made available."

The type of accommodation Kitty and her fellow committee members would like to see would consist of attractively done 'basic' housing, small in scale, but not of an unpleasant appearance.

"It's important for a community to survive, to offer a total range of housing," says Kitty. "There should be options for

young people starting out, 'empty nesters' who want to scale down their house size, and seniors."

The committee is an off-shoot of Christ Church Anglican's outreach group. As its leader, Kitty has been instrumental in bringing attention to the cause and some wonder if she's preparing to enter the political arena.

Not so, says Kitty. "I'm definitely not looking to get into politics," she insists. "I feel you can be much more effective promoting a cause from outside the restrictions of office. This way, we can worry about one concern, and do all we can to promote an overall awareness of what we feel is a great need."

Experienced background

The Committee for Affordable Housing was born last year, in response to the United Nations designation of International Year of Shelter For The Homeless. Kitty's public interest was an extension of her personal concern for homeless people.

While living in Ottawa, she started a home for destitute women in a church hall. She's on the board of Toronto-based Homes For Tomorrow's Society, an organization that has recently seen the completion of a 61-unit building for singles, at an affordable price.

"We always think of bums as being the only ones who live on the streets," says Kitty. "But few people realize that women living on their own with children are the fastest growing group of homeless people."

She laments that while the experts were able to predict such things as potential hydro shortages and the like, housing shortages were not foreseen years ago.

"The divorce, or marriage breakup factor wasn't anticipated," she says. "This has made for a need for two homes where only one was needed previously." The committee has tried to interest town council in the housing



KITTY GALT
 Looking for housing solution
 issue, and there have been frustrations, admits Kitty.

Not simple

"We were initially told that council could request a Housing Statement from the provincial government, for free, and that that would result in an assessment of our housing needs." But it wasn't quite that simple. The province did send someone to a council-in-committee meeting, but she wasn't able to satisfy the

housing committee with her answers. There has been some confusion as to just what directions should be pursued.

In the meantime, Kitty and her group have undertaken their own housing needs study: A questionnaire for Stouffville residents.

"We're trying to show there's a need out there." The reaction hasn't been favorable.

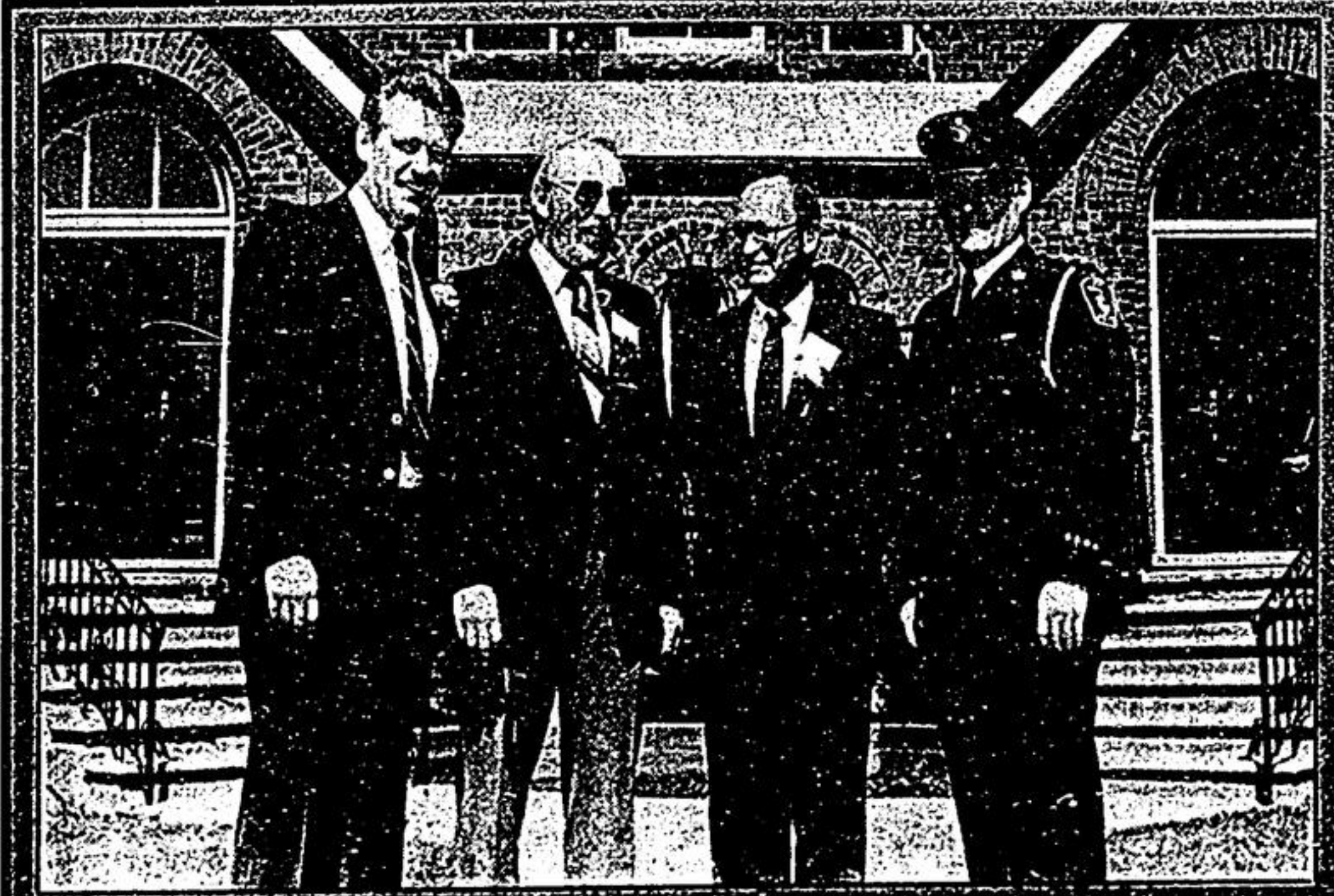
No ghetto housing

"There has been some negative feedback from those who fear the committee is trying to encourage the erection of ghetto-type housing areas in Stouffville," according to Kitty. "There are alternatives to housing ghettos," she insists. "There are some very attractive concepts for decent looking housing on a small scale."

"We want to see council get it started. It must become an election issue. We would like to see a bit of planning down the line. We want to raise the awareness, and make people look further ahead." She says the committee will continue to seek out and present to council, proposals they hope will eventually lead to the housing projects the town requires.

Kitty's interest will continue to be ensuring that everyone in Stouffville has a place to call home.

"Let's face it," she concludes, "we don't live in a climate where shelter is an option."



City Councillors

New
 teen club
 .../C-8

Back to
 nature
 .../C-9

Bruce
 Stapley
 /C-5