

# Comment Page

Stouffville

## Costume Rentals



### Jury still out on plan for court reform

Ontario Attorney General Ian Scott's recent announcement to streamline a court system that has slowed to a crawl in recent years is encouraging.

But while the provincial government recognizes the need for change, this proposal isn't much more than a Band-Aid solution.

Streamlining the court system will save administrative time, but the approach fails to consider the likelihood that the burden on our courts will continue to increase.

We must consider, too, the many cases thrown out of provincial courts because of lengthy delays last year.

If nothing else, that incident illustrated the severity of the crisis.

People who faced a variety of charges, including many for impaired driving, were set free without a trial.

Presumably, most of those people were guilty of the charges they faced.

It is incidents such as these which show there is much more at stake. If our police are to continue doing their jobs effectively, so too must the judicial system.

Clearly, a far-reaching program of judicial reform is needed.

# Short notice given of new arrival

Things happened quickly after the 7 a.m. phone call my wife and I received one recent Saturday morning.

My sister Carol Ann, nearing the due date for her second child, was ready to go.

And just two short hours later she and husband Desi had a new baby girl. I was an uncle again and felt just as proud as the parents.

Caitlin Margaret Overend, seven pounds, came bounding into the world on relatively short notice.

She has 10 perfect fingers, 10 perfect toes and her Dad's cleft chin. And to date, her disposition is downright friendly. Katy rarely cries, and doesn't seem to mind the amateur fumbling of a nervous uncle who is brave enough to hold her.

The phone call came early in the



at random

steve houston

morning as my wife Cheryl and I enjoyed early morning slumbers after a night of entertaining. The answering machine had already clicked on by the time Cheryl found the energy to answer the phone and, listening to it now, we realize it's quite comical.

Carol Ann's first child also came on short notice, and judging by the tone of Desi's voice on the tape recording, he wasn't taking any chances.

Could we come over and baby-sit 2 1/2-year-old Christopher while

they raced to the hospital?

The script of the conversation follows:

Desi (excited and slightly out of breath):

"Carol Ann's water broke a while ago. Can you guys come over? We want to leave quickly."

Cheryl (sleeping):

"Um...yeah. What did you say?"

Desi (more excited, voice rising an octave):

"We have to get going. You know what it was like the last time...she could have it on the floor right here."

Cheryl (still sleeping):

"Okay we'll come over now. Let

me wake Steve up. Is Carol Ann having the baby?"

Desi (very excited now):

"Yes. We have to leave right away. Come over now, okay?"

Cheryl (waking up now):

Okay. Let me wake Steve. We'll come over now, okay?"

Ten minutes later we tumbled in the front door of their house while Desi tried to contain his agitation. Carol Ann, meanwhile, was the picture of coolness, making sure Desi had everything they would need. She would grimace during contractions, but otherwise performed admirably.

Soon after that, my mother arrived from her house in Oshawa, hair tousled and eyes still sleepy.

She rushed the expectant parents into their truck and sent them on their way.

The news of Katy's arrival came shortly thereafter.

When Desi emerged later from

the delivery room, he began making phone calls to tell family and friends of the arrival and celebrated by eating fried chicken and french fries with gravy for breakfast. Honest.

Throughout her pregnancy, Carol Ann had hoped for a girl. And judging by the way this pregnancy agreed with her, it couldn't have been anything but a girl.

With her first child, Carol Ann was the picture grimness. As I recall, she had been transformed into an unpleasant cross between Godzilla and Linda Blair's character in the Exorcist.

Forgive me big sister, but I call 'em as I see 'em.

And for the sake of Desi, Christopher, brothers, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, and mother, we hope you have nothing but girls in the future.

You are having more children, aren't you?

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### Editor's mail

## Reader defends new hospital

Dear Editor,

I have read two letters in our local papers recently which were critical of the new Markham Stouffville Hospital. They asked why we helped with fundraising for a new hospital when they cannot help the sick and needy. I would like to offer a brief answer.

From personal observation, we helped with the fundraising because there was a great need.

In the five months since its opening, I believe thousands have gratefully discovered nurses and doctors who have shown unusual dedication in meeting that need with friendliness, patience and concern.

Now, unless as donors we expected we would be engaging a host of heavenly angels, we readily admit there will always be room for some criticism, but let's be fair.

B. Wallace's complaints concern treatment in the emergency ward. In protesting a wait of two hours for treatment of "a relatively deep cut" on her hand, she said "it was not apparent to my husband and I that the emergency room was busy."

Perhaps it was also not apparent to them that part of the emergency ward, which they were unlikely to see that day, is a monitoring room with three beds.

I have seen one bed occupied by a man admitted with a serious heart condition which a team of doctors and nurses were urgently trying to stabilize, while in another bed there was an elderly woman who had been rushed in with a bleeding ulcer. Her life depended upon stanching the loss of blood and replacing it with repeated transfusions.

The third bed was occupied with a man brought in with serious hemorrhaging of the bowel.

How much medical staff do you think were required to meet these emergencies? None of this would be "evident" to people in the waiting room.

As for the chronic care ward, there is almost always a long waiting list. Doctors and staff regret all the waiting and lack of space. Let us be sympathetic and offer what help we can.

Respectfully yours,  
Leila M. Whitcombe.