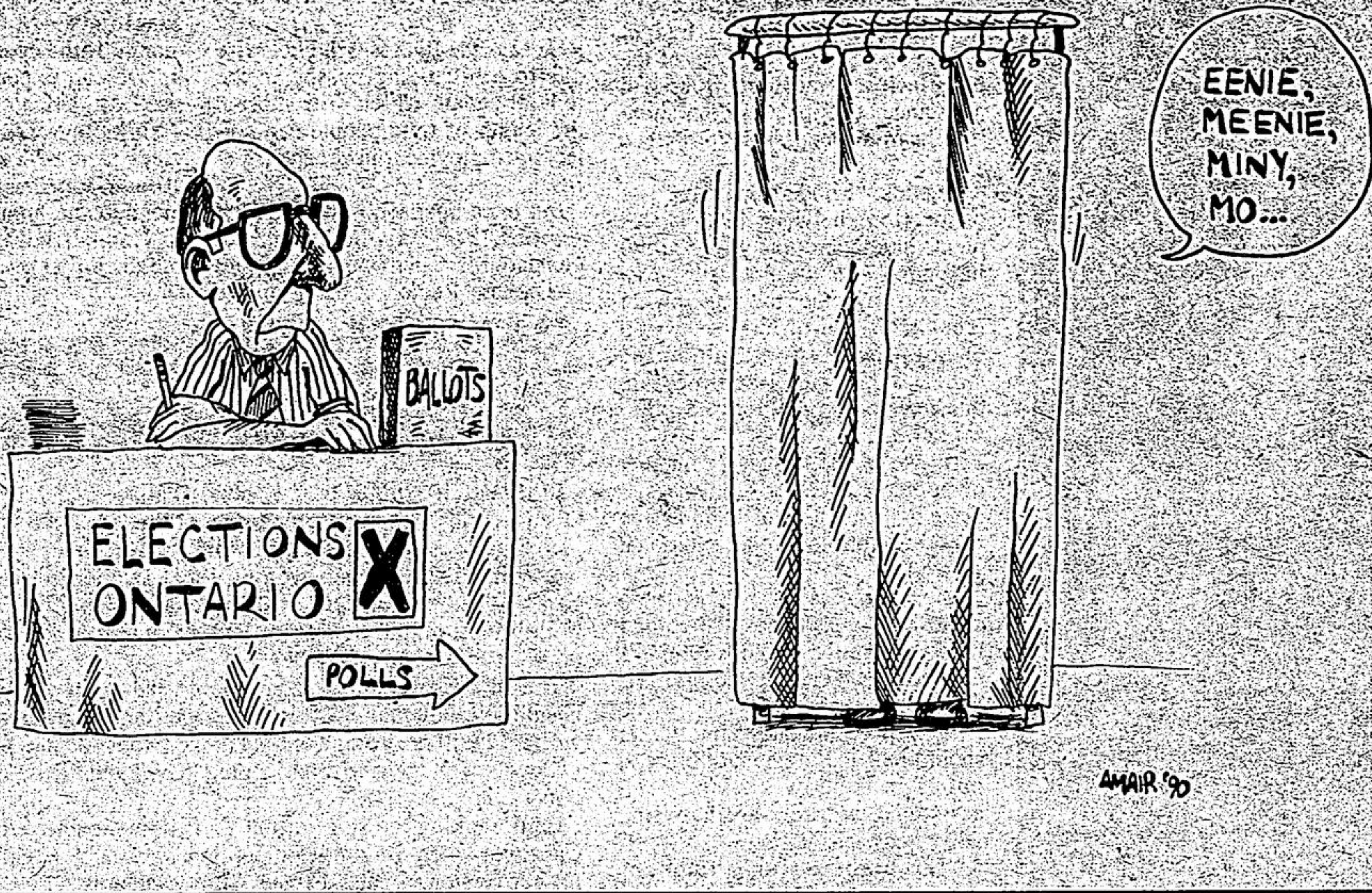


Comment Page



Tire fire will raise more ire

It may not have been started by Mrs. O'Leary's cow, but the fire last week at the large tire dump in this area should remind us all of how easy everything can go up in smoke.

It should also remind us that the \$5 tax we Ontarians pay on tires is taking its sweet time getting to the problem it was designed to service.

Officials are still looking for a cause to the blaze that could be seen from downtown Toronto, and once answers have been gathered, this particular incident should fuel another fire - the fire of outrage that will surely be sparked by concerned local citizens who will want to know what can be done to prevent a similar incident from taking place again.

Now is the time to lobby the local politicians, especially with the election this week. We have to ask them what they intend to do about the growing number of used tires that have not made it to the recycling plants.

It has been said by some that the biggest single issue in this election has been the environment.

This incident has only strengthened the validity of that comment, and also that now is the time to act.

Ultimate runners carry big price tag

When I read The Toronto Star's report on what the socially acceptable child sports in footwear these days, it struck me that the much-advertised restraint of the '90s is a just another media myth.

The going rate to ensure your child's complete physical comfort, mental well-being and peer approval doesn't come cheap.

With the 'right' names in sneakers fetching up to \$199, how can kids like mine face the world in shoes which cost a fraction of that sum, and which have never even been endorsed by a famous, rich and influential sports star?

My children do have a choice. If they want to stun their friends with a pair of those vastly expensive but incredibly cheap-



kate's corner

kate gilderdale

looking plastic shoes in which they bear an uncanny resemblance to Olive Oyl, they can get a job and pay the difference between what they want and what my budget, and my sense of proportion, will bear.

By the time they acquire the wherewithal to purchase the Ultimate Shoe, that once slavishly sought-after status symbol will have been replaced by an even more repulsive alternative, with a price tag which will require a second mortgage. Remember Converse?

Otherwise sane parents, who believe in sensible fiscal restraint, buy RRSPs, insure their house against every imaginable disaster and snip coupons which will save them 50¢ on ketchup, are often the same people who appear to totally lose their grip on reality when accompanied by their children to an athletic shoe store.

Two pairs of shoes at the price quoted by The Star would buy my entire wardrobe, shoes included, for a year.

Happy as I am to know that sports stars, scraping by on

multi-million dollar salaries, are supplementing their earnings in ads which manipulate acquisitive children and their gullible parents, they needn't look to this family for support.

We constantly hear about the lack of affordable housing, families on the poverty line who rely on food banks and single parents struggling to get tax breaks and adequate day care.

In that context, it's somehow obscene for an 8-year-old to be strutting about in \$100 sneakers, the lifespan of which is unlikely to exceed six months.

The desire to possess "exclusive" brand name footwear started with adults, not children; naturally manufacturers and marketers were quick to create and fulfill the same "need" for the youth market.

Parents may claim they don't

want their child to be different, but the truth is many find it easier to give in and avoid any confrontation.

Fortunately, there's help on the horizon for the upwardly mobile child whose parents are so poverty-stricken they can't put down a trifling \$199, plus tax, to satisfy the cravings of their little consumer.

Now you can buy used athletic shoes bearing the right label for a mere \$60 or so, an idea which as about as appealing as wearing someone else's sweaty socks.

Or for the same price, you could buy three new pairs of no-name sneakers, secure in the knowledge that your children won't be set upon by a gang of youthful social climbers bent on separating them violently from their shoes.

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Editor's mail

Campaign literature 'misleads'

Dear Editor,
 One of the wonderful things about the Canadian political system is the fact that we have three major parties. The not-so-wonderful thing is that sometimes one party will speak out against another before checking out the facts.

I would like to correct some misinformation that is printed in a Progressive Conservative piece of literature. Ontario Premier Peterson's government has not failed to meet its 1987 election promise to expand the Ajax-Pickering Hospital (as was stated in the PC literature to which I am referring).

Back in the middle of June this year it was announced that almost \$21 million will be provided for building

expansion, as well as for expanded psychiatric, diagnostic and laboratory services. This is well above the Health Ministry's original commitment of just under \$15 million.

The above-mentioned literature also noted a delay to Hwy. 401 expansion. Check it out! Anyone who drives from Scarborough to Durham every day knows that is not so. Work has been in progress since the summer of last year at the Meadowvale and Morningside interchanges. At the present rate of construction, it is estimated that work from Markham Road in Scarborough, east to Brock Road in Pickering will be completed in 1997, three years ahead of schedule.

The mention of the announced Seaton community being without

infrastructure is an irresponsible statement. At this point, we are without Seaton as well.

Of course the Provincial Liberal's record is not completely unblemished, but then no party in history can make that claim. However, there are a number of reasons that make me want to once again renew the Liberal mandate to govern.

- Stricter penalties for impaired driving.
- Cancellation of OHIP premiums by individuals.
- A balanced budget (no small accomplishment).
- Introduction and implementation of blue box recycling.

Yours truly,
 Marina Rodgers