

# Comment Page

## Education leadership

Whitchurch-Stouffville Trustee Harry Bowes made history last week with an unprecedented appointment to serve a fifth term as York Region's school board chairman.

And they couldn't find a better person for the job.

A veteran trustee and administrator, Mr. Bowes has a proven track record.

He is keenly aware of the issues facing York's school board after years of runaway growth, and the subsequent pressure to keep pace with that growth.

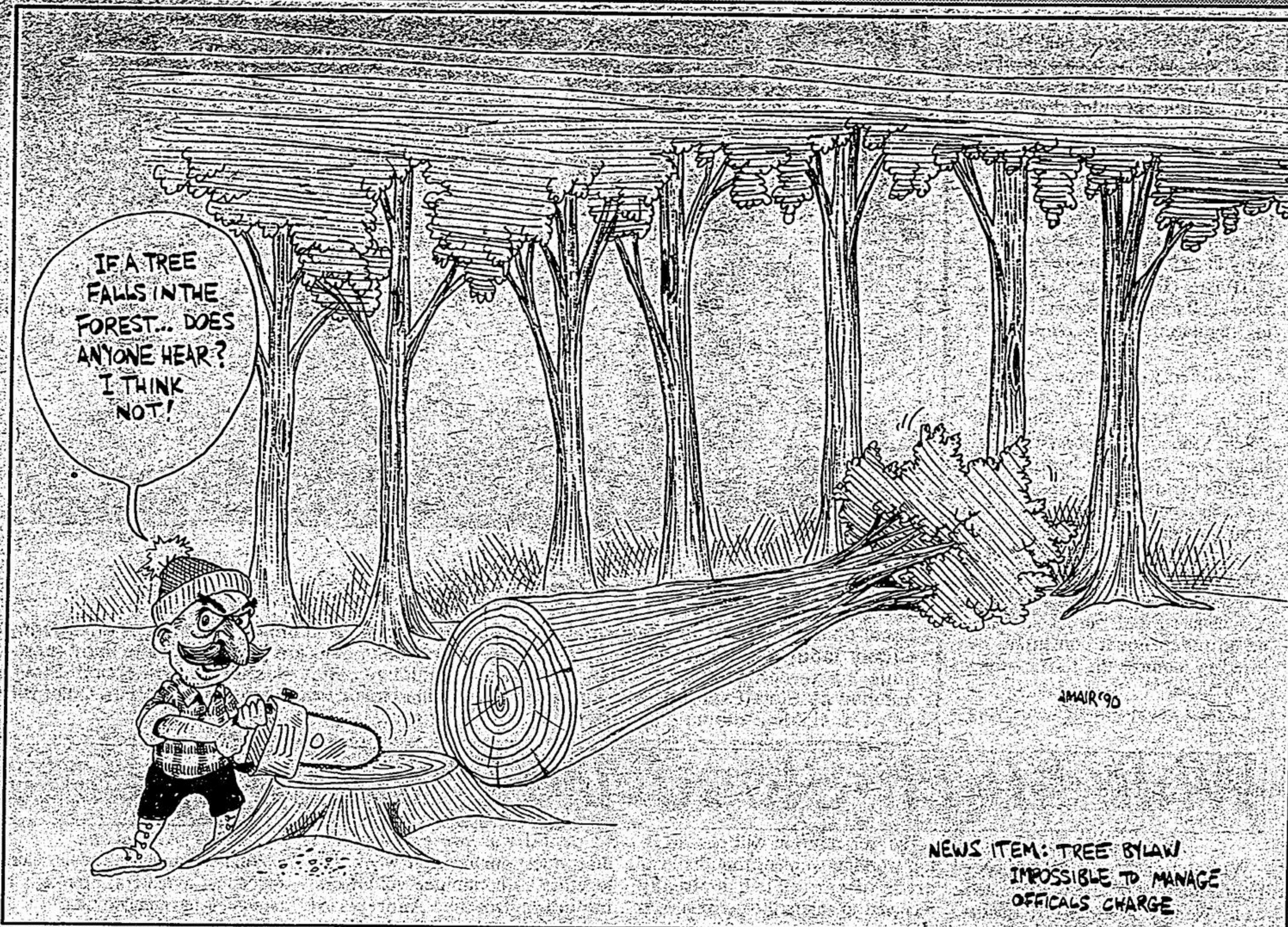
Now, he will lead York's trustees in a new direction with policies the board has in the works.

Trustees are currently grappling with a race relations strategy, and budget talks are aimed at keeping the next increase to a single digit.

Neither of those issues will easily come to pass.

Along with that, school boards still have to cope with the legacy of David Peterson's Liberal government that saw a marked decrease in education funding in recent years.

The future is not as rosy for the York Region Board of Education as it once was. But there is a leader who is holding the gavel.



NEWS ITEM: TREE BYLAW IMPOSSIBLE TO MANAGE OFFICIALS CHARGE

# With this thumb, I thee wed

When I threw my wedding bouquet Nov. 29 it wasn't to my dearest friend, nor to my still-single and aging Auntie Nelda. And my family was nowhere to be seen.

But when you plan to tie the knot thousands of miles away from home on a Thursday afternoon, what can you expect?

To tell the truth, there were a lot of things I didn't expect about my fantasy wedding in Manzanillo, Mexico.

When my husband, Bob, and I planned to wed in another country, we didn't expect it could be as complicated as it was.

In fact, if anyone ever tells me that while vacationing in some tropical paradise they just - on a whim - decided to get married, I know what to say.



### kibble's bits

tracy kibble

Hogwash - I won't believe them for a minute. Now that I've been through the process, I just won't believe it.

For instance, there was paperwork after paperwork after paperwork.

There were the blood tests, and the hours travelling from town to town to obtain a special document that no one seemed to know about.

I can't count how many times people said to me, "Is this legal?"

Well, I can assure you, it is just as legal as a marriage here. Only here you don't have to reveal every detail of your life since birth, plus your parents' histories, nor do brides here have to stick their thumbs in purple ink and place a print on 17 sheets of paper while sweating in a wedding dress under the heat of 32 degree sunshine.

It's legal, or I'll drink Tequila poppers until I fall off the bar stool.

Mexico may not be as advanced or as rich as North America, but when it comes to legalities - and there are many Amigos - the officials there are not to be fooled around with.

We arrived at our exotic resort and told the Canadian tourist representatives there of our plans.

We wanted to marry on the ocean side amongst the Hibiscus bushes and lapping waves.

No one there could tell us if this was possible because it had never happened before, they said.

So, on a tour to Malique we went one day to get the necessary blood tests. The building was a dilapidated, turquoise-colored, flat-roofed building with an old fridge out front.

We looked at each other and secretly hoped the needles would be sterilized.

After 10 minutes of sign language or charades (my Spanish is much to be desired) we finally got the girl to understand our fears. She showed us a box of U.S.-made, individually packed needles.

Step one was out of the way.

Step two was a test of our love. Waiting in the Mexican Immigration office for three hot, sweaty hours was not my idea of a vacation. But when the paperwork was complete, thanks to a translator named Gaby, we knew

the wedding was a go.

Everyone in the resort took care of us. One girl made me a beautiful bouquet of hand-picked exotic flowers, another man videotaped excerpts from our holiday and the wedding, and all the girls there threw me a stagette.

Picture this: You're tied to a chair on a lit stage and three men come out dancing in tuxedos - well, soon they brandished only bikini underwear. It was quite a show and a custom I totally respect.

Our ceremony was romantic, beautiful and touching. We had to have two couples stand up for us and by the time the wedding took place I felt as close to them as I would my friends.

I wouldn't trade that day for all the Kahlua in the country.

It was a honeymoon week I'll never forget.

But I wonder why several Stouffville councillors questioned why I have a tan? Haven't they ever been to Mexico before?

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### Editor's mail

## Old trees 'are like humans'

Dear Editor,  
Last October, my wife and I were visiting relatives in Stouffville.

We noticed some old maples marked for removal, especially on Church Street. I would have to agree with the tree-marker that those trees should come down before they are blown onto someone's home. In fact, it looked as if several more trees could have been marked.

I was surprised to hear of the

objections to removing these old trees, because they can be replaced with young, vigorous, healthy trees that will outlive all the people now living in Stouffville.

I can only hope the objections are being made from ignorance.

Trees are like humans. When they are young they can withstand the elements, but they get old and diseased and die.

The disease is evidenced by the rotten wood seen even from the

outside of the trees.

Much more will be on the inside, weakening the trees so they can no longer hold themselves up and will fall.

Trees don't live forever and they must be replaced - either naturally or artificially. The town is showing wisdom by replacing those trees before they cause damage and lawsuits.

Yours truly,  
Ralph T. Forfar