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1991: The year in review

Mayoralty race among year's top stories

SAL BOMMARITO
Staff Reporter

January

\$783,000

A study outlining a \$4-million proposal to build a recreational pool complex in Whitchurch-Stouffville receives a cool reception from town council. The study, prepared by town-hired consultant Leisureplan International Inc., states the complex would operate at a deficit into 1999.

Carl Myers, a 45-year-old Preston Lake resident who managed the all-Ontario champion Stouffville Merchants junior men's softball team, dies after battling cancer. Myers, a well-respected resident of Vandorf and president of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Community Softball Association, had been treated for the disease since the previous summer.

Stouffville businesses feel the crunch as the federal government's Goods and Services Tax (GST) comes into effect. Consumers also feel the squeeze as prices on everything from haircuts to vacations go up.

February

Around 150 Whitchurch-Stouffville residents gather at the Markham civic centre to hear the views of an expert panel on the escalating war in the Persian Gulf. The heated political debate that dominates the meeting is overpowered by the more emotional calls for world peace and the lack of support for Canadian troops in the Gulf.

Stephen Bellerby captures the Ward 2 council seat vacated by Ron Robb in a byelection. The 24-year-old Ballantrae man, who based his



STEPHEN BELLERBY
Wins in Ward 2

campaign on environmental issues, takes 210 of the 557 total votes, as less than 21 per cent of eligible voters turn out for the election.

March

A 45-year-old Stouffville woman and her 3-year-old child are killed in a traffic accident in Uxbridge. Maureen Johnson of RR3 Stouffville is pronounced dead at Uxbridge Cottage Hospital immediately following the 7:30 p.m. single-car crash. Her son, Robert Johnson, dies the next day at Toronto Hospital for Sick Children as a result of serious injuries sustained in the crash.

Arson is suspected in a \$100,000 blaze that destroys a vacant farmhouse just outside Whitchurch-Stouffville. Fire crews work for more than five hours to extinguish the blaze on Bethesda Sideroad between Ninth Line and Hwy 7.

April

Three young offenders and one adult are charged with arson after a blaze levels the Deer Park Inn on Hwy 47. Damages are estimated at more than \$1 million. Two of the youths are 14 years old. Also charged is a 20-year-old Stouffville resident.

York Regional Council fires its engineering commissioner Bob Hodgson without finding him guilty of any offence. Hodgson is involved in a land deal worth

May

Stouffville's GO Transit Station could be moved out of town to accommodate a major \$423-million overhaul of the 52-km rail line from Uxbridge to Scarborough, a study to council reveals.

A Sutton man is charged by York Region police after charges of repeated incestuous sexual assault are filed by a Whitchurch-Stouffville teen. A 23-year-old man is arrested at his place of work in Georgia.

The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce in Claremont is robbed by two armed suspects who escape in a stolen truck. One suspect is armed with a sawed-off shotgun and is wearing a balaclava and the other is armed with a knife.

June

A 42-year-old Stouffville man is named Whitchurch-Stouffville Citizen of the Year. Ged Stonehouse has an impressive list of accomplishments including heading the community track project committee, promoting the Strawberry Festival, serving as president of the Chamber of Commerce and organizing Stouffville's first Terry Fox Run.

Stouffville council wages war on the Gypsy Moth invasion as a program is initiated and funds allotted for 1992 to help end the caterpillar's destruction of millions of deciduous and coniferous trees.

Council is urged to back a 15-point parks and recreation study prepared by its advisory committee which outlines the need for more facilities including toboggan hills, outdoor rinks and an indoor pool. Although council supports the study in principle, no funds are committed because of the upcoming November election.

July

July began with the official opening of the Stouffville Community Track. Construction on the project had started in the fall of 1990. Ged Stonehouse, who was honored by The Tribune as Whitchurch-Stouffville's Citizen Of The Year during the annual Strawberry Festival, helped spearhead the project.

What should have been a happy occasion for John and Ann Kassies ends in tragedy while they're returning from their son's wedding reception in Scarborough. Diane Kieffe, 47, the couple's relative visiting from Newfoundland, is killed when the couple's vehicle is involved in a head-on collision.

Four Stouffville residents escape without injuries but are left homeless after a blaze claims their home located at Bloomington Sideroad and Hwy 47. Local fire officials peg the damages at \$175,000.

The child of a former Stouffville couple is tragically killed in a cycling accident over the long weekend. Melanie Harris, 14, daughter of former residents Bev and Glenn Harris, is struck by a truck while riding her bicycle across a road near Port Perry.

August

The municipal elections heat up as Mayor Fran Sainsbury announces she will be seeking re-election and Wayne Emmerson announces he will be entering the race for mayor. At the same time,



Photo/ALAN SHACKLETON

This July house fire at the intersection of Hwy 47 and Bloomington Rd. gave Whitchurch-Stouffville firefighters a battle. No one was injured in the blaze, which left a family homeless.

Ward 3 councillor Nick Tatone announces he won't be running for mayor in 1991.

John Bolton, 65, of Rexdale is charged with sex offences after an 11-year-old Toronto girl is sexually assaulted in a trailer at Cedar Beach Park. Police seize several videotapes which contain sexually explicit footage of young girls from the man's home. Bolton was later convicted of the charges.

September

Musselman Lake is closed after the Ministry of Environment discovers the presence of blue-green algae in the lake. The algae, the ministry reports, can have harmful effects on the respiratory and nervous systems of animals, if ingested.

Three more candidates announce they are entering the municipal elections, while two incumbents decide to bow out gracefully. Cliff Dunkeld enters the Ward 4 race, while Ed Lyons enters the Ward 2 race and Marie Adams says she'll run in Ward 5. Ward 5 councillor Doug Alles and Ward 1 councillor Margot Marshall announce they've had enough.

October

Two people, one a Stouffville resident, die in separate traffic accidents which occur the same day. Norman Heggum, 39, of Stouffville is killed when his motorcycle strikes three guide posts. A Toronto man is also killed in a fiery crash near Vandorf Sideroad.

The town announces it wants to make Stouffville the home of the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame. The announcement is met with unbridled excitement.

Two more candidates announce they'll run in the elections as three candidates are acclaimed. Ward 1 candidate Ivanka Bradley is acclaimed in Stouffville, while Harry Bowes and Dennis Collins are acclaimed to the public and separate boards respectively. Ken Prentice takes aim at Ward 6 and Dawson Lane enters the bid for Ward 2.

November

Ted Lowery announces he is dropping out of the Ward 3 race

for health reasons, but not before it's too late to have his name removed from the election ballot.

Fran Sainsbury returns as mayor after narrowly defeating challenger Wayne Emmerson. Other winners include Steve Bellerby (Ward 2), Nick Tatone (Ward 3), Cliff Dunkeld (Ward 4), Bob Ancheril (Ward 5) and Ken Prentice (Ward 6).

Two Goodwood residents are killed after their vehicle swerves to avoid hitting a dog and collides with another vehicle. Gary Jones, 32, and his wife Lisa, 25, are pronounced dead.

December

Eldred King wins a surprise acclamation as York Region chairman after two former mayors drop out of the running for the influential post. The 64-year-old former Whitchurch-Stouffville mayor has held the post since 1984.

Stouffville resident Harry Bowes, 68, is re-elected to an unprecedented sixth term as chairman of the York Region board of education. The new Whitchurch-Stouffville council is inaugurated during a 45-minute ceremony at town hall before more than 80 well-wishers.



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Re-elected Mayor

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