

stouffville comment

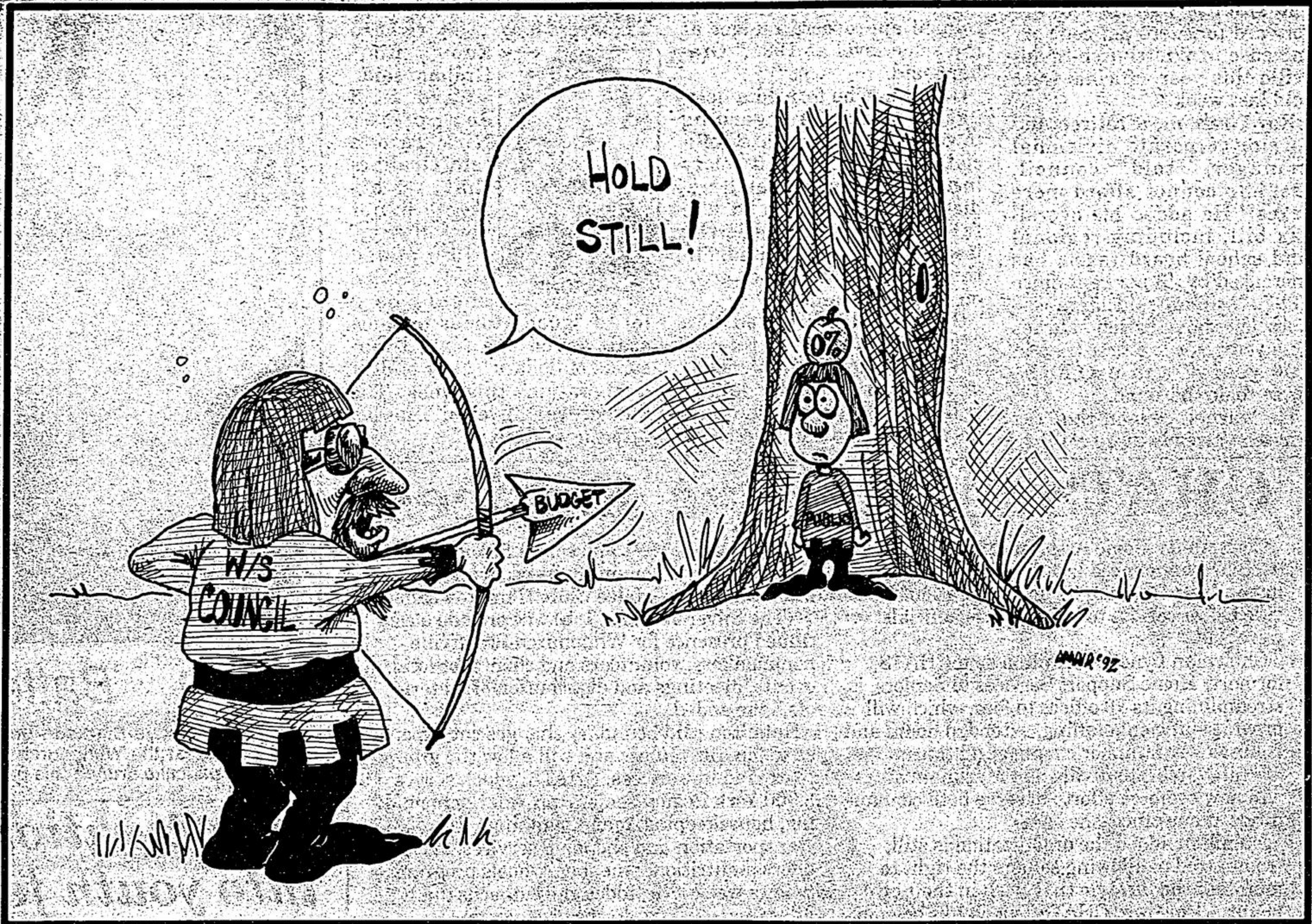
Youth centre now obvious necessity

If there are still any critics of a youth centre for Whitchurch-Stouffville, they must be silent after the incident in Memorial Park last week.

The incident served to highlight the need for youth activity in this community, and a place to hold such activities.

Those who initially stated the centre was of no interest to teens may be in for a shock. The Recreation Dept. is presently compiling statistics from all intermediate and senior students in this community, and by next week, the voice of Stouffville's youth will be heard. By all indications, the survey that was conducted will provide proponents of a youth centre with a clear mandate. A portion of the unofficial credo of the centre, "for youth, by youth and with youth", has now been fulfilled. The mandate for the centre has been offered "by youth."

With a centre in place, incidents like those last week would likely never take place again.



Super dad does the job with his eyes closed

"Bah, bah, bahbahbah? Gum, gum, bum, bahbungum. Sa?...ca, bum, sa dees, deem."

Music to our ears. The beginning babbles of an eight-month-old Kody show mom and dad he's thinking.

And every time he utters these sounds, my husband, Bob, looks into his eyes. In a teacher's patient voice, backed with encouragement, he says, "Say dada Kody. Say dada, daadaaaa. Daddy loves Kody. Dada, dada, dada." He waits.

"Bah, bahbah" is the proud response, always accompanied by a crooked grin and a slam of his fists on the table.

Bob shakes his head in despair, and I can hear him from the other room. "He'll never say dada."

Bob makes a wonderful dad. I sometimes call him a lot of different names. Names I wouldn't be allowed to print. Isn't that what wives are for? But, I have to admit he is a model parent - the 90s father.

Always there to take over when I turn into a raving, screaming lunatic. Always there to offer assistance when I can't keep my eyes open, or because he wants "just the guys" to go for a drive. They're buddies. Daddy and Kody.

He's eager to be a part of his son's life and does a remarkable job. Being a regular sock flinger and dirty t-shirt thrower - your basic bedroom slob - I was shocked at how neat and efficient he is with Kody.

Playing Mr. Mom for half the week,



Bob does all the things a mother would do - and sometimes better. He bathes him, changes him, feeds him and rocks him. But Bob is especially good in the playing department. Sometimes it astonishes me at how loud and hard our son can laugh when his dad plays games with him. Secretly, when Bob's not around, I'll try the same tactics, only to be awarded by a feeble smile or

a giggle or two.

There's one area, however, where his "Champ" instantly becomes "your kid." He mumbles something about a dirty diaper change. He just can't make it through that chore without gagging uncontrollably. He pleads with me to come into the nursery NOW. "Please change the kid. I'm gonna be sick," he tells me matter-of-factly as he slinks backwards out of the room.

And if I'm not home, he runs the poor child, at arms length, next door to grandma's house.

Pretending to be there for coffee and idle chit-chat, he cons his mother to do the job for him.

Once or twice grandma has been out

and Bob proudly informs me that he can actually endure the task if he dumps 900 wipes on Kody's bottom, closes his eyes, holds his breath and does the job with his head out the window. I find the whole thing thoroughly amusing.

We've got our work cut out for us this month.

Don't kids ever stop moving around? And why is it that no matter how many toys children have, they keep heading for the garbage, the telephone cord and the empty pop bottles?

Is there a support group for this?

Our more experienced friends call this the "just say no" stage of parenting. Our jobs seem relaxing to us now.

It's April showers from here on in

Remember when they made baths in which you could immerse your whole body, knees and all, simultaneously?

Many baths today are only a couple of inches longer than your average bidet. Bits of your body have to take it in turns to get warm because the bath is neither long enough nor deep enough for anyone larger than a very small jockey.

When I lived at home we had a real bath, in which one could languish for hours at a time, reading and philosophizing. But in recent years, I have noticed that tubs, which can comfortably accommodate a standard-sized adult, are in short supply.

When we first got married, the old man and I moved into an apartment at the unfashionable end of London's then-trendy King's Road. It was comfortable (by British standards) and roomy, with



the largest amount of square footage reserved for the bathroom.

This palatial retreat contained a bath which could have accommodated an entire baseball team. It was so long and deep that you had to cling to the sides to avoid drowning.

Or you would have had to, if the hot water tank which serviced this immense and impressive fixture had been equal to the task. Its dimensions, alas, were hardly bigger than those of a large suitcase.

When we crossed the pond and moved into Chateau Gilderdale, we had plenty of hot water, but a bath of woefully inadequate proportions,

Its predecessor, an old-fashioned model with legs, had been banished to the garage, where it served on occasion as a drink cooler for parties before being snapped up for a song at a garage sale.

When yuppiedom was at its zenith and everyone was building bathrooms which would not have looked out of place in the Palace of Versailles, we probably could have replaced our bathette with something more substantial.

But I never could bring myself to invest large sums of money on something as intrinsically boring as a bathroom. It's not as if you would do much entertaining there, at least not unless you wanted to encourage some wild speculation on the part of your neighbors.

And what was the point of such lavish expenditure if you couldn't show it off? I guess I'll just have a shower and leave Olympia and York to take a bath.

Stouffville Tribune

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Canadian Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement #439010

Published every Wednesday by Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing at 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, Ontario L3P 1M3 Tel. 294-2200. The Stouffville Tribune, published every Wednesday, at 6244 Main St. Stouffville is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing group of suburban newspapers which includes: Ajax-Pickering News Advertiser, Aurora Banner, Barrie Advance, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Post, Collingwood Connection, Etobicoke Guardian, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland Express, Milton Canadian Champion, Mississauga News, Newmarket Era Banner, North York Mirror, Northumberland News, Oakville Beaver, Orillia Today, Oshawa-Whitby This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, and Uxbridge Tribune.

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