

Photo SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Up on the housetop

Rick Raymer holds the safety rope for Dave McVicar, bottom left, on Raymer's home on Lloyd St. in Stouffville this week. The two friends took advantage of the nice weather on Wednesday to work on some fall repairs.

Caudle's 93.5% leads school

The top Stouffville District Secondary School students fared well against other schools in York Region last year. Peter Caudle achieved the highest average mark for Ontario Scholars in the school with a score of 93.5 per cent. Stephanie Lane achieved the second highest percentage at 90.7, while Amit Joneja was third at 88.3 per cent. The highest marks in the region were attained by James Lloyd-Smith of Markham District High School with 98.5%.

New truck features 75-foot aerial and 'expand's dept. capabilities'

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model truck, people could sue the town.
"Lawsuits are the biggest problem going," Finger said.
"Rate of failure increases with age, it's a fact of life," Brown added.
"Every house built, every

garage constructed, every new building is something we potentially have to service, but we have no more equipment than we had 20 years ago," Brown said.
Brown has served as the town's fire chief for six years, has more than 20 years of fire fighting expertise under his

belt, and has taken more fire safety courses than he can remember, including a four-month Ontario Fire College course. He has also advised General Motors on fire safety and has taken part in GM's own courses.

Brown said the new truck, which will pump and project 1,050 gallons (5,000 litres) of water a minute from a 75-foot aerial "expands the department's capabilities."

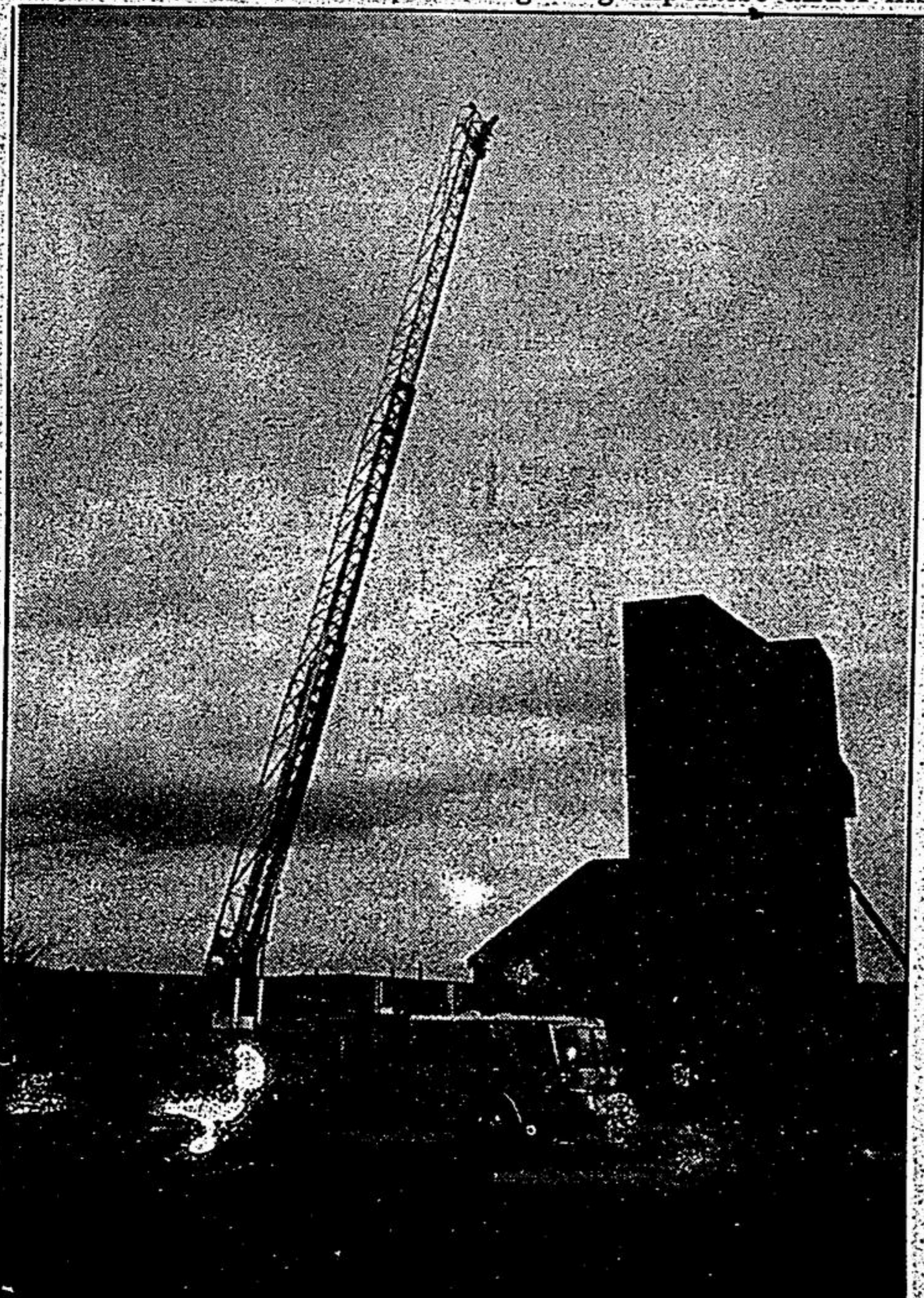
He added the truck has water tower capabilities, will protect adjoining buildings such as malls and attached dwellings more effectively, and provides a safer working environment for firefighters manning the vehicle.

"A misconception is that an aerial is for height buildings only," but is actually a way of getting the water to hard-to-reach areas in buildings.

Finger said Brown is actually ordering a "combination truck," one that Metro Toronto, Brampton and other municipalities are now looking toward for future. He said Brampton currently sends out four different trucks to each call with 20 men, but is looking at ordering a dual-job rig, like the one Brown is designing, for more efficiency.

Instead of being capable of just pumping water, or just carrying rescue equipment, Stouffville's new rig will combine the two jobs making it more effective and cheaper to operate in the long run, Finger said.

"Now's the time for Stouffville to buy this truck. The manufacturers are begging for the business," which will enable the chief to negotiate the best possible price.



This is the new truck approved for purchase by the town this week.

Homework policy debated

A draft homework policy will be debated by the York Region Board of Education later this month.

Currently, less than three-quarters of the public schools have some type of policy, whether written or based on tradition, said Superintendent of School Operations Terry Gray, but the board has never developed an overall policy.

"We have to look at the diversity in pupils, programs and home-life," Gray said. "That diversity has to be understood before a homework policy can be put in place."

A draft policy was handed to principals and the board is now looking at the feedback, some positive some negative. After the umbrella policy is fine-tuned, individual schools, with input

from staff and parents, will tailor the guidelines to the particular needs of the school and its students.

"Varying amounts of homework need to be assigned according to the individual characteristics and personal circumstances of each individual student," Gray wrote in an introduction to the draft guideline. The draft recommends that homework should encourage self-discipline and good work habits but should not be used as a tool for misbehavior.

The board conducted an indepth study on homework five years ago which concluded homework is a benefit to students.

The report said homework prepares students for the tough demands of post-secondary school and the job world.

Street debate prompts apology from mayor

Mayor Fran Sainsbury publicly apologized this week for her recent flip-flop decision in an ongoing street naming controversy.

"I'll be the first to admit, I changed my mind and I apologize," Sainsbury said.

The Mayor was referring to a June 23 meeting where she broke a 3-3 tie in favor of renaming Kennedy Lane North to Choko Lane.

Sainsbury said at that meeting council must back its Street Naming Committee's decision to call the street Choko Lane after three others (Hakonson, Nicely and Springvale) were objected to.

But at a meeting Aug. 11, Sainsbury changed her mind and voted down the name Choko Lane on grounds the street should not reflect the name of one of the property owners, since the other owner objected.

Best choice

She said her decision would rid the families of a long standing feud and added a neutral name (Spring Vista Lane) would be the best choice for everyone.

This week Sainsbury announced council had used "a lack of wisdom" throughout the issue, and is now "trying to rectify" the problem.

She said naming the street after one of the property owners when the other objects, "pits one neighbor against the other."

"I'd rather everyone be mad at me. I have no axes to grind, but this is the fairest way to resolve this," she said.

And Ward 1 councillor Ivanka Bradley said the street naming issue is "a learning process" for council, and admitted officials made a judgement error.

Most frustrating

However, Ward 2 councillor Stephen Bellerby said council should have stood behind the committee's decision in the first place and called the street Choko Lane.

"Overruling a committee's recommendation is most frustrating. That's why people become involved in local government, and now it seems their decision isn't credible. We should stick by the committee," Bellerby said.

But Ward 5 councillor Bob Ancheril said committees need council's guidance and should have a more clear mandate. He added that not all committee recommendations are adopted by the town. And Ward 4 councillor Cliff Dunkeld, a committee member, said although the committee is not satisfied with the way the issue was handled, they would "live with council's final decision."

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