

# Our Opinion

## Don't let trustees be fall guys for province

Politicians need to do more than pay lip service to reform. Taxpayers are justified when they call a halt to overspending by government and over government itself.

It was in response to about 500 angry taxpayers in Scarborough this week that Education Minister Tony Silipo said the province is considering a royal commission or task force with a view to revamping the school boards system.

The city's trustees had refused to roll back completely a 64 per cent pay raise. In a telling flash-



Viewpoint

Jo Ann Stevenson

back, when Silipo was a Toronto trustee in 1988, that board voted itself an 86 per cent increase.

This appears to be a shallow, knee-jerk reaction to a squeaky wheel.

In boom times such as we experienced in the 80s, no one complained too loudly about excessive consulting, programming, and indeed

excessive administration and bureaucracy. The practices are evident in the school boards system and throughout all three levels of government, municipal, provincial and federal.

We don't need another expensive commission to tell us what parents and educators and taxpayers already know - stop waste, stop spending to justify future budget allocations and reduce duplication of services and facilities.

One York Region mayor suggests scrapping school boards and having

regional councillors handle their responsibilities - an indicator that regional councillors have time to spare.

The kind of commission that would be justified would be one that tackles the 'untouchables' such as combining separate and public facilities and administration staff and, (dare I say it?), the effectiveness of regional government itself.

## VON nurses thanked for support

Dear Editor,

As the week of Jan. 25 to 31 is VON Week across Canada - I am writing to you to tell you of the efficient care my late husband received from the VON nurses.

From the first moment they set up an immediate rapport with us both, and continued to provide us with capable and conscientious care throughout the swift decline of Fred's illness in the days that



followed. I was so impressed, not only with the high standard of care delivered to my husband, but also with the support and understanding they offered me in this time of great need. I really feel that through their efforts

and support I was able to keep my husband's wish that he be nursed at home until the end - and this meant the world to us both.

We did not realize the tremendous help that was available through the VON services, and greatly appreciate the admirable and unforgettable source of competency and strength we found in their nurses.

My thanks to this wonderful organization.

Sheila Wilde  
Unionville

## United Way is grateful

Dear Editor,

"Thank you" people of York Region for your very generous support.

In these tough times, we all have to help each other, and as in the past, the people who live and work in York Region showed that they care about their fellow man.

The final campaign figure is \$2,560,000 - a 10 per cent increase over last year's achievement. For this we are truly grateful. For this too, the 37 social service/health related agencies who make up the United Way of York Region say "thank you". They can now continue to serve the needs of so many.

Gord Sanford  
'92 Campaign Chair



## ADAM

by Brian Basset



### MARKHAM ECONOMIST AND SUN STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE UXBRIDGE TRIBUNE

Weekender edition

A Metroland Community Newspaper  
PATRICIA PAPPAS, PUBLISHER  
JO ANN STEVENSON, Editor-in-chief  
PAULA CROWELL, Editor  
ANDREW MAIR, Editor  
DEBRA WELLER, Director of Advertising  
JENNIFER HUTT, Director of Distribution  
VIVIAN O'NEIL, Business Manager  
PAM NICHOLS, Operations Manager

Markham 294-2200 (sales 798-7624, classified 294-4331), Stouffville 640-2100, Uxbridge 852-9741  
294-8244 distribution and administration  
9 Heritage Rd. Markham L3P 1M2  
FAX: Markham 294-1538, Stouffville 640-5477, Uxbridge 852-4355

The Markham Economist and Sun, Stouffville Tribune and Uxbridge Tribune, published every Wednesday and Saturday is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing group of suburban newspapers which includes: Ajax Pickering News Advertiser, Barrie Advance, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Post, Collingwood Connection, Etobicoke Guardian, The Liberal, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Milton Canadian Champion, Mississauga News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Orillia Today, Oshawa-Whitby This Week, Peterborough This Week, Scarborough Mirror, The Era Banner.

Contents not to be reproduced without written permission from the publisher.

## English language hard to nail down

The fact that you're reading this automatically makes you a member of one of the largest families on the planet. Three hundred and fifty million earthlings speak English as their mother tongue. More than a billion use it as a second language. Yessir, an awful lot of information gets communicated in the language you and I are sharing at this moment.

But not always ... well communicated.

Shakespeare's tongue is a convoluted medium of expression with plenty of hairpin turns and cul de sacs. Foreigners don't always get the hang of it, right off.

Which is why on the streets of Tokyo you are apt to see designer T-shirts bearing slogans such as O.D. ON BOURGEOISIE MILK BOY MILK. What does it mean? Too inscrutable for this Occidental.

There's a restaurant in Geneva, the menus of which bear the blissful slogan "Our wines leave you nothing to hope for."

And a Warsaw eatery lets its customers know that they can choose from two specials - "roasted duck let loose" or "beef rashers beaten up in the country people's fashion."

If you've still got your appetite, pop a Pepto-Bismol and run before you get to the Acapulco restaurant which has a sign on the wall saying "The manager has personally passed all the water served here."

And in Denmark, harried international travellers will find perhaps the only truthful aeronautical promise I've ever encountered. An airline office in Copenhagen promises to "take your bags and send them in all directions."

Protestants with tooth problems can feel right at home in Hong Kong where a downtown dentist guarantees that teeth will be "extracted by the latest Methodists".

Then there is the problem of X-rated English - wherein newcomers to English inadvertently stumble into the off-color range of the language spectrum.

Such as the Zurich Hotel which warns its English-speaking guests "Because of the impropriety of entertaining guests of the opposite sex in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose."



Basic Black

Arthur Black

Or the laundry in Rome which enjoins its female customers to "leave your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time."

Or the Paris haut couture boutique which advertises "dresses for street walking".

Not to be outdone by the Bangkok dry cleaner which suggests that prospective customers "drop their trousers here for best results."

But fractured English is a two way street. Sometimes when we anglophones try our tongues at translation we mangle and muck up with the best of them.

In Japan, Coca Cola cans bear the slogan "I Feel Coke and Sound Special". Sounds stupid, but it works. It works a lot better than the Coca Cola PR department's first foray into China, when they tried translating "It's The Real Thing" into Mandarin.

Somehow, the slogan came out as "Bite The Wax Tadpole" - a jingle not likely to move a lot of soft drink.

Sometimes even a single word can get you in big trouble. General Motors found that out when they tried marketing the Chevrolet Nova in South America. "Nova" works fine in English - it comes from the Latin, meaning 'new'.

Unfortunately, if you throw in a space, it comes out in Spanish as no va - which means 'won't go'.

Not the kind of reputation you want your car to have.

But the Ford Motor Company had even bigger marketing headaches when they introduced their Fiera and Pinto to Europe.

In Spanish, 'Fiera' translates as 'old, ugly woman'.

Don't even ask about what Pinto means in Portuguese.

Well, since you asked ... 'pinto' is Portuguese slang for 'small male organ'.

Precisely the opposite of what all those overhyped auto-erotic adverts want potential customers to believe.