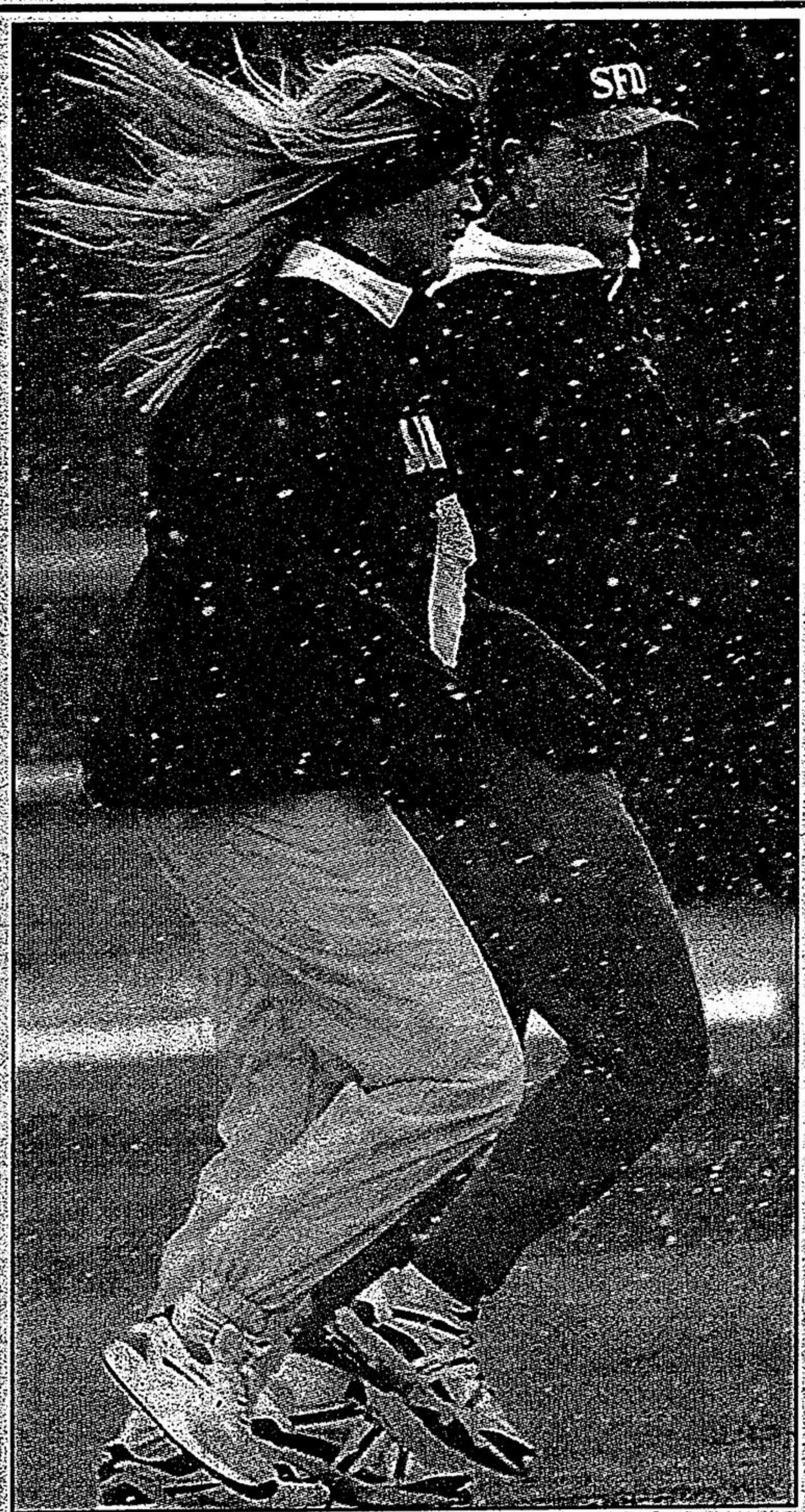


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# The Tribune *Stouffville*



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## Spring jog?

Pat O'Leary and Kim Jones jog on Main Street in Stouffville on Saturday in hopefully the last snow of the season.

Photo/SJOERD WITTEVEN

# 'IT'S THE PITS!

## Contractor leaves open trenches as region inspectors refuse survey

By **KATHLEEN GRIFFIN**  
 Staff Reporter

A Ballantrae family was forced to spend last weekend staring at a 70-foot open trench, more than six feet deep, because their plumbing contractor could not get a regional inspector to come, he said.

Mark Hassan is one of several private plumbing contractors hired by more than 900 Ballantrae and Musselman-Lake homeowners who are undergoing the conversion from wells to the new regional water system.

And while he said he has run into this problem before, last Friday's excavation was one of the worst examples yet. "We have real trouble getting the regional inspector to come to the excavation sites. But the open trenches can be very dangerous - the problem is the Oak Ridges Moraine. There is water moving through some of these properties all the time. It's ridiculous. It's public safety at stake. This

should never have happened and there's no way a resident should have to wait three days, with wide open trenches, for an inspector."

Hassan said he's been told the region is short-staffed. That they need 24 hours notice. But he says even when 24 hours notice is given, there's no guarantee an inspector will show. He said sometimes inspectors will come at 10 a.m. before the work has been done and when the pipes are finally in the ground by 1 p.m., they say they can't come until after hours.

But the regional director of health protection services, Oryst Zyhar, said Hassan has trouble with the 24-hours-notice provision. "This particular contractor finds it difficult to follow the standards," Zyhar said. "If he knows when a job is going to be ready that information needs to be given to the inspectors in advance."

Zyhar said the inspectors need to be there just as the job is finishing up and it's up to the contractor to let them know. If not, the contractor must rig up snow fencing around the site for the safety of residents, which Hassan did.

Hassan has arranged a meeting with other contractors, regional inspectors and Zyhar this morning. Both he and Zyhar said they hope the problem can be ironed out.

## Library chair resigns post

The chairman of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Library Board has resigned.

Board chairman Monica vanMaris said philosophical differences between herself and other board members were such that she decided to call it quits.

"My philosophy and the philosophy of some members didn't work," said vanMaris.

Board member Linda Giles is the new library board chairman.

VanMaris' letter of resignation will be received at a special board meeting to be held April 21.

VanMaris said she'll remain as a board member until the end of the year. She served on the local library board for a total of 16 years and was board chairman for 12 years.



Mark Hassan, a plumbing contractor, is down about trenches he had to leave exposed over the weekend when regional plumbing inspectors refused to survey them.

Photo/LORI EMMERSON

## Reform expected to acclaim candidate

Following his loss in the Markham Riding, Reform candidate hopeful Edward Sarafian confirmed Wednesday night he will be running

in Oak Ridges. And Oak Ridges Riding association president Jeff Turner said that barring any problems with his nom-

ination papers and background check, Sarafian will be acclaimed in that riding April 24.

(Please see page 3)



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