

# MPP vows to relay parental concerns

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Osborne urged parents to read Bill 160 and continue the opposition to it. She said despite obvious examples of school board excesses through the years, that the bill was going way too far in transferring power to the province.

"This bill would throw out the proverbial baby with the bath water," she said. Osborne, a teacher in York Region, said the government should consult the people before fast-tracking such a significant piece of legislation.

"If this bill is all they (the government) are saying it is, then to delay it for a referendum shouldn't be a problem. What's the hurry?"

At times Munro declined answering questions; at times she attempted to give the government's position, but failed. But she made it clear that studies undertaken by the previous NDP government had confirmed the

existence of "systemic problems" in the way funding and classroom issues were being dealt with by the various school boards across the province.

"The purpose of Bill 160 is to redefine the relationship between the province and the school boards," said Munro.

She said a Royal Commission

report on education in Ontario concluded such reforms were needed, and that "the ministry should have a powerful central role to drive these reforms."

Munro concluded by saying she will voice the concerns of those at the meeting to her government. "I have given you my commitment to represent your concerns."

## Parents question validity of Bill 160

Local teachers were out in full force at the Summitview P.S. information meeting on Bill 160. Steve Curly, a Stouffville resident who teaches in Scarborough, took Munro on over her insistence that her government isn't taking money out of education.

"Harris said on television he is going to make cuts," he said. "Is he right or is he wrong? If they do, then my daughter is going to suffer."

Curly later asked Munro if she might somehow "find it in your heart to vote against this bill."

Gary Barnard, a physical education teacher at Summitview, expressed concerns about his own survival while questioning how the gov-

ernment will save money by introducing paid uncertified teaching assistants into the classroom.

**"Find it in your heart to vote against the bill!"**  
~Stouffville parent

"The bill doesn't state that these people won't replace me," said Barnard. "And how will these assistants save money? They're going to cost more money."

Summitview teacher Heather Campbell suggested the bill could pass without being understood by some MPPs.

"I'm very distressed that after two days of debate, they will vote on this bill. Some of the MPPs have never read it," she said.

Brenda St. John, a teacher at Glad Park P.S., read transcripts of the bill to try to convince Munro the government wasn't open to input

in preparing it. "Those words are very strong," said St. John. "That doesn't sound like they want consultation."

Munro replied to claims the ministry had acted unilaterally in creating the bill by saying trustees from various boards worked with the Education Improvement Committee over the past summer to help decide how the transfer of authority from boards to the province would best be done.

Jean Davies of the Federation of Women Teachers Association of Ontario continued to beat the federation's drum.

"Teachers know the system isn't perfect," she said. "We're willing to change. But Bill 160 proposes changes that will radically change education in Ontario."

~Bruce Stapley

# Fire officials probe cause of Meadowbrook blaze

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The club, which is more than 35 years old, was just coming up for a very busy time of year.

Doug Pinkney, a 20-year member of the club and past member of its board of directors, was surveying the damage Thursday afternoon.

"The sad part is December is a really busy time with dinners and Christmas parties," said Pinkney.

Numerous banquets and Christmas parties were booked at the facility.

Management of Meadowbrook have tried to find other arrangements for immediate bookings, including a sold-out Murder

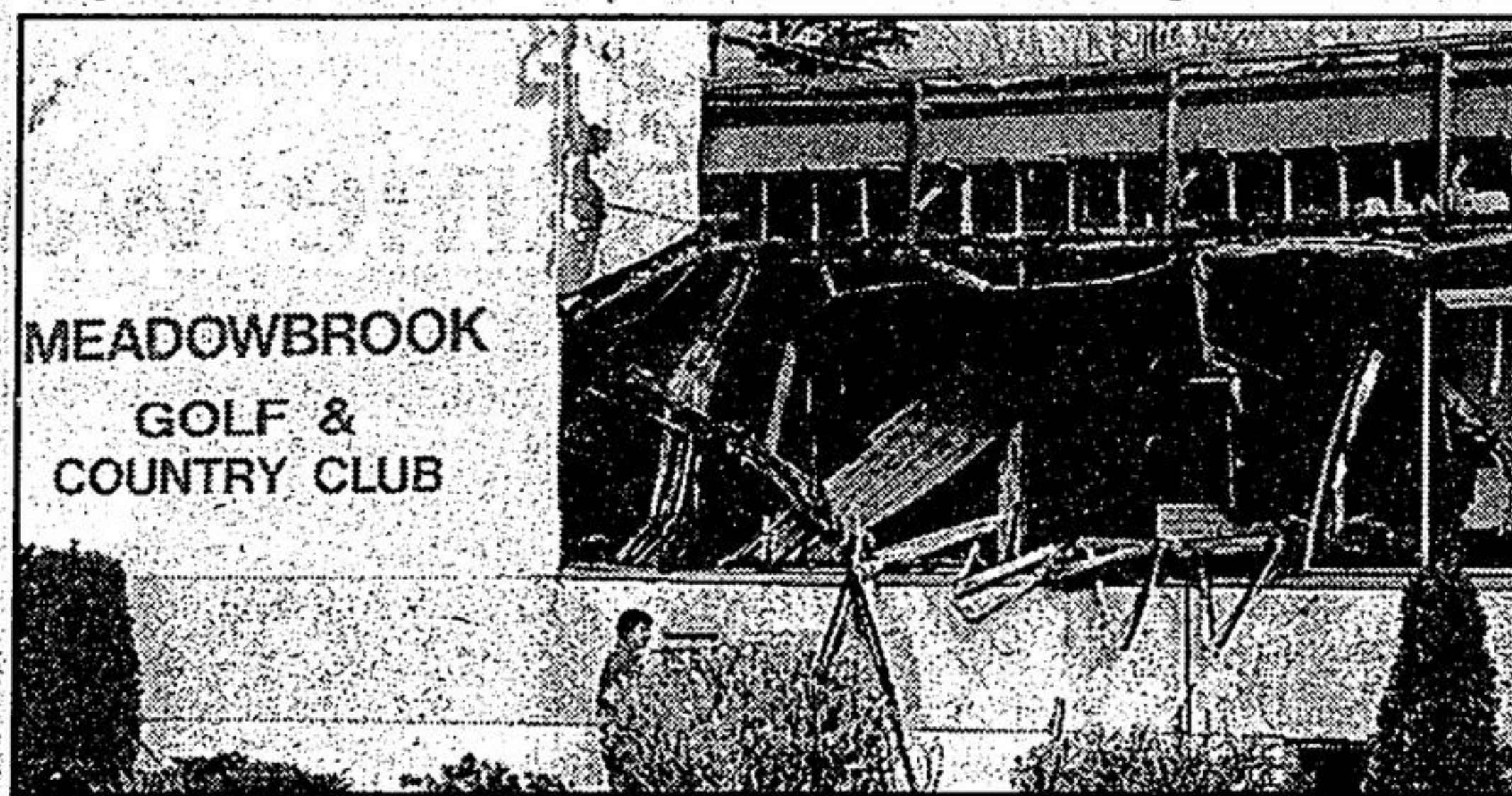
Mystery Dinner for tonight which has been moved to the Maples of Ballantrae.

Most of the damage from the fire was sustained at the front of the main building.

A newer addition at the rear which Pinkney said was built about eight years ago was not damaged structurally, but there

was some smoke damage, according to Emmerson.

The cause of the fire is still being investigated.



Meadowbrook Golf & Country Club suffered about one million damage in a Wednesday night blaze. Photo by JANET RICHARDS

## Council to decide on Sunday booze sales

Ontario beer and liquor stores can legally open Sundays after Dec. 7, Consumer Minister Dave Tsubouchi announced yesterday.

The permanent Sunday openings, following recent trial periods, are a response to strong consumer demand for convenience, Tsubouchi said in a release.

"The people of Ontario have told us what they want," said the Markham MPP.

"Consumers have told us repeatedly that liquor and beer stores are just like other large retailers and should be open on Sunday."

But an assistant to Tsubouchi said stores will open Sundays between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. only if potential sales make it worthwhile.

Also, local governments will still have the option to keep them closed, said Deb McCain.

"Any municipality that has concerns or does not want their stores open does not have to have them," she said.

Stouffville is one of only 17 communities in the province that did not participate in trial Sunday openings this August.

Mayor Emmerson is taking a

wait-and-see approach, suggesting council review the issue and check with local beer and liquor store employees to see how they view permanent Sunday openings.

According to Ward 5 Councillor Judy Scala, who doesn't oppose Sunday booze sales, "It's a freedom of choice issue. I have no problem with people buying (alcohol) on Sunday."

Ward 4 Councillor Cliff Dunkeld said it's a matter of choice. "Besides, people will just drive to Markham to get it."

Whitchurch-Stouffville's economic development officer Eric Lismanis said buying booze on Sunday won't make or break the town. "Studies show that in tourist areas business does increase with this. But I don't think it will have much impact here."

Helene Johnson, local Chamber of Commerce president, said, "I don't think it matters one way or the other."

Tsubouchi said the Sunday hours will also reduce black market alcohol sales and smuggling.

~Mike Adler and Joan Ransberry

## Dobrich wins Ward 1 in recount

It's official: Peter Dobrich is the Ward 1 councillor.

A vote recount carried out yesterday morning confirmed that Dobrich was, indeed, the people's choice in the municipal election.

Ward 1 candidate Sophie Angelis called for the recount after the

results of Monday's municipal election showed a 10-vote spread between her and Dobrich.

Monday's results were: 306 votes for Dobrich compared to 296 for Angelis.

In the recount, one of the ballots was questioned, said town clerk

Michelle Kennedy.

She ruled in favor of Dobrich giving him an 11-vote spread.

On Dec. 1 at the inaugural meeting in Latcham Hall, Dobrich will be sworn in along with the other members of the new council.

~Joan Ransberry

## Winter 'unofficially' blasts through town

Mother Nature jumped the gun yesterday, proving, once again, she doesn't go by the book.

At the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, the "official" winter season begins Nov. 17. When winter hit with a vengeance yesterday, motorists tested their winter driving skills, parents scrambled to find the kids' mitts and boots and pedestrians were seen slipping and sliding on town sidewalks.

While an early taste of winter either amuses or annoys most of us, it's serious business for local Public Works director Paul Whitehouse. He was forced to take the town's winter service response plan and "push it ahead."

While the town-owned equipment, including salters and sanders were in working order when the storm hit at about 4 a.m., Whitehouse couldn't put a full compliment out on the streets—

The town contracts out two of its winter maintenance units. Since the contracts don't kick in until next week, "our units had to pick up the difference," said Whitehouse.

Meanwhile, Friday morning, the fire department responded to a gas leak at the corner of Fairview and Rupert avenues. Because of the gusty winds, the gas vapors were blown off protecting nearby residents.

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**The Tribune** Stouffville

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