

INVESTIGATION CONTINUES: York Region Police Sgt. John Sheldon, right, confers with an officer behind the fence where a vicious dog attack claimed the life of a Stouffville girl Wednesday afternoon.

Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE

# Long-term care gets big boost

Ontario's new investment in long-term care looks like a serious effort to put much-needed facilities at the community level, local health care experts say.

The enormous amount promised — \$1.2 billion, supporting 20,000 new beds in homes for the elderly over the next eight years — follows strong, similar recommendations to boost care for the aged this week from the province's Health Services Restructuring Commission.

It's a major step forward, concluded Dr. Helena Jaczek, York Region's medical officer of health said yesterday.

"It's better late than never," Jaczek said. "It's long overdue but at least there seems to be a commitment."

The announcement included a promise to "add the equivalent" of 175 nursing homes or homes for the aged in Ontario and rebuild 100 outdated long-term care facilities. As well, the province is trying to simplify the overly-complex system that funds and assigns people to long-term care.

All that is good for York Region, where development of long-term care has been "virtually frozen" for 15 years as the population climbed, said John Wilson, interim chair of the Simcoe-York District

Health Council.

"We have sort of drifted from being somewhere in the middle to being a have-not region," said Wilson.

The province also released new design standards for nursing homes and homes for the aged, "leveling the playing field" between all private and non-profit facilities, which must now be built or rebuilt to the same standards and get the same funding, Jaczek said. The news is particularly good for the region's long-term facility in Newmarket, which has waited a year for permission to do renovations, she said.

Cuts the commission has ordered to some hospitals "make a lot more sense," now that the government is putting dollars into the community for long-term care, said Graham Constantine, the DHC's executive director.

A health ministry spokesperson said figures for York Region won't be released until tomorrow. The commission, however, said the region, which had 1806 long-term care beds in 1996 in its nursing homes and homes for the aged, needs 1,014 more by 2003. There should also be at least 3,441 spaces in supportive housing, long-term home care and attendant care within the region, compared to just 1,468 in 1996, the commission suggested.

## Library Ballantrae bound: councillor

JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Reporter

A library branch is planned for Ballantrae, *The Tribune* has learned.

Library Board member and Ward 5 Councillor Judy Scala has confirmed that the library board is in the preliminary stages of building a satellite branch in the northern hamlet.

"If one is needed anywhere, it's needed in Ballantrae," said Scala.

Nothing is absolute, stressed library board chairman Jan Williams. "But we are discussing it. It is a forward motion," she said.

The preferred location for the library branch is "somewhere in the vicinity of the Ballantrae Community Centre and the Ballantrae Public School," said

### EXCLUSIVE

Scala.

Community's with satellite branches have reported good things, while other communities have had problems, said Scala. "We really have to look into it," said Scala.

The library board is working with school boards and the town

to prove "some kind of (library) service" for Ballantrae, a report stated.

The library board has not determined the cost of a branch for Ballantrae, said Scala. As well as investigation location possibilities, the library board is looking at capital and operating costs for the Ballantrae project.

Meanwhile, the plan to build a major expansion at the library in downtown Stouffville continues.

The library board hopes to get a commitment from Whitchurch-Stouffville Council for construction startup in 1999.

"We're very excited about it all," said Scala.

"Things are moving ahead."

### Appointment



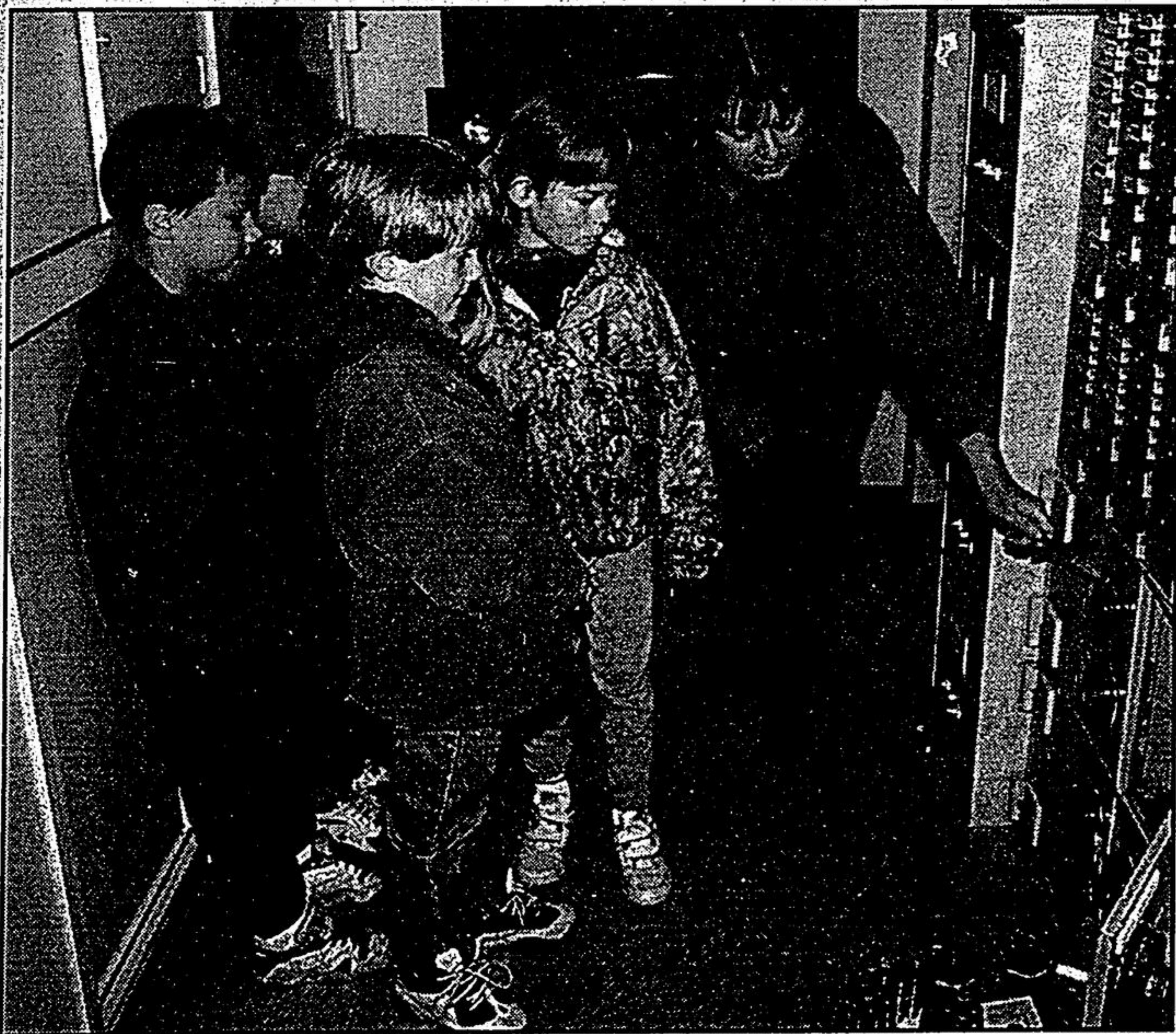
IAN PROUDFOOT

John Baxter, president of Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd., is pleased to announce the appointment of Ian Proudfoot as publisher of *The Markham Economist & Sun* and *The Whitchurch-Stouffville Tribune* and *The Uxbridge Tribune*.

Mr. Proudfoot is also publisher of *The Era-Banner* and *The Liberal*, Metroland newspapers that serve the rest of York Region and south Simcoe County.

Mr. Proudfoot replaces Patricia Pappas, who has announced her retirement.

The appointment is effective immediately.



YOU CAN BANK ON IT: Students from Willowgrove Primary School toured the Scotiabank on Main Street Monday morning to learn how banks work. Pictured here are Jared Henriques, Daniel Kalil, Sarah Legemaate and Matthew Morris. Assistant Manager Susan Law shows the kids the vault area.

Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE

## Role models meet girls

Tomorrow, about 350 York Region girls will meet an aircraft mechanic, a psychiatrist, a veterinarian and a chemical engineer.

And all these professionals — and others at the district's public school board's annual Women in Science and Technology Conference — will be women.

Seeing such role models will be important for the Grade 7 and 8 girls, said Gord Wagner, the board's curriculum consultant.

"A lot of the girls still think that math and science is sort of for the boys," he said this week. "We want to break that myth."

Almost all the women from science and technology-related careers at the conference, held at Seneca College's King Campus, are appearing free of charge, Wagner added.

### Correction

Markham Stouffville Hospital has 78 acute care beds. Ontario's Health Services Restructuring Commission has recommended adding 29 more by 2003, not 107 beds as was suggested in an article Tuesday. *The Tribune* regrets the error.