

# Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper  
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## Views ON THE News

A FORUM FOR PUBLIC OPINION

**Q:** Thirty children died in the first 10 months of this year while being supervised by Ontario children's aid societies. Because of this alarming fact, tougher child protection laws are being implemented. Do you think these changes will make a difference?

It will make a difference.

**JIM ROWLAND  
MARKHAM**

Yes, it will make a difference. We have to protect the children, of course.

**ELLA HUNT  
STOUFFVILLE**

I'm hoping they will. The figures are alarming. Hopefully it will reduce the violence against children. If we can't rely on Children's Aid, who can we rely on?

**JANE HADDAD  
MARKHAM**

It couldn't hurt and it's senseless that children die. It's supposed to be an aid society and you'd think they can do a lot better than that.

**CHARLES DAVISON  
MARKHAM**

They should make a difference. If these numbers are correct, they are incredible and the fact children are dying makes it worse.

**BRYAN DIZON  
MARKHAM**

It may help to a certain degree. Generally speaking, I think the children's aid society has too much power. There should be more interaction between children's aid and the parents, rather than coming down on them like a ton of bricks.

**TERRY NAIPAUL  
MARKHAM**

Yes, I think it will make a difference. They should put a tougher screening process in place, because there's a lot of creeps out there, and hopefully children will be in better hands.

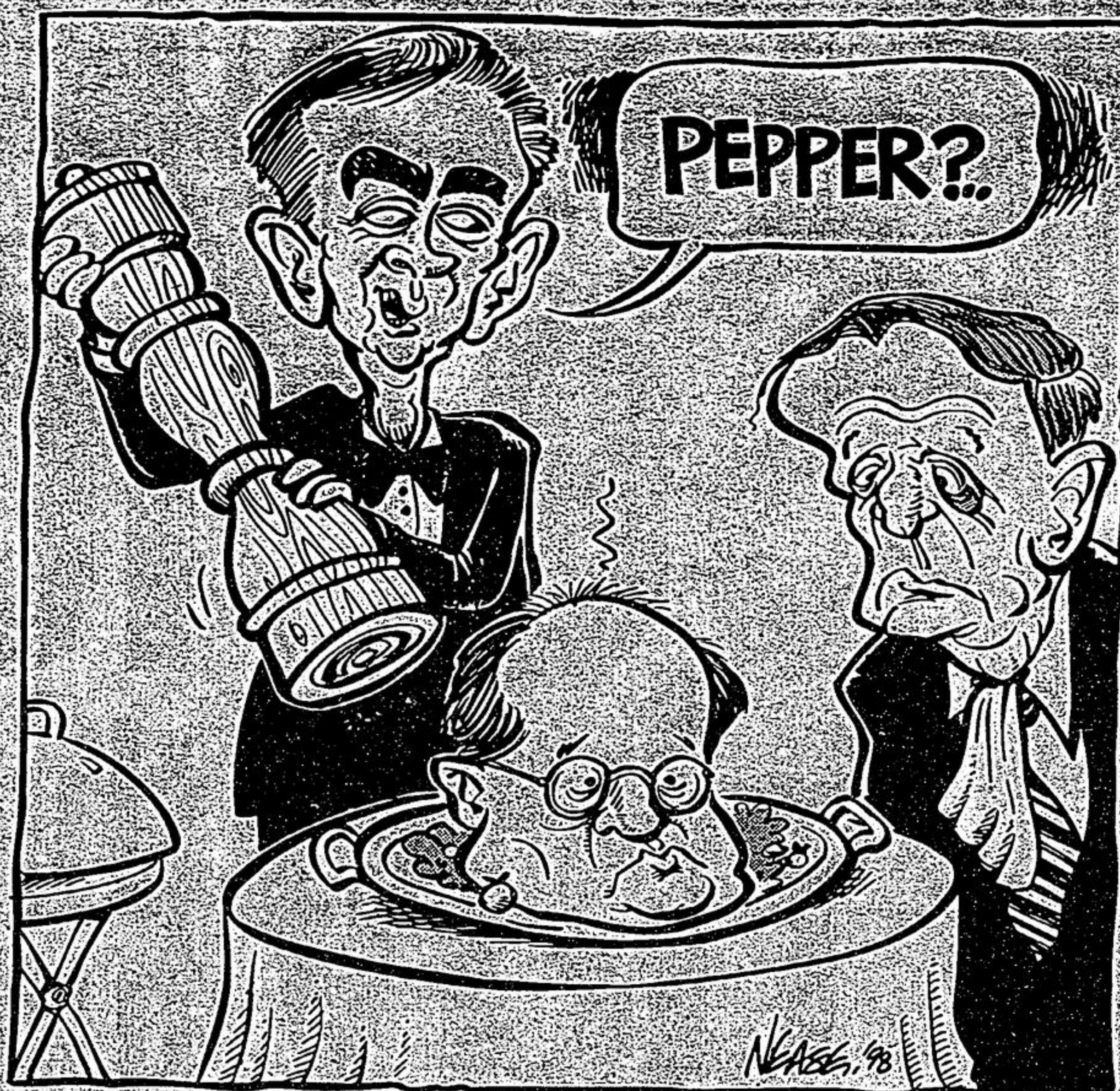
**MIKE BANVILLE  
MARKHAM**

## THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

York Region's Catholic school board released its Grade 3 test results this week. Do you think these tests are an accurate way of measuring student and overall school performance?

Submit contributions to  
Views on the News, fax: (905) 640-5477  
E-mail: thetrib@istar.ca

# OPINION



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Education system needs drastic reform

Like most parents in York Region, I find myself in a state of irritation and agitation over the recent unrest in our public school system.

Having several family members and close friends who are teachers, I try hard to be sympathetic to their plight.

It goes without saying that they have one of the most critical and challenging jobs in all of society.

Yet one can't help but be grieved by how this affects our children's education, to say nothing of the inconvenience and lack of stability for families.

I said to my husband over dinner this week that this educational system needs drastic reform.

And I predicted we are going to observe the complete self-destruction of the public school system over the next 10 years.

Were it not for the suffering of the students and other innocent bystanders along the way of this self-destructive process, it would not be such a bad thing.

I, for one, would cheer the introduction of a voucher system, for instance, so that we could choose to which school our tax dollars are applied.

My husband raised the question as to whether it is the system that needs reform or the people.

He pointed out that the educational system has not essentially changed since the time we were students and these bitter disputes were so much more rare 30 years ago.

Perhaps what has changed is the attitudes of those in positions of power. Do the decision makers for all parties

involved lack the wisdom and maturity necessary for an amicable or win-win solution?

I can't help but dream of how things might be different if these leaders entered into discussion wondering what they could give of themselves and their people to solve the impasse rather than what they could get.

I long to hear negotiators from any side speak with a voice of selflessness and grace rather than one of anger and greed. Is it the system or the people that need renewal? Something has to give, and soon.

In the meantime, young minds are learning sad lessons about problem solving and none of us stand to gain by such lack of accord.

**JANE PHILPOTT  
STOUFFVILLE**

### How can we afford luxury?

I had the privilege last week of accompanying two women to the Jane Snow Aquatic Centre in North York.

It is a marvelous facility of an Olympic-sized swimming pool and a therapeutic pool. We spent two hours there during which time one patron used the pool for 30 minutes and six people used the therapeutic pool.

There were three staff members in the reception area and one supervisor, and two lifeguards on duty.

If the City of North York's population can not support the use of a pool to any great degree, will someone please explain to the taxpayers of this small municipality how we can support such a luxury?

**MARION WELLS  
STOUFFVILLE**



Dave Teetzel

## Here's a cheaper way to slow down speeding cars

**Y**ork Region doesn't have the only police force to use creative ideas in its traffic strategy.

You have, no doubt, seen Etobicoke's cardboard cops on TV and in newspapers. The idea is that drivers slow down when they see the decoy officers.

I can't help but think it would have worked better if they hadn't advertised this fact on TV and in newspapers.

York Region seems to be going in the opposite direction — using cruisers that don't look like cop cars from a distance so you think every car up ahead could be waiting to nail you for speeding.

Of course, if you wanted to use cardboard cut-outs to get drivers to slow down, there is a cheaper and more effective alternative.

Some record stores have these life-size cardboard cutouts of Shania Twain. Most of the testosterone-charged, gap-toothed yokels who tail-gate me in their pickup trucks would be more likely to slow down for Shania than for any cop.

Of course, they would have to give her a sign that could be read when you get close up that says, "I'm only cardboard — eyes on the road, bub."

Police should also use high-tech methods to control speeding. For instance, they could post fake e-mail messages warning that teenage gangs are shooting anyone who exceeds the posted speed limit.

Recent experience shows people are more inclined to believe far-fetched tales on the Internet than any official statement from the police.

Another excellent way to slow traffic to a virtual standstill would be to hold more Santa Claus parades. I know, they held at least 137 parades in York Region last weekend — but why not spread them out all year?

Every day, they could close down a different major thoroughfare for a couple of hours, then dispatch large slow-moving floats all over the region to back up traffic.

Anyway, this cardboard cutout thing probably has applications far beyond policing. We could reduce the size of local government by replacing three-quarters of our politicians with cardboard cutouts that are propped up at ribbon-cuttings.

And I'm sending cardboard reporters to their stultifyingly uneventful council meetings. Just don't tell anybody.

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Subscription rates by mail: 1 year - \$69.55 (Tuesday only), Canadian Publications Mail Agreement Number 1247

The Stouffville Tribune, published every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd. group of newspapers, which includes the Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Barrie Advance, Barry's Bay This Week, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes, Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Action Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland/Penetangishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Newmarket-Aurora, Georgina Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Orillia Today, Oshawa/Whitby/Clarington/Port Perry This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Today's Seniors, Uxbridge Tribune and City of York Guardian.

