

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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Views ON THE News

A FORUM FOR PUBLIC OPINION

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

I don't think they are accurate because they are an overall opinion, but don't give an accurate individual account. They are averaging the figures out and it doesn't work, just like those polls in Quebec.

JOHN SHAW

No. I don't believe so. These tests don't measure individual potential. It's strictly academic. If a child does badly, it ruins self-esteem.

LINDSAY SIMICK

I think so. If they don't have these tests, they don't have other ways to measure the students. They have to be able to compare students against students in other systems, not just other students.

KARL YUNG

Students are not prepared for the future. In the old country it's better. They could take a student in Grade 3 and compare it to a similar student in Italy. They would be like Kindergarten students here as they won't be able to touch those overseas in academic excellence. I'm talking 40 to 50 years ago and I think it's still the same now.

VINCE BENEDETTO

Personally, I believe in standardized testing. I come from a family of teachers and they all disagree with me. We have some fun discussions like, "What do you know about education?" and I say, "I went through the system."

CHARLIE HASTINGS

I noticed a lot of the schools fell below the average, which is atrocious. This is also stressful for the kids. I believe the schools with excellent grades probably prep the kids for these exams. So I don't know how accurate the whole thing is. And if the kids fall below the mark, they are made to feel inferior.

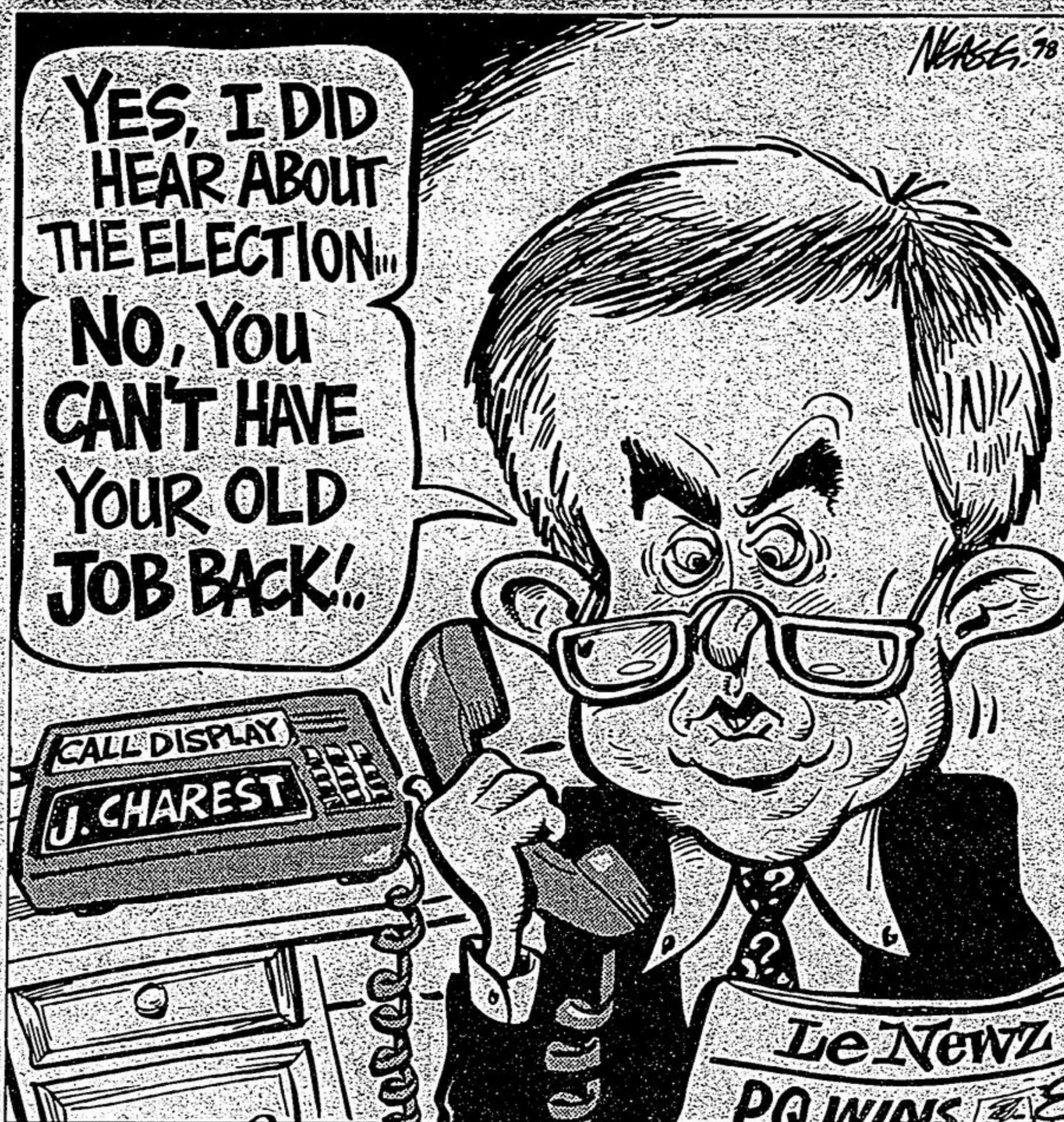
DANIELLE MALISKA

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Will you spend more money buying gifts this holiday season than you spent last year. Why or why not?

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

OPINION



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

End women assault

It was a typical December day in 1989 at the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal and a man calmly walked into an engineering class with a plan.

He proceeded to systematically shoot at the women in the classroom, murdering 14 women. His victims were chosen simply because they were female. Men were not targeted in this all-too-familiar act of violence against women.

This massacre has been dismissed as a random act of violence by a madman. Sadly it is not.

Instead, it was a focused, well thought out attack on 14 women who were all daughters, mothers, sisters, nieces, partners, co-workers and friends.

Is it any wonder that these types of attacks continue to happen in our society? We continue to teach our male children to be aggressive, driven, and uncompromising. We raise our female children to be submissive, gentle and tolerant.

These differences are even more profound when we look at statistics which state that:

- One in four women experience physical abuse in an intimate relationship
- Women are four times as likely to be sexually assaulted by someone they know than by a stranger
- Ninety-five per cent of sexual assault cases are perpetrated by men, 25 per cent of all rapes are committed by husbands

These statistics were taken from The

Canadian Panel on Violence against Women, 1993.

These facts reflect the power imbalance between men and women. Such imbalance is the foundation for violence against women which is supported and sustained through our society.

York Region, often thought of as a safe community, saw 615 women since January 1998 seek assistance at the region's two women's shelters, Sandgate Women's shelter and Yellow Brick House. These women were fleeing violence, violence that happens in their own homes by people they know and love.

In addition to this figure are hundreds of women who sought support through outreach programs of shelters and community services for abused women. The Women's Sexual Assault Helpline receives on average 244 calls a month from women in our community.

Making a difference in York Region means speaking up, supporting your community shelters and women's services by donating your resources or time. Write your local politicians expressing your concerns. Challenge gender stereotypes and pass it on to the children in your life.

Making a difference means saying no to violence. No woman should ever be abused.

This letter is written in honour of the 14 women who died Dec. 6, 1989, and to women who continue to face violence in their daily lives.

PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S ISSUES, YORK REGION SEXUAL ASSAULT HELPLINE AND OUTREACH SERVICES



Roy Green

Reading Dickens aloud can tame any Scrooge

Readings from a book is a cinch, right? But it gets a bit tougher when the book was written in the style of the time.

And the time was 1843. It's Charlie Dickens' A Christmas Carol and I'm one of five people taking part in a dramatic reading of that Christmas classic at the Newmarket Theatre on Dec. 19.

The author himself had great success travelling the world and reading a condensed version of the story to packed houses.

"We have rarely witnessed or shared an evening of such genuine enjoyment, never before remembering to have seen a crowded assembly of 3,000 people hanging on the lips of a single reader," wrote the London Leader of his first public reading of the story in 1857.

Easy for him. After all, he wrote the darn thing.

AN EVIL EYE

No one denies that Gholly was one heck of a writer.

Reading his works aloud, however, is something else.

It's a challenge to catch a breath while you're intoning. "No children asked him what it was o'clock, no man or woman ever once in all his life inquired the way to such and such a place of Scrooge. Even the blindman's dog appeared to know him and when they saw him coming on, would tug their owners into doorways and up courts. And then would wag their tails as though they said no eye at all is better than an evil eye."

And that's one of the easier passages. My fellow readers — Durham-York MPP Julia Munroe, CBC Radio reporter Maureen Brosnahan, freelance broadcaster Norm Dynes and community theatre actor Cliff Copeland — all have tougher paragraphs, and, I must admit, handle them much better than I.

Anyway, if you're interested in finding out if I can survive a number of 650-word sentences, call the theatre box office at 953-5122. Proceeds from ticket sales go to the Newmarket and District Association for Community Living.

And take note, I'm retiring from dramatic readings after this.

Like Scrooge says, I wish to remain anonymous.

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