

Stouffville Tribune

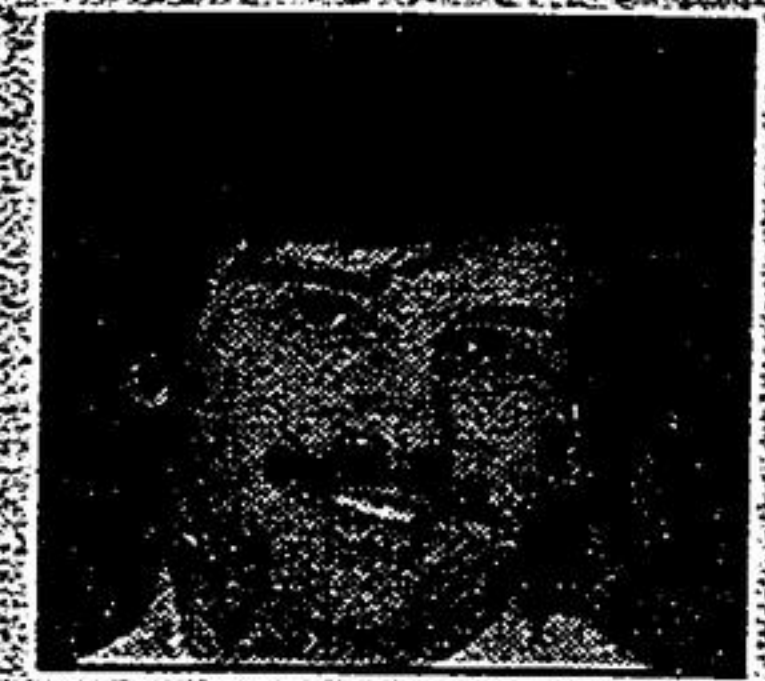
A Metroland community newspaper
37 Sandford Dr., Suite 306, Stouffville, Ont. L4A 7X5

Publisher - Ian Proudfoot

General Manager - Alvin Brouwer

Editor-in-chief Brenda Larson
Advertising Director Debra Weller
Business Manager Margaret Fleming
Regional Editor Brian Kirtik
Classified Manager Stephen Mathieu
Office Manager Vivian O'Neil
Editor Tracy Kibble
Distribution Director Barry Goodyear

OPINION



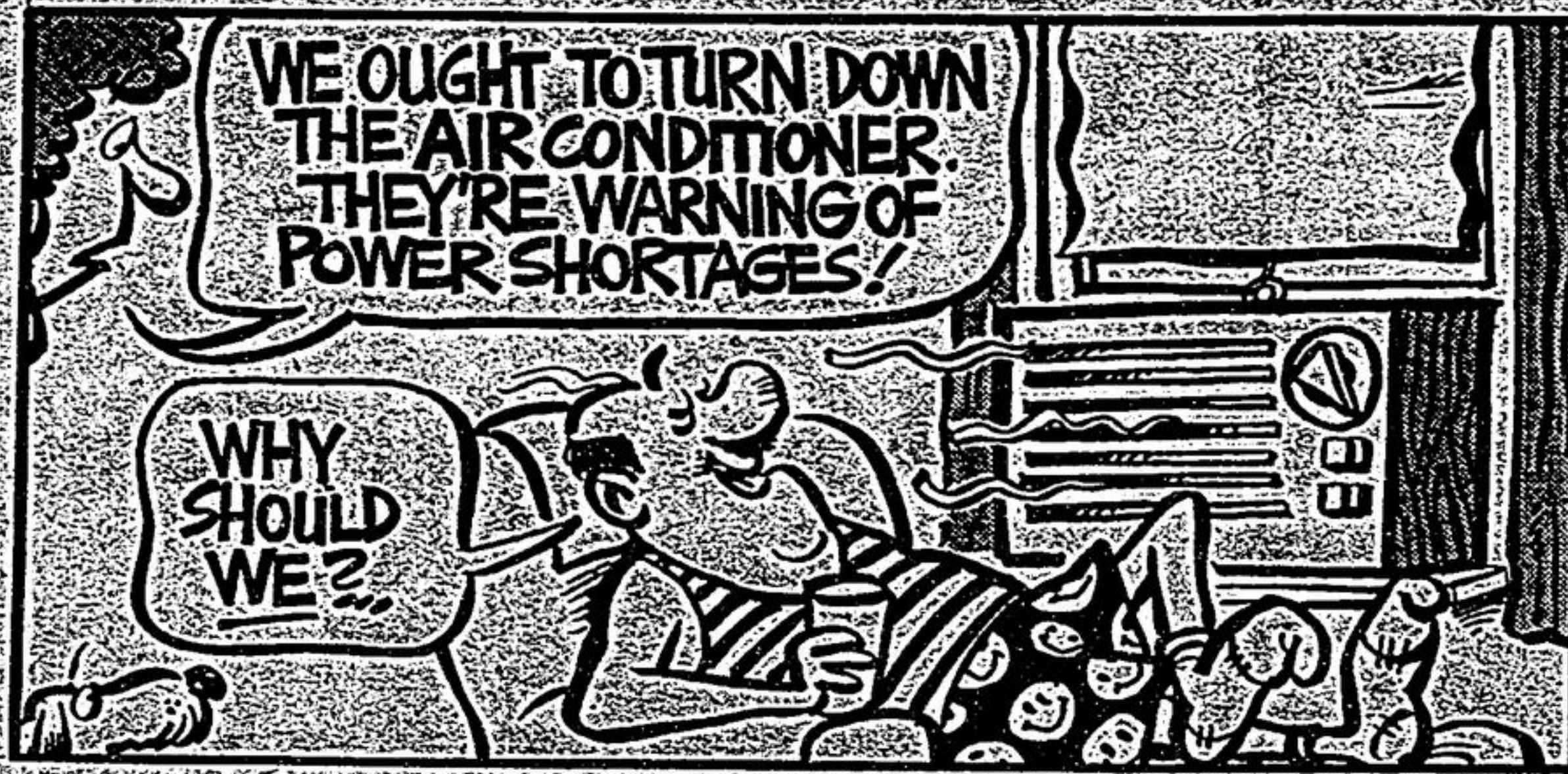
Dave Teetzel

Pop machines are preparing to take over

Nobody believes me when I tell them our technology is rising up to destroy us. The fact that my computer crashes and my printer fails at precisely 20 minutes to deadline every day is pure coincidence. I'm being paranoid when I say my car has a chip that communicates with my bank computer, allowing it to break down every time I have more than \$100. So how do all you pencil-necked techno-twerps explain the Australian pop machines? Emergency services Down Under are gridlocked because soda pop machines are making crank calls to their equivalent of 911. Naturally, modern science has a perfectly reasonable explanation for why a drink dispenser suddenly turns into a nightmarish amalgam of Hal 2000 and Bart Simpson. These pop machines are programmed to call a special distribution number when they get low, so someone can come out and restock them. But there was a computer glitch that caused them to revert to a default phone number, 000. Unfortunately, Australian emergency services use 000 instead of 911, probably because it's easier to remember when you're drunk.

OUT OF MOUNTAIN DEW

So now the emergency line is being tied up by machines calling to say they're out of Mountain Dew. But why should you worry? After all, the rebel machines are on an island on the other side of the world. Who cares if a few convicts' descendants get eaten by dingoes because the local constabulary can't work a phone? But thanks to the wonders of technology, the entire world is wired together. The Antipodean fizzroids have access to our phones, faxes, computers — they can talk to OUR pop machines. I am beginning to suspect that about two-thirds of the calls I receive on an average day actually come from pop machines. Calls like "Uh, the mayor is here and he's officially opening a Pepsi. Can you come and take a picture?" For years now, the tech support whizzes who are supposed to fix these things have doggedly applied the one and only solution they know. The machines are getting ready to turn the tables. On Jan. 1, 2000, they're going to shut off society as we know it and reboot.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pesticides overused and abused at high cost to all

Hooray to M. Macdonald for her recent letter concerning the spraying of lawn pesticides. Each year I become outraged by the overuse and abuse of these harmful chemicals.

Little do people know their war with dandelions and insects may be causing irreparable damage to our health and even the genetic makeup of future generations.

Although lawn care companies extol the safety of their chemicals, I don't believe it. Let's face it, making money is their bottom line.

Exposure to these chemicals is enormous. Daily, we are bombarded with huge quantities of toxic poisons sprayed by lawn care companies and homeowners. It has truly gotten out of hand.

Are pesticides playing a role in increased cancer and auto-immune disease? Why take that risk?

Since synthetic pesticides were developed for chemical warfare during the Second World War, man has been using them to tamper with and control nature in very dangerous ways. With the rise of suburbia in the '50s, everyone dreamed of the perfect home with the perfect lawn. What price have we paid for that perfect picture?

And the most ironic part of all? A lush, healthy lawn, if maintained properly, is a lot better off without chemicals damaging the root systems. Ours is green, healthy and proudly pesticide free.

For an eye-opening look at the startling dangers of pesticide use, read *Silent*

Spring by Rachel Carson, written in 1962. You would think mankind, supposedly the most intelligent species, would be a faster learner.

IOANNE HENEY
UNIONVILLE

Quality at public schools slowly declining

In an attempt to defend himself as a "quasi-parental" teacher, the letter writer of "Teacher test is yet another invented crisis" (July 3) proves a case of paranoia. He asks an inane, but interesting question about a "crisis that will only bring further tension and disruption to Ontario classrooms?"

I would think that it is the obligation of teachers to put their hearts and souls in an effort to bring out the best from a student, and not bring further tension and disruption of classes by creating unnecessary strikes and demanding more money (as if they are owed) and lesser classroom time.

The truth is, the quality in public schools is slowly declining. Since I cannot afford to send my child to a private school, and as a taxpayer, I expect my tax dollars to be implemented to the fullest, even to the extent of testing the competence of teachers in order to improve the quality of education.

We do not know, as of yet, what the test is based on, so long as it benefits both teachers and students.

BOB ELLIOT
MARKHAM

Views ON THE News

A FORUM FOR PUBLIC OPINION

Q: With the recent shooting of a teenage girl in a Markham parking lot, are you concerned that young people's lives are becoming more violent, and if so, what are the causes?

Yes, I'm concerned. I don't think enough time is spent with kids when they are young, so they stray a bit. And of course there is violence on TV. That is definitely a big cause.

STACEY SOTIROFF

Yes, I am absolutely. It's lack of parental supervision. With both parents working there is not enough family support to guide kids morally, and children are being raised by others.

TONY PANOFF

I am concerned, yes. Television is a root cause. I think some of these television shows are not good for children because of all the violence in them. Parents should not let their children watch these shows.

KI MAN

It almost sounds racist, but it is immigration. People commit crimes here who should have been deported a long time ago. I'm not saying that's all of it. I'm sure TV and movies add to it, but they don't teach them to kill for the sake of killing.

BRIAN BAKER

It's hard to say. As children we had problems too, but maybe more so now. Movies and TV are much more violent. The Three Stooges used to hit each other over the head with a hammer, but it is more graphic now.

GEORGE HOSKINS

They are becoming more violent. I think it's drugs and parents neglecting their children. Life has become so fast moving, parents don't have time to properly look after their kids.

SHEHZAD KHAN

I don't think they are becoming more violent. But as to the cause of violence, it would be easy to say TV. Everything is easier to get. The world is moving at too fast a pace. Parents don't have time for their kids and they can't raise them. And teachers only have the kids till 3:30 and with class sizes so big there's not much they can do.

JULIA COTTAM

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

The OPP in York Region is investigating what is being called the worst case of road rage in Ontario after a Markham man was severely beaten during a traffic altercation on Hwy. 404. Do you believe road rage violence is increasing? Have you witnessed any road rage incidents?

Submit contributions to

Views on the News, fax: (905) 640-5477

E-mail: thetrib@istar.ca

Stouffville Tribune

Serving the community since 1888

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, Falmouth 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.

Phone: (905) 640-2100 • Classified: 1-800-743-3353 • Distribution: (905) 640-2100 • E-mail: thetrib@istar.ca

