

PROFILE: Guidance counsellor head puts down his pen after 30 years of teaching and counselling students in schools across York Region

# Taking a new direction

## Dabbling in the garden and crafting with wood will guide counsellor through retirement

BY BRUCE STAPLEY  
Correspondent

**D**oug McCammon might want to start wading through some of his old geography books in search of travel destinations.

The Stouffville District Secondary School guidance department head retired June 30, bringing to an end a fulfilling career spanning three decades.

McCammon taught geography upon taking his first teaching position at Langstaff Secondary School in Richmond Hill in 1969.

But it wasn't long before he switched streams.

"The guidance head at Langstaff said, 'I think you'd make a good guidance counsellor,'" McCammon recalled. He earned his guidance credentials studying part time over the next three years.

Following four years at Langstaff, McCammon took a guidance counseling position at Thornlea Secondary School in Thornhill, staying for 12 years.

He assumed his current post at SDSS in 1987 after a two-year stint at Sutton D.H.S.

McCammon, who was a Stouffville resident from 1970-95, looks back on a career that was both challenging and satisfying.

"It's been a fabulous career. I've been able to do the things I really love."

He said he enjoyed the variety that enabled him to teach, counsel students, and serve as a high school coach. "It was always an eventful day."

McCammon noted a shift in the concerns of students during his years as a guidance counsellor.

The severity of the students' social needs has changed. The number of teens who are on the edge, desperate for help, has increased. Suicide is a much bigger issue today, whereas an unwed mother is nothing unusual anymore.

As he leaves, McCammon said a recent name change in his department from guidance to guidance/career education/co-op indicates a shift in direction. "We're going to see a lot more referrals to social workers for personal/emotional problems. The emphasis

will be on career counselling."

The provincial government initiative will see guidance teachers spending more time in the classroom and less time with individual students in their offices.

For McCammon, 53, retirement brings with it a host of options. He's an avid woodworker with an eye towards building and selling custom furnishing.

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He also enjoys dabbling in gardening and landscape projects around his Richmond Hill home.

"I've decided not to make any commitments right away," he said. "But with my energy I can't imagine sitting around."

McCammon hopes his retirement will give him more time to tend to the family cottage near Minden. He looks forward to canoe trips with sons Jeremy, 27, and Tim, 25.

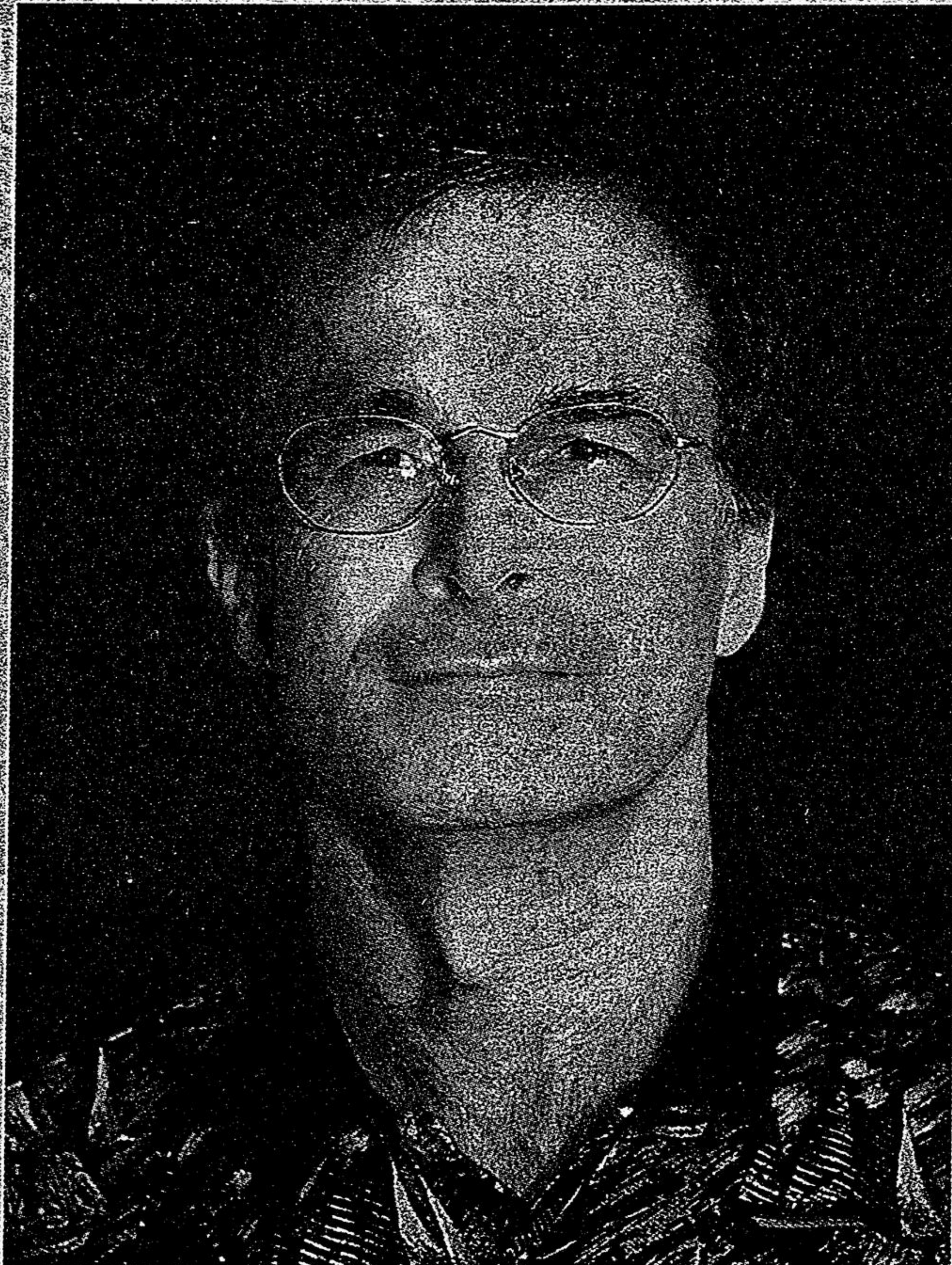
Following in his father's footsteps, Jeremy hopes to begin a career as an elementary school teacher in York Region this fall.

McCammon also intends to include travel to parts of Canada, Europe, the Mediterranean and Australia in his retirement plans.

"There's such a long list of places I'd like to visit," He plans to continue his volunteer commitment with Pathways, a Markham organization that provides houses for homeless young people, parent support groups, and parent-child resource centres. He has served as Pathways chairperson for two years.

McCammon said he'll miss the camaraderie with staff members at SDSS.

"It's such an outstanding social environment. That's always been special for me."



STAFF PHOTO/SIGERD WITTEVEEN

Doug McCammon leaves his post as guidance department head at SDSS after 12 years. His retirement plans include some travel, outdoor trips with his two sons and continuing with volunteer work.

TRANSPORTATION: Provincial downloading is putting funding pressure onto property owners' backs

# GTA suffers from failing transportation network

BY LISA QUEEN  
Staff Writer

GTA politicians will use the post-election honeymoon period to convince Premier Mike Harris to make transportation funding a priority.

There is a small window of opportunity to get the province to listen to GTA transportation concerns, said Hamilton-Wentworth chairperson Terry Cooke, who, along with York Region chairperson Bill Fisch, heads the transportation committee for the Greater Toronto Services Board.

Fisch has already started the lobbying, by discussing the need for more transportation funding with new Transportation Minister David Tumbull and new Municipal Affairs Minister Steve Gilchrist several weeks ago.

According to David McCleary, who heads the GTSB task force on transportation funding, the GTA is at a crossroads.

If more funding isn't allocated to transportation, the GTA will lose its competitive advantage to U.S. cities in the Great Lakes area.

"Thanks to provincial and federal downloading, property taxpayers are now responsible for financing most roads and transit systems in the GTA, with the exception of the provincial 400-series highways."

The GTSB is pushing to have Queen's Park and Ottawa fund 66 per cent of future road and transit capital projects, through gas taxes, driver licensing and vehicle registration fees, tolls collected from Hwy. 407, and the provincial sales tax generated through vehicle sales and leases.

McCleary said the province can no longer ignore the fact that the GTA and Hamilton-Wentworth — Canada's economic engine — is in decline because of its failing transportation network.

The GTSB is pushing to have Queen's Park and Ottawa fund 66 per cent of future road and transit capital projects, through gas taxes, driver license and vehicle registration fees.

The area is home to 5.1 million residents and provides 2.7 million jobs.

The 2.78 million vehicles used

by residents and businesses in the area make 10 million trips every day.

And 70 per cent of the highway network is congested, with the QEW and Hwy. 401 experiencing bumper-to-bumper traffic for most of the business day. Drivers trying to avoid highways are clogging arterial roads.

Meanwhile, Union Station, the TTC and the majority of GO train lines are operating at capacity.

Growth in the GTA over the next 20 years will add two million residents, 1.4 million jobs, 1 million more vehicles and 5 million additional trips a day.

McCleary said another \$580 million a year must be invested in transportation infrastructure to keep service at current levels. To start gaining ground, another \$800

million a year is needed.

McCleary said failing to address transportation will hurt the GTA's quality of life, increase air pollution and hike costs to businesses — leading to a loss of competitive advantages.

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He pointed to a 10-year-old University of Toronto study that pegged the cost of congestion in the GTA at \$2 billion a year.

McCleary estimated that cost has now doubled.