

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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EDITORIAL

Anti-speeding projects will make streets safer

Growing pains continue to plague our roadways.

As both commercial and residential development booms, our highways and residential streets are experiencing an increase in traffic.

And with that increase in traffic comes an increase in chaos — frustrated drivers who resort to speeding, running red lights, failing to yield... the list goes on.

Despite the best efforts of our law enforcement officials, they cannot be everywhere at once. Programs such as last weekend's Tough Love project are effective in showing a police presence on our roadways and temporarily slowing down aggressive drivers. While it is ideal on a holiday weekend to keep some semblance of control on traffic, it's not the kind of initiative we should expect to see daily.

But there is still reason to be optimistic. And that kernel of optimism sprouts from the commitment and dedication of people.

New citizen-driver, or citizen-endorsed initiatives are cropping up throughout the region and they might just help calm traffic chaos.

Last week in Markham, speeding was virtually absent from the Carlton Park area, where York Regional Police vehicles parked on grass, uniformed officers stood in the area and television cameras were pointed at drivers.

In addition, a bright yellow sign warned drivers that the stretch of Carlton Road in Unionville was now a speed watch area, where licence plate numbers of speeders are scribbled down by residents and reported.

Meanwhile, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has developed a Road Watch committee. Residents have been deputized in an effort to reduce speeding and other dangerous driving offences.

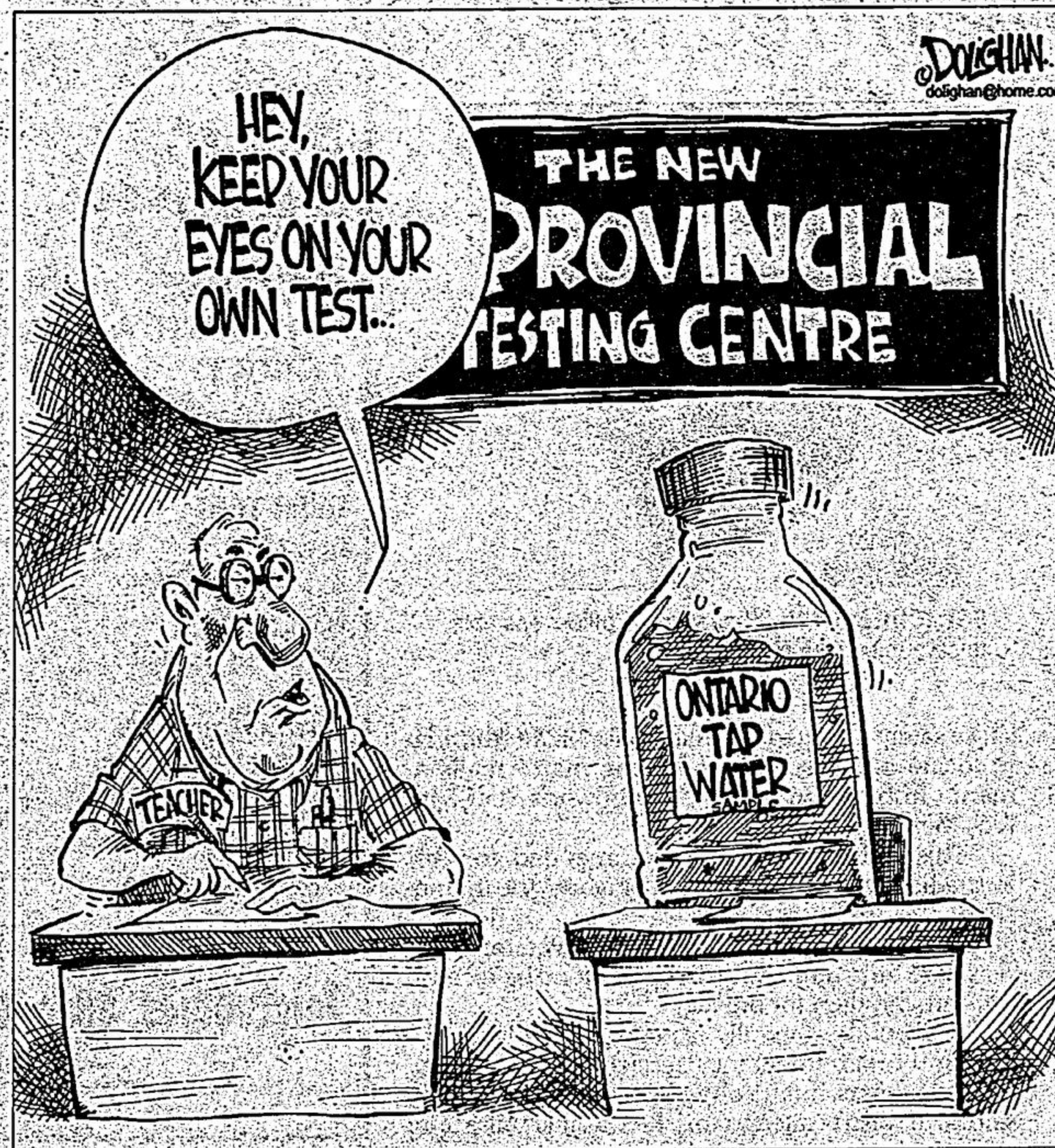
Road Watch committee volunteers stand on streets and watch for driver infractions, which are then reported to police who then notify drivers of their infractions via mail. After two or more reports, drivers could end up in court.

Both Markham and Stouffville's programs demonstrate communities are willing to deal with the issue, rather than just complain about it, and residents are concerned enough to join forces with law enforcement officials to improve the problem.

They are fine examples of grassroots

OPINION

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

\$600,000 lawsuit launched against York police is disgusting

I read with disgust and dismay that Dang Khoa Lieu has filed a \$600,000 lawsuit against the York Regional Police. His lawyer claims he suffered from "severe headaches, insomnia and psychological damage" as a result of his arrest following a pursuit on Hwy. 404.

I wonder how the other "victims" are doing. Are the two people who had knives pulled on them and the person whose car was stolen and used in the high-speed chase suffering from headaches, insomnia and psychological damage?

What about the many lives that were endangered when the stolen vehicle went out of control and slid across six lanes on Hwy. 404?

I commend the police for stopping a suspect before damage was done. I hope this lawsuit is thrown out of court before it wastes taxpayers' money. Too bad the other "victims" haven't filed a lawsuit.

CARRIE PERRUZZA
UNIONVILLE

Road needs calming measures

The other day on Highglen Avenue just east of Noble Street in Markham, my neighbour's small Yorkshire terrier was killed by a speeding car. This unfortunate incident could

have happened to a child or a pedestrian for this is a residential area and the posted speed limit is 40 km-h.

I was on the neighbourhood transportation committee for Ward 8 which recommended speed humps on this road. Our local councillor Alex Chiu unfortunately did not uphold our wishes and no traffic calming measures have been installed.

Speed humps have been installed in Councillor Khalid Usman's ward on Highglen and this has slowed traffic considerably.

The neighbourhood badly needs some speed humps on Highglen as speeding is getting worse.

I phoned York Regional Police and filed a complaint. An officer acknowledged this stretch of road is bad for speeding.

As for the dead dog, no one was able to get a licence plate number or car description, but we believe that if this person had obeyed the speed limit, this death would have been avoided. It seems that 40 km-h is the minimum speed that people travel on this road, not the max. I ask you, what will it take to get some action from our council? The death of a child or senior, or some other horrific car accident?

To Mr. Usman, I congratulate you for your dedicated representation of the people in your ward. To Mr. Chiu, shame, shame on you for your lack of representation.

MIKE VISCONTI
UNIONVILLE



David Teetzel

York Region should wade into trash rail-haul debate

Let's just say for a minute that the fight against the Keele Valley landfill was more than a Not-In-My-Back-Yard battle.

Let's give Vaughan and York Region officials credit that they are concerned about the environment, that they want a system of waste disposal that has as little effect on the surrounding community and environment as possible.

I really want to believe that.

So I hope before York Region starts merrily tossing garbage bags on to Toronto's trash train to Kirkland Lake, our representatives will ask some questions — and not just "How much does it cost?" and "Where can we sign on?"

You have to believe people in Vaughan — as well as people in Georgina and Markham, whose communities were earmarked for a megadump by the NDP's ill-fated Interim Waste Authority — would sympathize with the people in the Kirkland Lake area who are fighting the rail-haul plan.

Only a few weeks ago, we were the ones marching in the streets to protest against the extension of Keele Valley. And had the provincial government not intervened, we could still be fighting.

While we're all relieved to see Keele Valley close, we owe the northern dump opponents a little more than a casual, "The trash has to go somewhere."

York Region should be the conscience of the GTA's waste strategy. Before we sign on to the rail-haul scheme, we should be making sure concerns about groundwater in northern Ontario are addressed, beyond the narrow confines of the environmental process spelled out by the province.

We should be taking seriously the concerns of people on the train route, who wonder about the contents of those boxcars and what happens if they spill. The trash train will start at the rail yards in Vaughan and head north through York Region.

We should be offering to participate in GTA-wide waste reduction strategies, perhaps sharing the cost of pilot projects testing waste-reduction technologies.

And obviously, York Region's participation must be conditional on having the flexibility to reduce waste as much as possible through local recycling and composting initiatives.

So if we want to push the point, we can make Toronto and Rail Cycle North answer our questions and meet our conditions.

The only thing we may not have is time. York Region's waste management committee is to make a recommendation on our waste management by Sept. 6 and regional council is to ratify it by Sept. 14. That doesn't allow a lot of time for research and review.

LETTERS POLICY

Stouffville Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The newspaper reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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