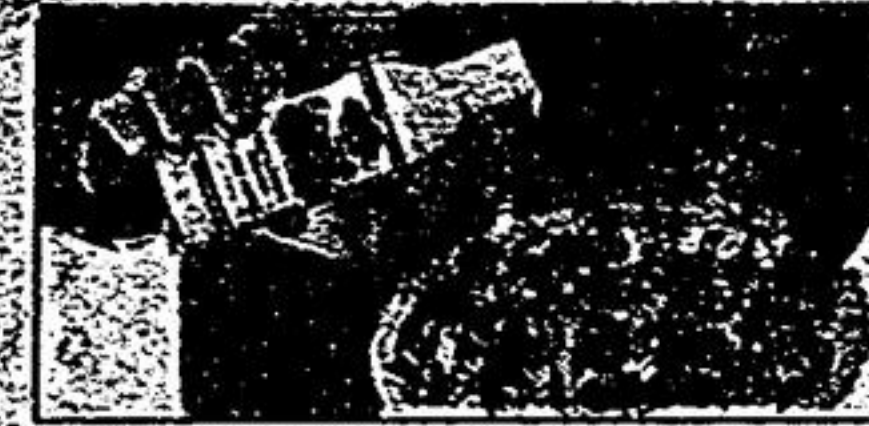


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16 Stouffville's Keith Acton will be honoured Thursday for his 20-year NHL career.

ARTS & CULTURE CALENDAR
EVENT: Stouffville Secondary School art exhibit
WHEN: Jan. 11 to Feb. 4
WHERE: Latcham Gallery, Stouffville (640-8954)



14 Savouring some new spins on traditional recipes for sauces and dressings.

SERVING WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE SINCE 1888

Stouffville Tribune

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AGRICULTURE LAND ASSESSMENTS SKYROCKET ACROSS YORK REGION

FARMERS FEAR TAX JUMPS

BY ROY GREEN
 Staff Writer

Even a miracle won't prevent tax increases for York Region farmers, following hefty hikes in assessment values on farms across the region.

"I'd say it would take more than a miracle," said Al Evelyn, CAO and treasurer in East Gwillimbury.

"The assessed value of Class 11 farm property here has gone from

\$2,200 per acre in 1996 to \$4,000 in 1999. The aggregate increase is 74 per cent in East Gwillimbury."

Whitchurch-Stouffville treasurer Nick Kristoffy said the average increase on farm property there is 71 per cent. In King, farm values are up 66 per cent and the average across York Region is 71 per cent.

The only area where values haven't soared is Georgina. "The

percentage change in farm properties from the last time in Georgina is 35.8 per cent, considerably lower than others in the region," said Georgina CAO Stan Armstrong.

Just how much these increases will effect, property taxes won't be clear until municipalities finish their budgets but at least one farmer isn't holding out much hope.

"In all my life experience, I've never known taxes to go down. And the farmland assessment I had a year ago was one-half of what they've come up with this year — \$200,000 to \$400,000," said Bob Pritzker, who has a 110-acre farm in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Even though farmland is taxed at only 25 per cent of assessed

See DONT, page 8.

Get ready for 10-digit dialing on your phone

GTA running out of 905 numbers

BY PATRICK MANGION
 Staff Writer

Hey, 905 move over — here comes 298.

With a full year under our belts since the Y2K disaster that never was, York Region residents will once again be victims of technology with the birth of 10-digit dialing.

While a 1999 survey predicted there were enough 905 phone numbers to last until 2004, industry analysts were shocked when a similar survey performed last year revealed there would only be enough numbers to last into 2001. That's the result of massive growth in York Region last year, said telecommunications consultant Ian Angus.

His advice for businesses and home workers?

"If you have equipment that dials, reprogram it now," Angus warned.

Angus said computers and faxes, for instance, may hang up if not programmed for 10-digit dialing because seven-digit dialing may be recognized as a wrong number.

The phone company isn't predicting the doom and gloom forecasted by some over-zealous prognosticators a little more than a year ago but it still wants to make sure residents are prepared for 10-digit dialing.

The first stage of the transition

See SECURITY, page 8.



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

WHO NEEDS A ZAMBONI?

Outdoor ice rinks across Whitchurch-Stouffville have been popular playgrounds during the cold and snowy Christmas school break. Clearing the snow from the rink in Stouffville Memorial Park were (from left) Ross Geiger and his son Paul, Colin Broom and his dad Geoff and Natalie Geiger.

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