

STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE & SUN

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TO REACH US: (905) 294-2200

THE FACES OF OUR FUTURE

Outstanding youth of York Region
may become tomorrow's household names



MARC LAMIRANDE: Brother Andre student helps student environmentalists serve entire community.



BETHANY MOORE: Stouffville District Secondary School student is youth affordable housing activist.



RADHIKA SHARMA: Milliken Mills student volunteers at Markham Stouffville Hospital's kids' ward.



CARTER HAYDEN: Stouffville resident plays a teen thug in his latest movie, *Treed Murray*.

They are the bright, shining lights on York Region's horizon.

They are volunteers, entrepreneurs, students and activists. They are the young people among us who lead by example and accomplish great things through their efforts.

They are the future of York Region.

And now, at this most appropriate time of year, we're celebrating these young people in a series of stories that highlight the energy, vision and goals that drive young people to stand out among their peers.

Profiles of York Region youth/pages C1 to C7.

In the pages of today's paper, you'll meet:

• Markham's Peter Wightman, a leader in student government at Brother Andre Catholic High School;

• Stouffville's Kenny Sandford, who quit school at 16 and now runs his own excavating company;

• Kareena Elliston of Unionville, who writes and directs plays to raise awareness in young people about Black History Month;

• Clara Jordan of Stouffville who wants a career in musical theatre, after graduating from Unionville High School next spring;

• Unionville's Stephen Weiss, who is in the Czech Republic this week representing Canada at the world junior hockey championships. The Plymouth Whaler star hopes to play for the Florida Panthers in the NHL next winter;

• Carolyn Burke of Thornhill. The nine-year-old junior environmentalist has already protested against development on the Oak Ridges Moraine. She wants to tell politicians what young people are thinking.

VOICES OF 2001

Terrorism is never going to be abolished or suppressed.

We live in complicated societies where there's always going to be someone who is disgruntled or out of whack and wants to do something drastic.

Canadian journalist Gwynne Dyer speaking to students at Father Bressani Catholic High School about the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

He certainly hasn't been very helpful to our group, to the type of people who would come to our food banks. They're not getting enough money from social assistance to live on. They have had to turn to food banks ... people are coming to rely on food banks as an institution. We were going to be a stop-gap until things got straightened out. They never did get straightened out.

Rosanne Rodgers, spokesperson for the York Region Food Network on Premier Mike Harris' announced retirement in October.

The future does not look very bright. We've seen, in the last few years, an increasing challenge in finding physicians for the hospital and the community.

Markham Stouffville Hospital president Dr. Jim MacLean, commenting on a survey by the College of Family Physicians in October. The poll of more than 13,000 family physicians indicated two-thirds of doctors will no longer accept new patients.

I don't think York Region (Community Care Access Centre) has been very successful. They have done some good things but, at the end of the day, we had some poor decisions ... Sometimes good intentions aren't enough. The buck stops with us. We will ensure the clients and taxpayers get the best possible service.

Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees suggesting the province is about to shake up control of the York Region agency that co-ordinates home care following six months of acrimony between Ontario's Community Care Access Centres and the Tories.

Some of the regulars would just light up anyway and say 'What are you going to do, throw me out?'

Paul Vasilovsky, owner of the Unionville Arms, on York Region's smoking bylaw.

MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DISTRICT DIRECTOR WARNS CURRENT HEALTH-CARE FUNDING WON'T LAST Patients must prepare for user fees

Tax increases, longer waits will skyrocket without fees, doctor

BY LISA QUEEN
Staff Writer

As debate over the future of Canada's medicare system heats up entering 2002, the district director of the Ontario Medical Association believes Canadians should start resigning themselves to user fees.

Dr. Timothy Nicholas, an Aurora physician, said the existing system of funding health care is not sustainable indefinitely.

Health care now eats up 46 per cent of Ontario's provincial budget.

If patients continue to demand high-quality health care and the latest medical advancements, Nicholas said, it will be impossible to avoid user fees for some health services.

Without those charges, he warned waiting lists will lengthen or taxes, to support the system, will skyrocket.

FEES WILL RUIN HEALTH CARE

But others argue user fees will spell the ruin of a universal health-care system revered by Canadians.

Nicholas, who represents York Region and the counties of Simcoe and Muskoka on the board, says patients are not accountable for the health services they use under the current system.

They can see their family physicians, drop into a medical clinic or show up at a hospital emergency room whenever they want.

Nicholas has seen patients turn up at emergency rooms with non-urgent conditions. They could have been treated during daytime hours by a family doctor, although a poll by the College of Family Physicians shows two-thirds are no longer accepting new patients.

"You have to ask yourself, at some time, why people come to the emergency department with a sore hand or foot that they've had for three weeks," he said.

"Unfortunately, the thing is, health care is expensive and somebody has to pay for it. There is no accountability by

the patient. They do not seem to understand the costs that are involved and feel they are entitled to everything. The system can't function indefinitely. It can't. There aren't enough funds.

Nicholas, who has been a family doctor for more than 20 years, practised years ago in Nova Scotia.

Patients there paid \$2 for an initial visit to the doctor and \$1 for a follow-up visit. Nicholas feels the fee made them use the health-care system more responsibly.

The debate over funding is expected to escalate in late Janu-

ary when premiers meet to form a strategy on health care.

The Canada Health Act outlines rules for medicare, such as requiring provinces to provide a comprehensive range of medically necessary services, and prohibiting hospitals charging for medically insured services.

Under legislation, Ottawa can cut funding to any province that contravenes the act.

But some provincial leaders and other health-care providers are trying to challenge the interpretation of the act.

Nicholas said politicians and taxpayers need to determine which medical services should

be classified as basic services that all Canadians are entitled to free of charge.

Other standard services would be subject to a small user fee. Yet other services would require a more substantial charge.

Nicholas declined to break down the services into different categories.

"It's up to the public to decide," he said.

"I think (Prime Minister) Jean Chretien has been somewhat blinded. They have wrapped themselves in the Canada

See HOSPITAL, page A7.

School boards, unions brace for hectic year

BY STEFANIA RIZZI
Staff Writer

With such controversial provincial initiatives as teacher recertification and private school tax credits, coupled with a looming recession, school board and union authorities are bracing for what could be another tumultuous year.

Over the course of 2001, the Tory government passed legislation or introduced numerous initiatives designed to improve

the province's education system and enrich student learning.

While some proposals, such as parents being asked to fill out surveys on the state of education, can be viewed as positive and welcoming, others remain controversial and disheartening.

Although it was passed in June, teacher recertification will remain a thorny subject for teachers in 2002, said York Region's Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association

president Julie Pauletig.

"We would like to see the government revisit the teacher testing legislation," said Pauletig, adding other future challenges teachers face next year are handling pressures associated with the double cohort and continued lack of funding for resources. "Teachers already give 100 per cent and asking them to be recertified when there are non-qualified teachers who don't have to be

certified, is unjust. It's an attack on teachers professionally who do and care a lot for their students."

Pauletig said about 40,000 teachers have been notified they must attend recertification courses.

Some of those teachers, she added, have retired or passed away.

"(The government) is not ready for such a program to be in place," she said.

While teacher recertification continues to be at the forefront and vehemently opposed by teacher unions, there may be another piece of legislation that may unnerve and incense teachers.

Bill 110, passed by the government earlier this month, allows students and parents to have input in the appraisal process of teacher evaluations conducted by principals and vice-principals.

"Our biggest issue for 2002 and into 2003 will be to elect a different government," said York Region's Elementary Teachers Federation president David Clegg.

"To (have students and parents) play a role in the performance appraisal, without having any background or qualification to do so and to do that anonymously, is quite disturbing."

"I don't know how comfort-

See SCHOOL, page A2.

REGION TO TAKE LEADING ROLE IN A GTA-WIDE STRATEGY Growing pains ahead for York

Population boom requires housing, improved transit and infrastructure

BY JEFF MITCHELL
Staff Writer

York Region has the benefits of forward momentum and sound strategic planning as it prepares to move into 2002 and beyond, says Regional Chairperson Bill Fisch.

Fisch said the region is well positioned to face the challenges ahead and continue to provide services to a population that has come to expect them.

And as the region faces the 21st century, the nature of those services and demands on York's infrastructure becomes more complex.

"We have a 25-year growth plan. We are in the eighth year of that plan," Fisch said. "We have done all of the easy things."

Now comes the hard part.

That includes strategies for such issues as waste management; affordable housing; conventional and rapid transit; roads and water and sewer infrastructure; economic development; and management of the region's astonishing growth



BRIAN TUCKEY: York's planning commissioner favours smart-growth philosophies.

See U.S., page A7.

Sharon ANTIQUES
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