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4 Let it snow, York Region farmers say after our unseasonably warm and dry winter.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENT: Spring pancake brunch
WHEN: Sunday, April 7, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
WHERE: Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum, Vandorf



14 Soul searching: York Region missionaries shun societal myths, comforts.

SERVING WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE SINCE 1888

Stouffville Tribune

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TO REACH US: (905) 640-2612

30 years after the airport was announced

Fewer people, buildings on lands near Stouffville

BY MIKE ADLER
 Staff Writer

It's been 30 years since the federal and provincial governments started to slowly erase the farmsteads and quiet crossroad communities of eastern Markham and north Pickering just south of Stouffville.

On March 2, 1972, the two governments sprung plans for \$2 billion in development — a Pickering airport to handle international flights for Toronto, a city of 150,000 built beside it — on 2,000 residents who would be displaced through expropriation. "Work on the airport will begin next year and is expected to be finished by 1978 or 1979," the Toronto Star reported.

"The new city will be finished by about 1990."

None of that happened because a group called People or Planes fought for the homes and farms, most of them on land as rich as any in Canada. Many buildings, however, were destroyed. In 1975, the year the airport was shelved, three women barricaded themselves in a house in an all-out attempt to prevent another demolition.

In the stalemate that followed, the governments rented the 18,500 federal acres and 25,000 provincial acres to tenants but the houses and barns on them

See REGIONAL, page 3.

Out of its shell for Easter



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Lynda Sergeant, owner of Lynda's Floral Boutique on Main Street in Stouffville, shows one of the 11 little chickens that hatched in her storefront window just in time for Easter.

Bingo halls get a smoke break

York Region amends bylaw to allow more smoking

BY JEFF MITCHELL
 Staff Writer

In yet another remarkable turn of events, York Region councillors voted Thursday morning to amend their smoking bylaw to help bingo halls compete with operations in other jurisdictions.

Markham Regional Councillor Frank Scarpitti employed some fancy footwork to bring about the change, when his attempt to send a report on the bylaw back to the health committee for more consideration failed, he quickly proposed an amendment that would double the allowable capacity in the designated smoking rooms the halls must have in place by June 2004.

The amendment, a concession which has been sought unsuccessfully by bingo hall operators and charities since last fall, passed 9-8.

"It's just terrific news," said Harvey Meek, a member of the Markham Bingo Country Sponsors Association.

The group derives proceeds for 38 local charities from bingos held at the hall. They have lobbied the region for the change, saying restrictive smoking bylaws affect attendance at bingos here.

"It definitely is moving in the right direction finally, after all this time," Mr. Meek said. "For the bylaw to have gone through the way it was, was just simply wrong for everyone."

The developments left Joyce Frustaglio, chair of the region's health committee and the municipality's top crusader against

See BINGO, page 7.

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