

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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LETTERS

Appreciating democracy means paying attention at meetings

Re: There's a link between the dead of Dieppe and our comfortable beds, column by Joan Ransberry, Aug. 22.

If Ms Ransberry would really like to pay tribute to the 1,000 Canadian soldiers who died on August 19, 60 years ago on the beaches of Dieppe, then perhaps she should be giving her full attention to democracy in action.

What we need to remember is that all of these men died so that people like David Moyer would have the opportunity to present ideas for town council to consider.

If Ms Ransberry would really like to pay tribute to those brave soldiers of 60 years ago, I can think of no better way than by paying attention to today's democracy in action.

PAM MANDICH
STOUFFVILLE

Will provincial government listen to anyone on education?

Re: We must give public education investment it needs, opinion by Debora Kelly, Aug. 22.

It's hard not to agree with Ms Kelly's assertions the provincial government has to stop stalling on revising the funding formula for schools.

Schools do need a long-term reliable source of funding, not "special grants".

The chaotic years of the Tories' Common Sense Revolution, though, have done a great job of extracting children and support from the public school system.

Even Ms Kelly admits she would pull her children out of the public school system if she could afford it.

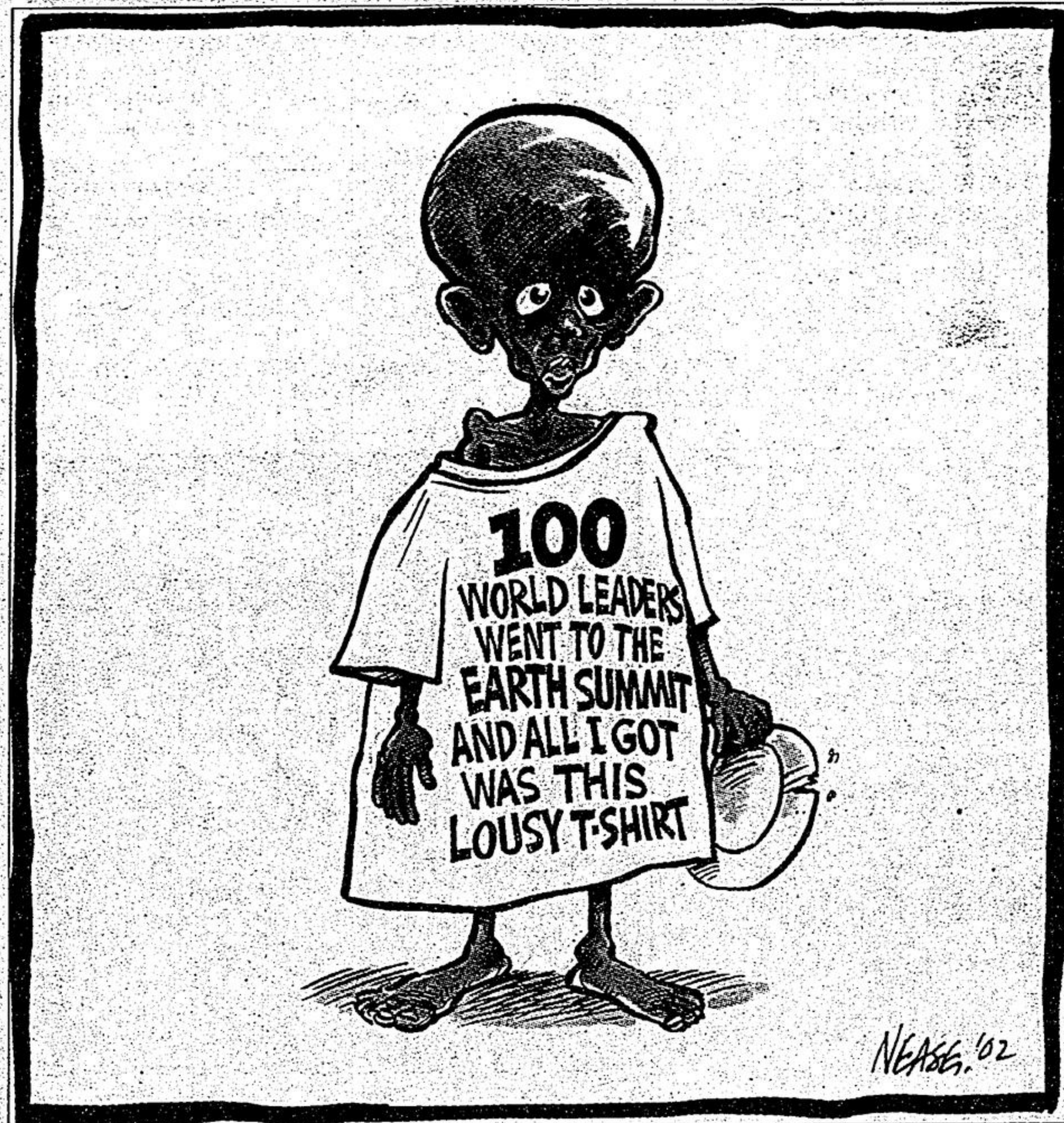
This thoughtful editorial has left me with more questions than answers. With just so many people anxious to jump ship, it's hard to see who is going to put the Tories' feet to the fire on these critical education issues.

The provincial government has labelled teachers and parent groups special interest groups. Pro-education trustees have been labelled "irresponsible, partisan wastrels".

After all the years of disturbing, so-called education reform, I can't help but wonder just who is left who can make a stand this government will really listen to?

TOM KOPERWAS
WINDSOR

OPINION



Thanks to all for successful Olden Days & Antique Cars Festival

The Olden Days & Antique Cars Festival held on Main Street Markham last Sunday was an overwhelming success. More than 100 antique and restored vehicles, three stages of entertainment and antique and craft vendors brought out record crowds.

The perfect weather made the day even more enjoyable. Special thanks to Tom Keeling, our antique appraiser, who donated his proceeds to the Markham Foundation.

A festival like this relies on the good will of our corporate citizens. Thanks to our sponsors — Markville Ford, Economist & Sun/Tribune and Capstone Communications — for their generosity.

Thanks as well to those who donated to our raffle and door prizes. And of course, we could not do this without our fabulous volunteers.

On behalf of the businesses on Main Street Markham, we look forward to seeing you again next year.

JUDI MCINTYRE
MANAGER, MARKHAM VILLAGE B.I.A.

Old Whitchurch-Stouffville town office in good shape

Re: Company won't back out of hall, Tribune, Aug. 22.

I noted with interest Mr. Bruce Arrowsmith's comments regarding the former Whitchurch-Stouffville municipal office building as being "in dire need of repair".

The building is actually in better shape than when it was occupied by the town offices.

Since the Town's migration to the west end three years ago, the Clock Tower Theatre Association repaired plumbing, replaced electrical fixtures and re-installed the main electrical feed, added fire separations, and has provided custodial services to the artist groups that have been using the building.

The Clock Tower Potters and the Sidewalk Artists (two of the building occupants) took it upon themselves to repair and repaint the foyer, as well as redecorate the walls in the old council chamber to make it suitable as a gallery/display room to exhibit their creations.

The building is bright, clean and very functional thanks to the efforts of many volunteers.

As an architect, I'm sure Mr. Arrowsmith is aware of the steel beam supports that were necessary when the Town added the second floor, comprised of modular concrete, to accommodate the Chamber and the Clerk's Office.

With the exception of some deteriorating exterior bricks that can easily be replaced, the building is probably one of the sturdiest structures in York Region.

It's not clear to me what is meant by "restore the building" which is how the Town is considering spending \$500,000.

Restore the building to what? Before the Town added the second floor, it was a movie theatre, before that a bowling alley and even a farmers market, (according to some historians). None of these uses included a second floor.

Does this mean we're going to have a market, a bowling alley or a theatre? Seemingly not if the Town and Mr. Arrowsmith have their way. Their plan is not to restore but to renovate a heritage building capable of serving the public as a cultural centre, into a commercial office.

I just want to make sure we are all on the same page.

DAVE DUGGAN
STOUFFVILLE

Bylaw needed to stop problem of second-hand smoke

Re: Bar owners smoking mad, Aug. 22.

We are taking this opportunity to signal our support for efforts that seek to prevent non-smokers from being forced to inhale unwanted second-hand smoke.

The article discusses measures governing smoking in public businesses. We would like to turn the dialogue to the problem of unsolicited second-hand smoke from one household entering the household of another.

We acknowledge it is legal for adults to smoke in private residences. What do you do, however, when your own house and yard is infiltrated by neighbours' smoke? Suck it up?

Maybe, if the neighbours use tobacco products that only occasionally make it into your home, but what do you do if you live next door to heavy smokers who do not believe in smoking inside?

What do you do when those neighbours and their smoking guests enjoy an outdoor lifestyle that results in year-round groups of people located steps from your property, emitting so much smoke it gets into your house, even with the windows closed?

What do you do when, after soliciting their compassion and asking them to direct their smoke away from your household (because it triggers allergies and asthma in your family), they receive your requests unsympathetically and do not change their behaviour?

If, in a passion for chemistry, we were to continuously conduct outdoor experiments with ingredients such as urethane, formaldehyde and carbon monoxide (or any of the other carcinogens contained in cigarettes), it is unlikely we would receive public support if we remained unaccommodating to requests from fellow residents that we relocate our smelly, toxic and legal activities.

In our household, we are fortunate we are employed in workplaces where we are protected from second-hand smoke.

We find it painfully ironic that, as soon as we return home from work and turn our key in the door, we have to struggle not to inhale smoke that is wafting over to the entrance of our fully detached residence.

After investigation, we are convinced the only viable protection we could ever hope to expect would come in the form of a change to the local bylaw.

We suggest York Region bylaws be created that prohibit tobacco smoke from entering private properties from which it does not originate.

ALEXANDRA PRASOW
AND EDWARD HESHKA
RICHMOND HILL

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