

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
34 Civic Ave., Stouffville, ON L4A 7Z5

PUBLISHER **Ian Proudfoot**

LETTERS
to the
EDITOR

Region transit making progress

Re: Shuttle buses can solve GO problem, letter to the editor, Oct. 23.

In reply to several comments regarding access to and from GO Stations, York Region Transit (YRT) would like to advise your readers about the services we offer.

YRT provides transit access to every GO station within the region. This is done with either specifically designed GO shuttles or with regular routes scheduled to co-ordinate with train arrival and departure times.

YRT carries approximately 1,000 passenger trips per day to and from the stations, which equates to a saving of about 500 parking spaces.

Within the past year, YRT introduced a new shuttle from the Cornell and Wismer communities in Markham, a new local Bur Oak route to the Mount Joy station in Markham and is actively promoting the Langstaff shuttle to residents along the Hwy. 7 corridor between Leslie Street and Bayview Avenue in Thornhill.

YRT shuttle services are subsidized by GO Transit (75 per cent of adult fare), with a nominal 25-cent passenger payment. This payment provides YRT with about \$70,000 of additional annual revenue and a means of tracking ridership.

Since the amalgamation of local transit services in 2001, the region has doubled its investment in public transit. We are pursuing the implementation of the first stage of a rapid transit system with our Quick Start project.

The results are encouraging; last year, York Region Transit had the highest ridership growth rate in Canada.

We still have a ways to go, but with a co-ordinated GTA-wide approach and dedicated funding from Queen's Park, York Region will have a first-class public transit system that will make all of us proud.

DON GORDON
GENERAL MANAGER
YORK REGION TRANSIT

Event put spotlight on local talent

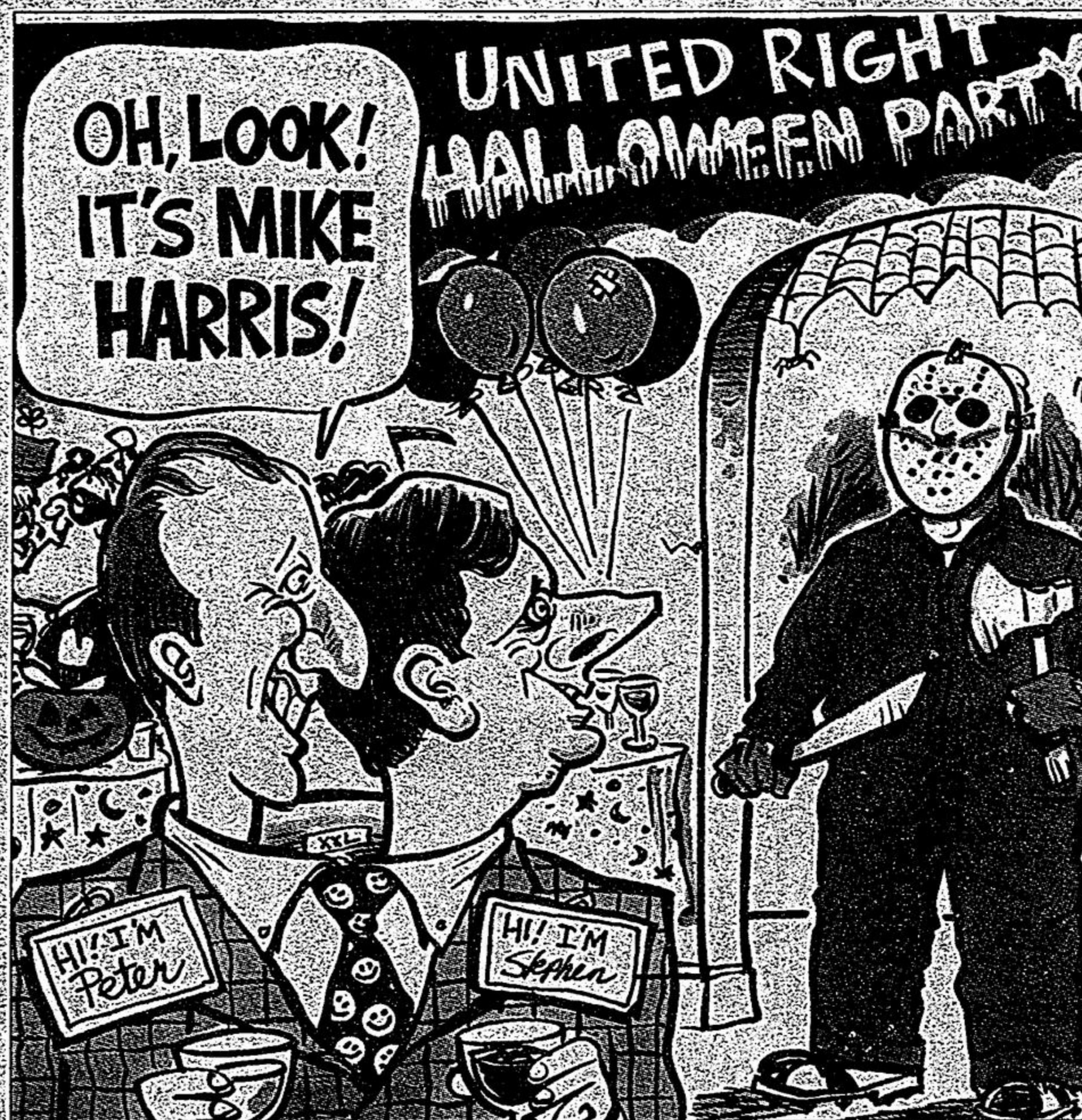
We want to thank The Economist & Sun/Sun-Tribune for inviting us to the York Region Newspaper Groups third annual Celebration of the Arts evening at Markham Theatre. It was so inspiring to see such high-calibre home-grown talent.

York Region has a reputation of being innovative and progressive. It is so important we do not lose sight of, but continue to encourage, support, and celebrate cultural pursuits as we grow and develop.

Celebration of the Arts shows York is a place that fosters and is committed to the arts.

The smiles on the faces of the performers and the audience's overwhelming response was evidence of this.

OPINION



What an incredible experience for these performers to have the opportunity to perform at the Markham Theatre and receive recognition that may not otherwise come their way.

We know how much time and energy planning and staging an event such as this takes. We'd like to thank everyone involved for their commitment, time and effort in making this evening such a success.

SUE & AL SMITKO
UNIONVILLE

Kennedy should cross floor

Re: One MPP should cross floor, letter to the editor, Oct. 25.

An excellent suggestion from reader Tom Pashkov, I nominate Gerard Kennedy, minister of education in the McGuinty government, to cross the floor of the legislature and give his former colleagues party status.

When he managed the Toronto food bank, Mr. Kennedy was a card-carrying member of the NDP. Senator Keith Davey, a prominent cog in the Liberal organization, hand-picked him to run for the leadership of the Ontario Liberal party.

Clearly the senator believed there was no one in the party capable of winning an election. Mr. Kennedy was his only hope.

At the leadership convention, rank-and-file members did not relish an outsider vying for top spot. So they gave it to a relative new-

comer to the Liberals, Dalton McGuinty.

Mr. Kennedy's NDP heart is still beating; he was the only Liberal to vote against the pay hike recommended for provincial politicians.

Go on, Gerard, make the move to where your heart rests.

J. SHAW
MARKHAM

Mayor's disgust misplaced

Re: Mayor disgusted at region's construction yard, Oct. 25.

As a 20-year resident of the Unionville area near Kennedy Road and 16th Avenue I appreciate Mayor Don Cousens' actions. However, I might ask where his disgust was when tens of millions of dollars of house building permits were handed out in our beautiful little town.

The resulting explosion in population and automobiles means I can't sit in my back yard (which backs on to 16th Avenue) in the summer because the noise of speeding traffic is deafening.

In fact, the traffic only slows down every morning when I'm trying to make the eight-minute drive to my office, a drive that now takes 25 minutes.

If this can be called progress, perhaps voters in the coming election should bestow the appropriate reward on those responsible for it.

DAVID J. FLEISHMAN
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David Suzuki

Mother Nature
newest scapegoat

I happen to live in a part of the country that has, of late, been especially hard hit by what are often called "natural" disasters.

This summer, the interior of British Columbia was ravaged by drought and forest fires, not to mention the insidious spread of a little beetle that seems intent on devouring the entire province.

Before anyone could even catch a breath, the drought turned into record flooding on the coast. As a result of these tumultuous events, thousands of people have been evacuated; hundreds have lost their homes, many have lost their jobs and a few have even lost their lives.

It hasn't been a good year. So it's only natural for people to be looking for a scapegoat. Yet I was still quite taken aback when my local newspaper bizarrely chose to blame Mother Nature.

The lead editorial in the Oct. 21 Mommy Dearest, claims "our culture has a history of viewing nature as benign, as the wellspring from which all good things come" and argues "it's time to relieve ourselves of the notion that everything natural is good".

Perhaps the Sun is under the impression its readers are infants or merely stupid, but I imagine most might have figured out nature does not just cause the sun to shine and birds to chirp, but also volcanoes to erupt and rivers to overflow.

The intent of the editorial, it seems, is to remove any hint of human culpability from the disasters that have gripped the province. Never mind the extreme weather events and insect infestations British Columbia has been experiencing are exactly what scientists have been telling we will be seeing more of if we don't stop pumping increasing amounts of heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere.

Instead, the editorial seeks to frame the world as "nature vs humans" as though the two entities are fundamentally different and at odds.

Although it's apt in many ways, referring to nature as our mother reinforces the idea nature is outside of ourselves, something that will always take care of us no matter how badly we screw up.

To discuss this topic with others, visit the discussion forum at www.davidsuzuki.org

LETTERS POLICY

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

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Sun-Tribune

A York Region Newspaper Group community newspaper.

The Stouffville Tribune, published every Thursday and Saturday, is a member of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Forstar Corporation. Metroland is comprised of 70 community publications across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper Group includes The Liberal, serving Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan Citizen, Markham Economist & Sun, Stouffville Sun-Tribune, Georgina Advocate, York Region Business Times, North of the City, yorkregion.com and York Region Printing.