

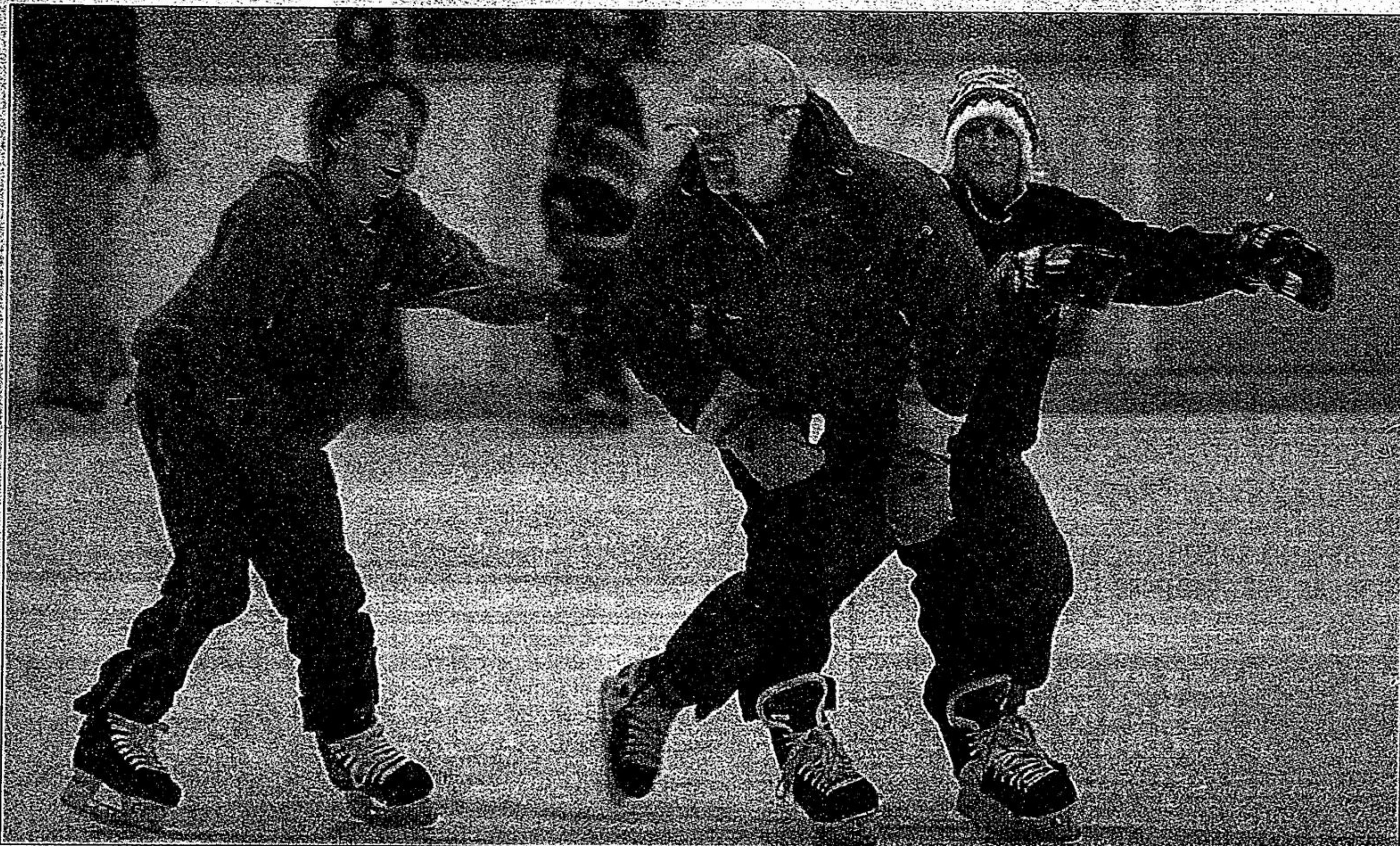
Stouffville Sun-Tribune

THURSDAY, JAN. 8, 2004 ■ SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE ■ 20 PAGES/\$1 INCLUDING GST



15 Bobby Hughes helps Ontario win world tourney title

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STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Catch him, if you can

Chris Wiseman, centre, is chased by son David, right, and Kenny Webber during public skate at the Stouffville Arena last week.

Mad cow scare leads to pet food panic

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

Hungry cats and dogs have been pulled into the North American mad cow scare.

Pet owners across York Region are buying up American pet food out of fear it will run out now that beef products from the United States can no longer cross into Canada.

Pet food was affected when Canada joined other countries to ban U.S. beef after a cow in Washington was hit with bovine spongiform encephalopathy. The fatal disease eats holes in the brains of cattle and can be passed to humans.

While pet owners stock up on U.S. produced foods, York Region's 500 cattle producers wonder what will happen in Canada now

that DNA tests confirmed Tuesday the infected U.S. cow originally came from Alberta.

The border has been partially open to Canadian beef since September, following a ban for four months because of a case of mad cow in Alberta in May.

BORDER CLOSED TO U.S. PRODUCTS

While Canadian agricultural authorities try to get the U.S. and other countries to lift the ban on Canadian beef, the Canadian border is now closed to U.S. beef products, including pet foods.

Out of fear of cross contamination, the latest ban also applies to U.S. pet foods mixed with meats other than beef, including chicken and pork.

The owner of Global Pet Food in Markham is not about to forget this past Tuesday.

"They cleared us right out," store owner Rob Serrie said. "It was the busiest day we've had since we opened."

While Mr. Serrie scrambled to re-stock his shelves, mainly with Canadian pet foods, he's wondering what long-term impact the situation will have on the domestic pet industry. Made-in-Canada pet food is of equal quality and it's comparable in price, Mr. Serrie stressed.

"If there's an up side to this, people are switching to Canadian products," Mr. Serrie said. "Because of the situation, people are

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TASK FORCE PLANNED FOR WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Doctor shortage across region

BY LISA QUEEN
Staff Writer

Communities across York Region are kicking off 2004 by boosting efforts to recruit desperately needed doctors and health services.

"Ensuring communities have the health care they need in all forms, from doctors to nurse practitioners to the health environments needed to provide the services to the diagnostics, is a huge priority for the region as we enter the new year," said Fred Tuffnell, chairperson of the Simcoe York District Health Council.

"I would say recruiting doctors is a key issue but I wouldn't say it's the overwhelming issue. It goes hand-in-hand with working to develop and provide the best tools, environment, diagnostics etc. But obviously we need the doctors in the numbers required to provide the services."

Virtually every community in the region wants to improve health services.

For example, an increasingly nasty battle is raging in Georgina over plans for a health clinic in Sutton.

In an effort to bring doctors to the underserved town, the Georgina community health care council has attempted to open a medical clinic on Baseline Road using a \$1-million grant from the town, obtained from the sale of Georgina's hydro utility.

However, the deal has been clouded in controversy.

Members of the health council have been accused of not being accountable to the public. Six Keswick doctors threatened to leave Georgina, upset public funds would be used to

See SITUATION, page 5.

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