

OPINION

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Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Green sequence lights, fewer stops good for drivers, environment

I had a dream that within a few months, most traffic signal lights on main roads will go on the so-called green sequence as promised, yes, about 10 years ago by Markham and York Region.

Green sequence means that by driving a pre-determined speed on any of our main roads, the signal light will always turn green when you get close to it.

It's been done in the rest of the world for about 50 years now and cuts down on pollution and wasted fuel. Finally, after so many years, York Region and Markham likes to give it a try to help traffic moving again. It doesn't cost any money, it just needs someone with a little mathematical skill and the will to set up the right timing in the traffic computers.

The other item in the works at traffic engineering are the removing of most of our useless stop signs in our towns. As all of you know, we all pay dearly for them with our health and money wasted on fuel.

It is a well known fact stop-and-go cars create most of our air pollution.

Fact is it cost about two liters of extra fuel for roughly 25 to 30 unnecessary stops. That would make it about four litres a day (\$3.80 per day, at today's prices).

When we take about 250 working days per

year, that brings the extra and wasted cost to about \$950 a year for everyone driving a car. That's roughly 20 cases of beer in my book. And that's not to mention the air pollution created. A car pollutes about 40 to 50 times more when taking off from a full stop.

Too bad it was just a dream. It must have had something to do with being close to April 1. Even though the needed changes won't be coming to Markham or York, all the numbers are accurate.

HEINZ NITSCHKE
MARKHAM

Children in Ninth Line subdivision want park, playground equipment

I'm nine years old and wondering if the mayor and council of Markham can do something about putting a park in my neighbourhood.

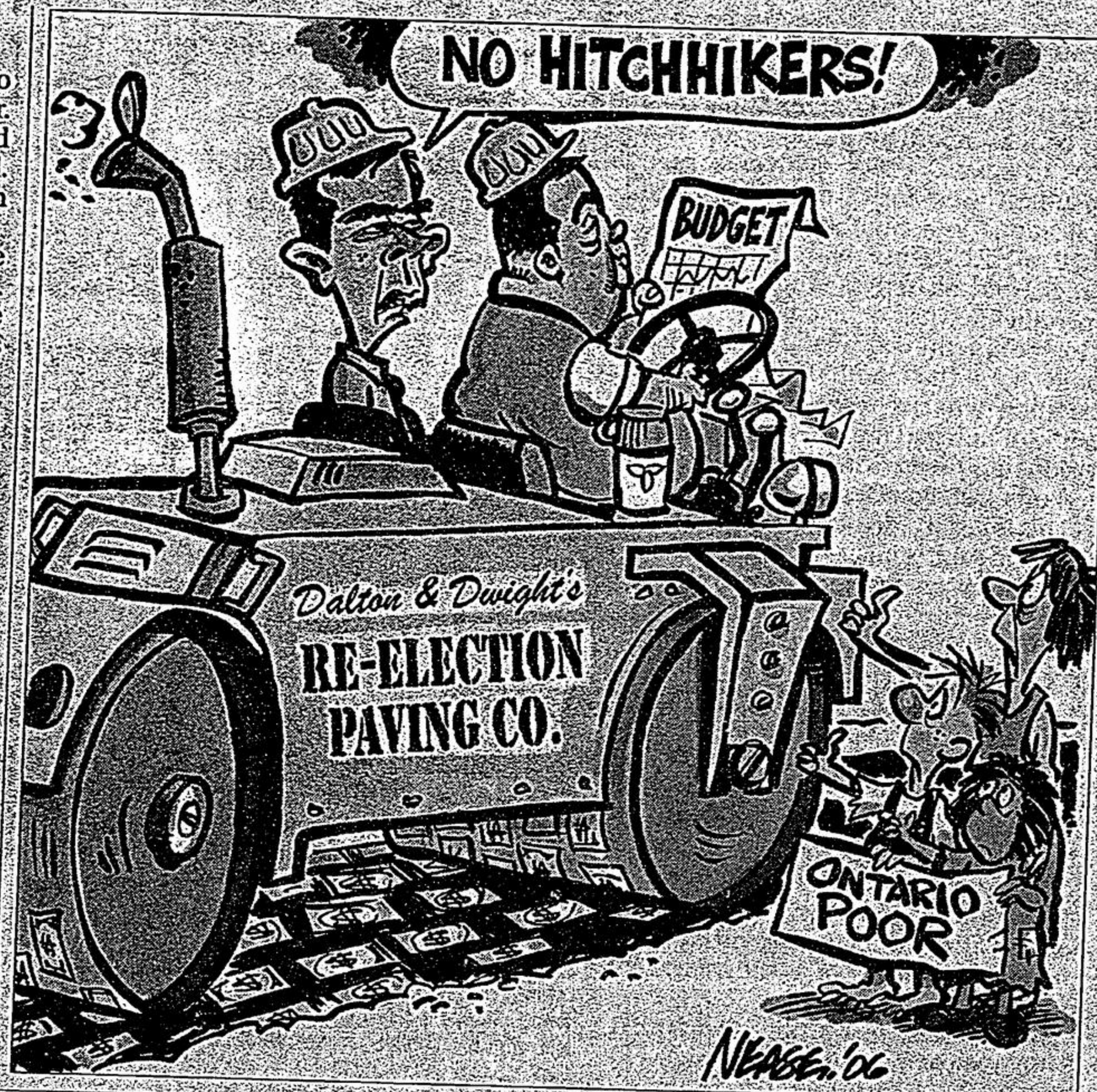
We live on Linsmary Court, near the intersection of the Ninth Line and Markham Bypass.

We have been here for three years and there is still no park with playground equipment in the area we can walk to.

All of the children in the neighbourhood want a park.

Please help us, Markham council.

JADE MARK
MARKHAM



Springtime brings region back to 'fore'

We are so lucky to live in York Region.

We have a quality of life unsurpassed anywhere in the world: low crime, safe drinking water, ample food, a steady stream of empty buses on our streets.

Best of all, we have great golf courses. More than one-third of the GTAs, in fact, one of the highest courses-per-capita ratios in the world.

Two of the globe's finest are here: the National in Woodbridge and Beacon Hill in Aurora. We have fabulous top-end public courses in Angus Glen, Eagle's Nest and Copper Creek. And within 15 minutes' drive of my home, I can enjoy seven fine ClubLink facilities.

I've played courses across Canada, in the Caribbean, Asia and the United States. This winter, I even played at Lake Nona in Orlando, home course to Ernie Els, Annika Sorenstam and Sergio Garcia. Yet nowhere have I found conditions that surpass York Region's own.

And we're blessed with wonderful golf retailers, offering the latest in technology designed to improve your game. Thirty years ago, the average golfer took 100 strokes per round. Now, the clubs are so scientifically advanced and the balls fly so much farther, which has been proven by studies, the average golfer still shoots about 100.

It's recommended you take lessons from a pro (as I have, many times) and get lots of practice (as I have). In fact, now that I'm semi-retired and play more than 50 rounds per year, I've gone from an 11 handicap to a 13.

Tiger Woods is the best golfer in the world, but I may be the most dangerous.

At Hamilton Golf and Country Club, I narrowly missed hitting the publisher of the Toronto Star with a five iron; at the Granite Club in Stouffville, I nailed a three wood off a golf cart occupied by a vice-president of Torstar Corporation.

At King's Riding, I hit a pitching wedge from 120 yards just as my best friend emerged from



Bruce Annan

the woods behind the green. The ball struck him in the chest and he dropped like he'd been shot. Happily, he was all right and we finished the round. More importantly, I beat him by one stroke.

Last summer at the magnificent new Bond Head course, I was a guest of the publisher of this very newspaper. On the 11th hole, he went searching for his tee shot just off the fairway while I addressed my ball in a bunker. My seven-iron blast came out at a 45-degree angle; I yelled "fore!" which gave him enough time to look up... and stop the ball with his face.

After lying on the ground and bleeding for awhile, he got up and birdied the hole. It's a funny old game.

To an addict, the sport is all-consuming, at least until we're reminded there are more important things in life, like our health.

Golf is sort of like religion that way: to those who play, no explanation is necessary; to those who don't, no explanation is possible.

A few years ago, I underwent eye surgery. I asked the doctor, "Will I still be able to drive?" My driving is about the same, but my putting is worse.

Nonetheless, last summer I achieved a milestone: at National Pines I shot 35 on the

front nine, under par through the front half. I bogeyed 10 just as the horn sounded, ordering us off the course because of lightning. After a 90-minute delay we resumed the round and I carded a back-nine 51 for a routine 86.

A few years ago, my wife finally agreed to try the game and signed up for lessons. She quit after the first session, saying she just didn't see the point of it all.

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I've spent the past month practising at the new Aurora Dome and this is going to be my year, I can just feel it.

See you on the course. You should probably stay behind me when I hit.

Bruce Annan is a York Region writer and consultant. He can be reached at bruce_annan@gmail.com. Comments on this column for the letters page can be sent to newsroom@econsun.com.

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