

# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**

6290 Main St.  
Stouffville, ON L4A 1G7  
www.yorkregion.com

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

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## Editorial

### Town still wants true theatre

It seemed like a good idea when it was first hatched 12 years ago.

Why not turn the old town hall downtown into a theatre for the performing arts?

Now, the building at 19 Civic Ave. will be turned into something.

A theatre it isn't.

The building is to become an arts centre, with seating for approximately 100.

Retired Stouffville District Secondary School teacher, choir leader and vocalist Jim Rehill saw the potential for the building. While on vacation in the southern United States, he visited another community that renovated an old building into a theatre.

It became a gem and focal point for the community. It drew traffic downtown from the local municipality and outlying areas.

Mr. Rehill and others soon saw that same potential in downtown Stouffville.

They envisioned a theatre of about 400 seats, hosting local productions and touring companies.

That won't happen, at least at 19 Civic Ave.

Thanks to the 2003-06 edition of Whitchurch-Stouffville council for finally deciding on the fate of the building. Politicians, volunteers and consultants spend too much time and money on so many proposals.

And it's not over. There is money to be raised and plans to be finalized.

And what will we end up with? Hopefully, something more than "just another Latcham Hall", as David Duggan called it.

Mr. Duggan and other members of the Clocktower Association met last week to lament fate of their theatre proposal of a dozen years ago.

They should be heavily thanked for their persistence and vision.

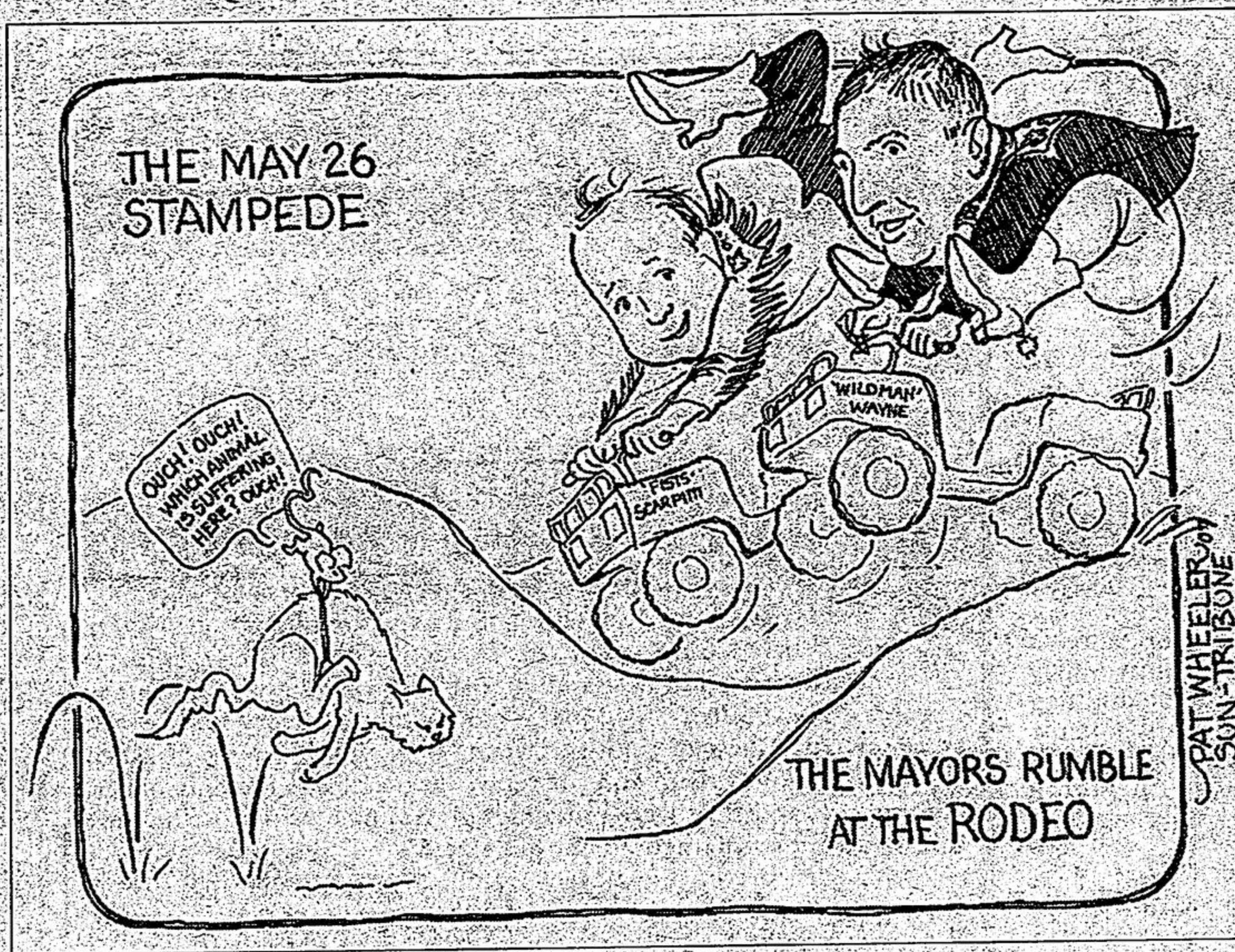
Hopefully, that vision will eventually materialize. It won't be built in the old town hall or the new Stouffville District Secondary School, thanks to town council.

This town doesn't need another 125-seat hall.

Local theatre groups say they won't use it. It's too small for Music Mania, York Durham Academy of the Performing Arts and most dance school recitals.

Former councillor Harry Bowes has a movement afoot to build a full-fledged theatre.

Question? Is there enough money and need in this town for two facilities?



### Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Toasting the Queen and our neighbours with fireworks

It wasn't quite Woodstock revisited, but it was impressive, man.

Vehicles lined both sides of Woodbine Avenue and packed the parking lots of the community of Vandorf Monday.

As the sun set over Hwy. 404, families settled into their portable lawn chairs, sipped hot chocolate and soaked up the warm air of spring. Small children left the park equipment vacant. The neighbourhood gossip ceased. The countdown neared completion.

Bottom line: we're suckers for fireworks.

We toast the birthday of our country and Queen Victoria, whoever she may have been, with pyrotechnics.

We fill Stouffville Memorial Park every July 1. And on the Monday of the long weekend in May, the place to be is Vandorf Park.

We're not Carolina crazy about blowing things up in the sky. Down there, it seems every second shop sells the stuff exclusively. And their July 4 fireworks shows dwarf anything this middle-age guy has seen on this side of the border.

That's a good thing. Mike Feld, the emcee and deejay for the Vandorf show, warned the amateur technicians to leave the fireworks to the experts Monday.

Still, the neighbourhoods around the park lit up before the real show, by Pyro Mario of Stouffville, took off. I dodged fireworks in my SUV on our crescent Saturday night, as if on a movie set. York Regional Police cars were cruising the subdivision the next night, as cherry bombs blew and the sky lit up above them.

Back in Vandorf, the crowd poured out of the park and the vehicles snaked up and down Woodbine, following their 20 minutes of high-flying fun.

Good times aside, the event brings people to a corner of our municipality they may never otherwise visit. And in a community as fast growing as this one, getting together with the neighbours is always something to toast.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

## Letters to the Editor

### Good Samaritans commended

On May 13, Station 52 of the Whitchurch-Stouffville fire and emergency services in Ballantrae responded to a head-on collision involving two vehicles on Hwy. 48, just south of Vivian Road.

The act of Good Samaritans at the scene should not go without mention.

The people who took it upon themselves to help in a life-threatening situation are truly worthy of a commendation.

To those who took action, risking injury to themselves, we thank you.

There could very well have been a more tragic outcome to this serious collision.

MARK CARROLL  
PRESIDENT  
STOUFFVILLE VOLUNTEER  
FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

### Baby shouldn't have had hotdog

Re: Lunch break, brother, May 17 photograph.  
I was shocked to see the picture of a 17-month-old boy on the front page of The Sun-Tribune holding a hot dog.

Are people still that dense? The No. 1 cause of choking in children is hotdog and that looks like a pretty big hotdog in the photograph.

MARK DI FELICE  
MAPLE

### Gallery values council's support

On behalf of the board and members of the Latcham Gallery, I want to publicly thank Mayor Wayne Emerson and council for their support of the

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gallery. The recent grant will go a long way towards helping the gallery provide the many programs it offers to the citizens of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

It is heartening to have a municipal government that recognizes the value of our public art gallery to the community.

DOUG ALLES  
CHAIRPERSON  
LATCHAM GALLERY BOARD

### Ticket buyers will decide stampede's fate

Re: Stampede stirring up storm, May 17.  
I do not agree with a group, presumably small, taking away the opportunity for many of us in the Markham area to have a stampede.

If a group wants this event banned, then it is up to our local politicians to find out what the majority of residents want. I, for one, look forward to a little piece of the Calgary Stampede close to home.

If our community does not want the event, ticket sales won't happen and it won't return.

I am a senior and look forward to attending, hopefully with young members of friends or family. I find this event affordable and interesting.

BRUCE HOWIE  
MARKHAM

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EDITORIAL  
Editor  
Jim Mason  
jmason@yrmg.com

INTERACTIVE MEDIA  
Marketing & Advertising  
Manager  
Dawna Andrews  
dandrews@yrmg.com

ADVERTISING  
Retail Manager  
Stacey Allen  
sallen@yrmg.com

Classified Manager  
Ann Campbell  
acampbell@yrmg.com

Assistant Classified  
Manager  
Bonnie Rondeau  
brondeau@yrmg.com  
PRODUCTION  
Team Leader  
Sherry Day  
sday@yrmg.com



EDITORIAL  
905-640-2612  
Fax: 905-640-8778

ADVERTISING  
905-640-2612  
Classified: 1-800-743-3353  
Fax: 905-640-8778

DISTRIBUTION  
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