

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

Doctor, doctor, election on horizon

Is the number of announcements lately from the McGuinty Liberals a sure sign of this year's election?

Or is it pure coincidence?

Make no mistake. We will go to the polls Oct. 10 in the first pre-determined election day in this province.

There will be no more surprise votes. Remember the demise of the David Peterson Liberals in 1990, just three years into their mandate? They're history.

Voters in Whitchurch-Stouffville will elect a new MPP in a new riding this fall. Oak Ridges, currently held by one-time Tory cabinet minister Frank Klees, will be no more. Oak Ridges-Markham, with the same name and boundaries as its federal counterpart, is the new riding.

The Liberals and Conservatives are prepared, at least with candidates. Former York Region medical officer of health Helena Jacek will represent the Liberals again, Janice Hagan will represent the NDP, and Whitchurch-Stouffville Councillor Phil Bannon the Tories.

There is no shortage of issues for them, and the handful of other candidates sure to join the fray, to discuss.

Health care remains the No. 1 issue with voters. Family doctors, who are often our first reference point to the system, are an endangered species in many Ontario centres, and not just in the far north or rural west.

In Stouffville, many people are unable to obtain a family doctor. Many who move here maintain their doctor near the old home for the sake of just having one. That doesn't make sense.

The hospital in neighbouring Uxbridge is approaching a crisis. A lack of doctors may close the emergency room after this fall. That's bad news if you view Uxbridge Cottage as an alternative to more urban hospitals or it's the closest one to where you live or where an ambulance picks you up.

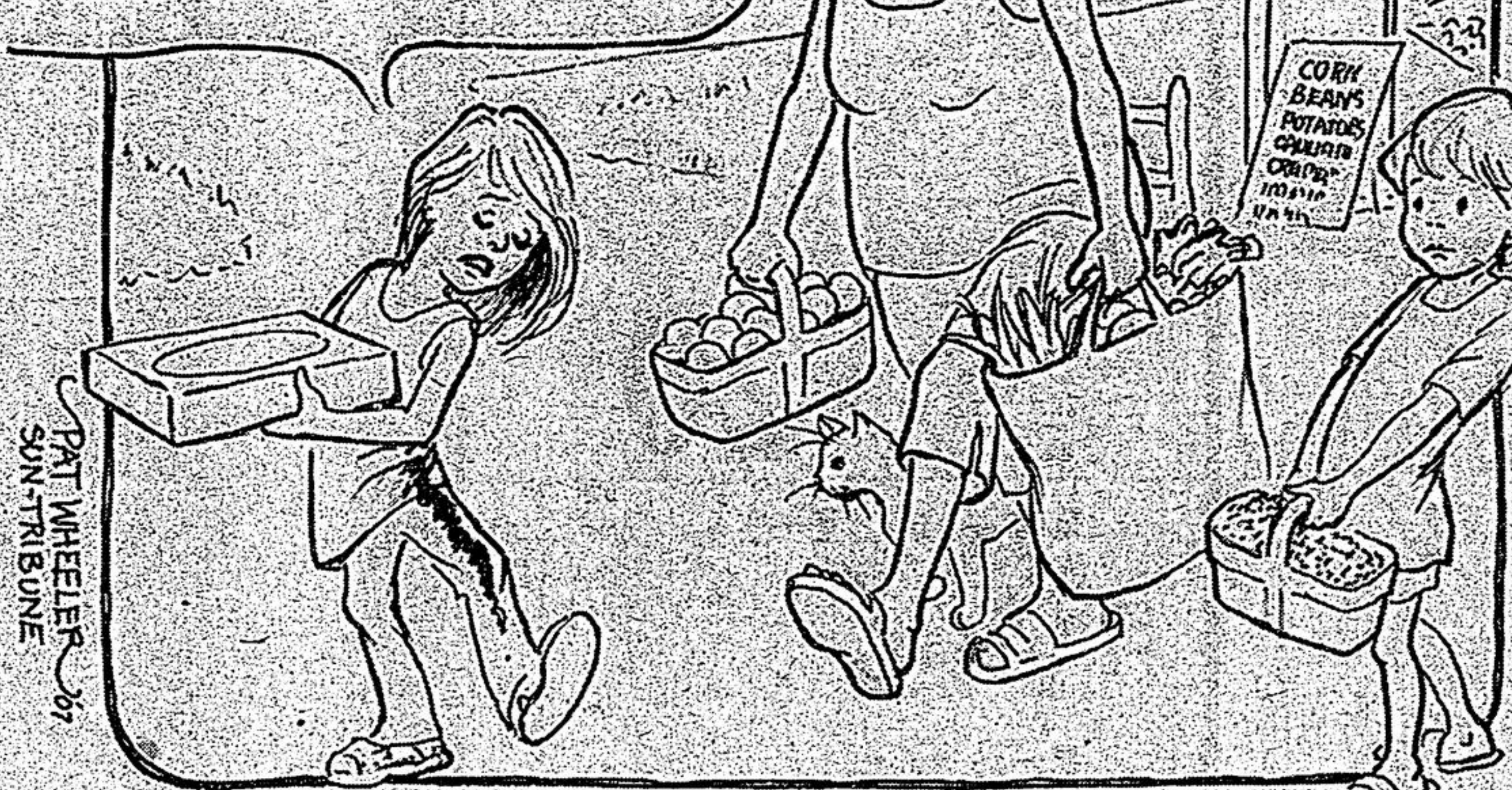
Despite additional medical school spots, we simply can't produce enough doctors, or import them, to look after all of our residents.

Dentists? Not a problem. Doctors are a different story.

The government can be proud of its new cancer care centres, including York Region's at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket, scheduled to open in two years.

Other specialty care, including heart health, that residents had to travel to Toronto for which previously has also been embraced by York Region residents. But walk-in clinics, and jammed emergency rooms are not the answers at the entry level. Residents want, and deserve, family doctors.

GRANDMA, 'I TIPPED THE FRESH RASPBERRY PIE AND IT RAN ALL DOWN MY LEG -MAYBE REESORS SHOULD SELL STAIN SPRAY!



PAT WHEELER
SUN-TRIBUNE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Greetings from paradise, in your back yard

If you park yourself for a moment, it feels like deepest northern Ontario.

The sound of traffic has disappeared, replaced by the crackle of crickets and small birds hurrying by, just over top of the high weeds and wildflowers.

This is rush hour in the Stouffville Reservoir.

The sun is preparing to set over the still pond. A few birds rest on its smooth tabletop. The trumpeter swans, so at home and magnificent during our last trek through trails, are out.

How many people drive by on Millard Street without ever stopping to walk the land? OK, hands down, everyone.

Do it. Take the time. Take the dog and the children. Bring a camera, a book and your lunch.

The dam and resulting reservoir aren't natural features, constructed by the park beavers. The bucked-tooth wonders live here, but don't blame them.

Thank Hurricane Hazel, which ripped through the GTA in 1954, killing 81 and causing millions of dollars in damage. The flood control plan, approved five years later to avoid a repeat performance, included the Stouffville project. It was completed in 1973.

It's not a fancy park by today's standards and that's fine by us. No lit parking lot or buildings to vandalize, please.

Improvements to the paths, which run north through the hardwood or by the water's edge, are welcome. It's part of a plan to run more trails through Stouffville.

Bring it on. The more nature the better in a community becoming more urban with the construction of every new subdivision two-storey.

Jim Mason is editor of *The Sun-Tribune*.

Letters to the Editor

Safe, environment stressed at Stouffville children's dances

Re: Children won't dance again after power-outage ouster, letter to the editor by Daphne Court, June 27.

We were most disturbed by Ms Court's letter regarding the Kids Dances in Stouffville and would like to clarify any misconception one may have about these dances.

In 2000, a resident of Stouffville started these dances because she recognized her young daughter and friends needed something fun to do on a Friday night.

We instill a very safe and friendly environment for the kids and have plenty of staff to assist with the supervision of the evening.

Once the children are in the hall, they are not allowed to leave unless a parent comes to get them.

On June 8, the last Kids Dance, there was a power outage throughout the east end of Stouffville and at approximately 7:40 p.m., the power went out in Latcham Hall.

The music resumed for two minutes, but the power went out again.

We waited until 8 p.m. to see if the power would resume and the dance would continue, unfortunately it did not and at that point we cancelled the dance.

Ms Court's comment that we did not let

the children use a phone to call their parents is absolutely not true.

Our cellphones, at our expense, are always available to the children if needed, along with the use of the hall phone.

Most of the children had their own cell-phones however some chose not to call their parents and wanted to hang out in the hall.

After an hour, the hall did become very hot inside even with both the front and back doors open.

We felt it was for the safety of the children to have everyone wait outside of the building and we stayed until all the kids were safely picked up.

Unfortunately, we were unable to refund the money because we still incurred all of the expenses for the DJ, hall rental and staff.

Although this dance was sold out, most are not and we personally cover the shortfall.

We have run these dances for the past five years without incident.

It is unfortunate that one misinformed parent wishes to end what is a memorable experience for the children.

We wish to continue these dances in the fall starting Sept. 14 and a show of support from the community would be appreciated to ensure their continued success.

DIANE WICKS & WAYNE CAMPBELL
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

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

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