

Vivian - Shrubmount - Pine Orchard

Central school here protest Whitchurch parents

PINE ORCHARD - Over 100 concerned parents taxed the accommodation at Pine Orchard School, April 7, in an emotionally charged confrontation with a delegation from the York County Board of Education over the suggested closing of three rural schools in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The Board proposes to bus 160 students from Pine Orchard, Vivian and Shrubmount schools to the new \$641,504 Rogers Public School in Newmarket.

Parental criticism of the Board's proposals include objections to the distance school children would be required to travel every day, the amount of time students would be spending on buses, an increase in the student-teacher ratio, and the proposed 'open school' concept at Rogers.

Speaking on behalf of the Board, Ronald Hall, Area 2 Superintendent, told parents the opportunities at Rogers would be 'far superior' to those found in the small two-room schools.

"There is far more provision at Rogers for specialization", he told the assembly. "The organization is far more adaptable as well. In the country schools when two teachers are sick, you have to declare a holiday".

Facilities to be incorporated into Rogers include a library resource centre, a gym, four main teaching areas with enclosures for special study and remedial work.

Rogers is presently planning to include kindergarten to Grade 5, but Mr. Hall told parents the curriculum may be extended to also include Grades 6, 7 and 8.

Although the question of economics was carefully avoided by delegates, the Board feels a saving of \$56,000 could be accomplished if the rural schools were closed.

In a report handed down by the Head of Planning and Development, Steven Bacsalmasi at the Board's March 22 meeting, trustees were told it costs \$80.00 per pupil per year more to educate a child in a rural school than it does in a larger urban centre.

"A recent study of operating costs for schools in the Whitchurch - Stouffville area revealed that per pupil cost for all teaching staff, caretakers, supplies, telephone and maintenance for 11 rural schools totals \$418.36 for each of the 708 pupils enrolled. At Regency Acres, the cost is \$327.36 per year", the report states.

Additional transportation arrangements for Special Education Students which cost the Board \$80.00 per day could be eliminated under the new busing plan, the report continued.

On hand to reassure parents as well as the newly appointed principal of Rogers, Keith Profit. He explained to parents that the school would be run on a 'modified open plan system' but he didn't intend to condone an atmosphere of 'permissiveness'.

But despite assurances from Board members, trustees and staff, parents remained unconvinced that their children would receive better education in Newmarket.

Speaking as unofficial representatives for the group, Jim and Lee Wong, Cherry Street, Vivian, told Board members,

parents would be happy to see their children in a modern school with all the advantages of Rogers - but in Whitchurch, not Newmarket.

"There are only 150 kids from Eagle Heights subdivision that will be attending Rogers but 500 from the Whitchurch area. We can't see why 500 students should be bused out of the community to fill a school miles away. There are more than enough school age children to warrant a new school here", Mrs. Wong said.

Adding to his wife's arguments, Mr. Wong, a Secondary School teacher in Metro, explained to the Board that people in the Vivian, Ballantrae, Pine Orchard and Shrubmount area, consider Whitchurch 'their community'.

"When you ask us to send our children to Newmarket, you are asking us to change their pattern of school and community life. We have a cinema at Ballantrae, a judo club and a community centre. Newmarket isn't part of our community and we don't want to become urbanites. Most of us moved away from Toronto to get away from schools where our children were just numbers. We don't want it to happen here", he said.

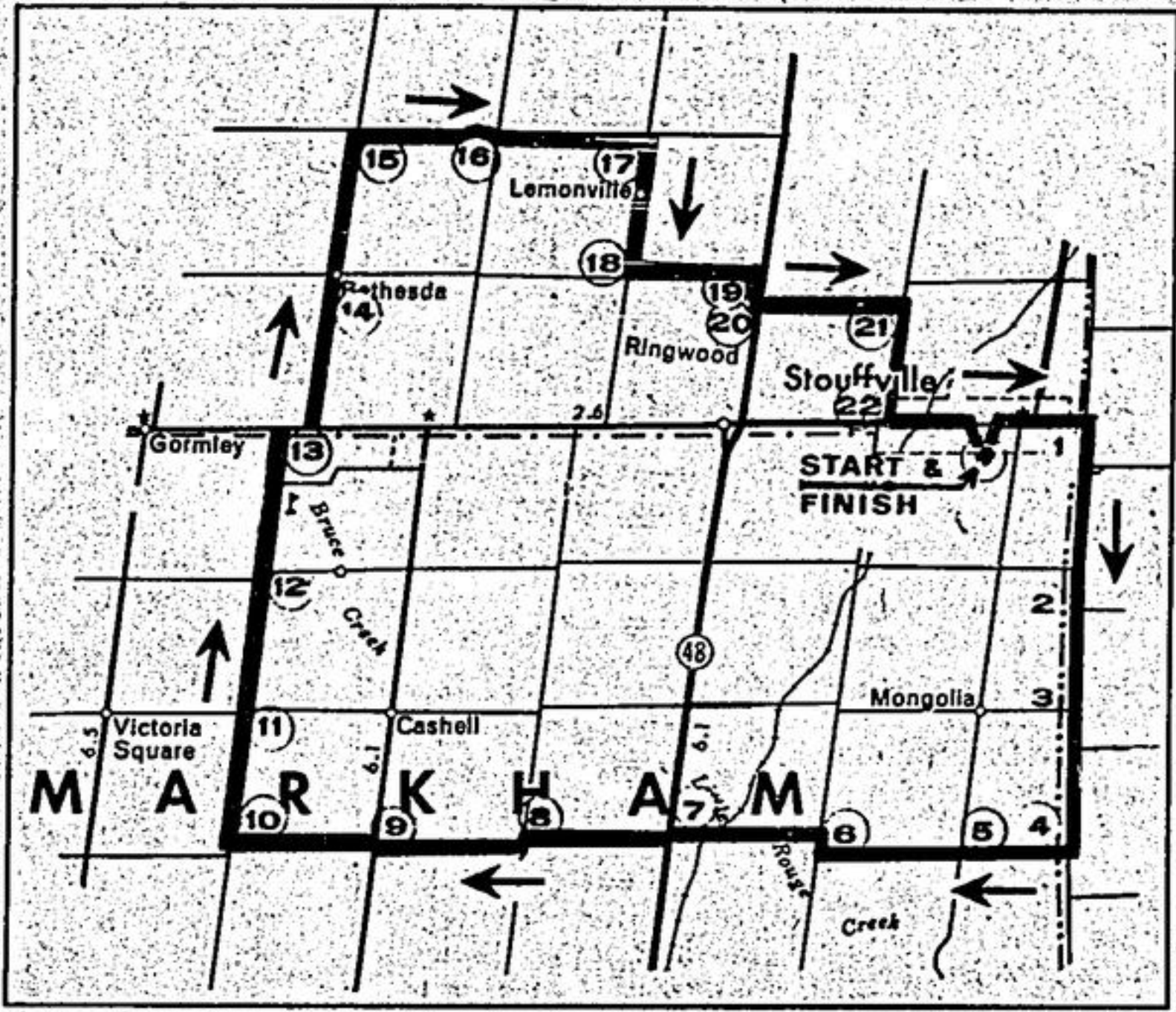
Several other parents expressed the fear that large urban schools encourage delinquency and drug abuse. "You don't see drugs in small country schools", a Pine Orchard father told the Board. "In every Metro Junior High, drugs are a critical problem".

But when Walter Wilms, Superintendent of Area One tried to convince parents that their fears were unfounded he was greeted with calls of derision.



The Stouffville Lions-sponsored bike-a-thon is set for Saturday, May 1. To assist in supervising the 30-mile route, Fred Lewis of Altona Feed and Supplies has donated the services of four Honda motorcyclists (left to right) - Helen

Bradley, Terry Lewis, Gordon Powell and June Powell. Seven of the bike entries are (left to right) - Mike Boadway, Ian Harris, Greg Murphy, Glenn Gibson, Juliet Frenchman, Dana Turner and Mark Boadway. -Jas. Thomas.



The bike-a-thon route is indicated on the map above, with the start and finish at the Stouffville Memorial Park.

"If you asked the kids, they'd tell you they are happy where they are", interjected one man.

"No way are my kids going to Newmarket. They'll stay at home first", commented another.

But the greatest criticism among parents was reserved for the distance their children would have to travel and the amount of time they would have to spend on buses.

By the time the stormy session was over, parents in the Pine Orchard, Ballantrae, Vivian and

Bike-a-thon-May 1

STOUFFVILLE There are still two Saturdays left to register in the Stouffville Lions-sponsored Bike-a-thon, May 1.

The Municipal Office, Civic Avenue, will be open April 17 and 24 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to receive entries.

Persons under 21 years, must have their parents' or guardians' consent.

To date, over 100 cyclists have signed up. But the 30 mile route has room for many more. Join in the fun and, at the same time assist the organization of your choice.

More than 80 volunteers will be stationed at checkpoints along the road to assist at intersections. St. John Ambulance members will also be on hand.

The schedule extends from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine. The starting point is the Stouffville Park. The 30 mile route also ends there.

The committee chairman is Dr. Bill Murphy, Main Street West.

Shrubmount areas had agreed to close the two room rural schools on one condition - that the Board assure them their children could attend at Ballantrae.

Employment program

Uxbridge \$3,300

UXBRIDGE TWP. - The County of Ontario has allotted funds of \$95,073 under the Provincial Government's 1971 employment incentive program.

The idea of the plan is to create jobs for unemployed persons on the basis of \$1 per capita for each municipality.

Projects may include - extension or improvement of capital works, removal of dead elms, brush clearing, park improvements or rehabilitation of municipal buildings.

Out of this amount, the Twp. of Uxbridge will receive \$3,365 although the Council requested \$4,000. Others follow - Ajax, \$6,000; Whitby, \$23,256; Cannington, \$1,030; Pickering Village, \$1,991; Port Perry, \$2,000; Brock, \$3,116; Mara, \$2,618; Pickering Twp., \$29,905; Rama, \$956; Reach, \$2,500; Scott, \$1,000; Thorah, \$1,312; East Whitby, \$3,215 and Ontario County, \$12,809.

Uxbridge Town, Beaverton and Scugog requested no funds at all.

The suggested wage for casual labor is \$2.30 per hour.

Pickering approves deer hunt

PICKERING TWP. - A three-day hunt has been approved for the Twp. of Pickering, Nov. 1, 2 and 3.

Only shotguns are permitted. No dogs are allowed.

Although the motion, April 5, was approved by Council, reeve John Williams and councillor Sherman Scott were opposed. Reeve Williams said he had received several telephone complaints last year concerning the conduct of some hunters.

TV 10 SUBURBAN FINAL

Monday to Friday 6:30 to 12:30 p.m.

BERNIE SAFRANCE, MARKHAM talks about the take-off pounds sensibly club.

STEVEN NEWBOTH, NORM TERRY, RICHMOND HILL talk with Adrien Clarkson and Mrs. Keller Mackay about the Day Break Walkathon to be held April 24th.

DICK GRIFFEN talks about the formation of a Kinsmen Club in Markham.

BILL MURPHY, STOUFFVILLE LIONS CLUB, talks about the bike-a-thon to be held on May 1st.

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