


**The Tribune**  
Established 1888



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## Editorial

### Youth program is suspect

On Feb. 14, when M. P. John Roberts (York-Simcoe), visited Stouffville, he found an audience prepared with questions and anxious for answers. The majority, he fielded well.

One question however, concerning the government-sponsored 'Opportunities for Youth' program, has not been answered - at least, not well enough.

And the seminar, sponsored by M. P. Norm Cafik (Ontario), at Uxbridge, Saturday, only confirmed our suspicions that, in theory, the idea is great, but in practice, it's a fiasco.

While it may be unfair to condemn all projects, on the basis of what we saw and heard, Saturday, we would conclude that to be even insignificantly successful, its organizers (with the exception of the Dept. of National Defence), would have to be better informed and more responsible than was apparent at this particular Conference.

Gum-chewing Tony DeFranco, an official of the State Secretary's Department, was an insult to the people, who

took of their time to attend. Rather than merely arriving late, it would have been better for his audience and less of an embarrassment for Mr. Cafik, if he had not arrived at all.

The federal government has authorized the spending of millions of dollars (your dollars and mine), in pushing this program.

The magnitude of the project is immense.

But to realize benefits to warrant such expense, very capable administrators are required - administrators that will be selective at the start and decisive at the end. Anything less is a waste - of their time and our money.

Last year, when the 'Opportunities for Youth' program was originated, several candidates for approved 'hand-outs' were suspect.

In the minds of many, at Uxbridge, Saturday, those suspicions are now confirmed.

We say, scrap the project entirely, and put the funds to a more practical use.

### Snowmobile earns its stripes

Every community has its snowmobile enthusiasts, including Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Every community, Whitchurch-Stouffville included, has its snowmobile critics.

We cannot be counted among either class. We accept them for what they're worth.

And their worth, both drivers and machines, was prominently revealed last weekend, in an area other than sport and recreation. The 'big blow' that inundated this district, made their use essential.

Dozens of motorists were assisted from stranded cars by these 'good Samaritan' snow vehicle operators, many of whom

made it a point to check locations where traffic might be heaviest.

By noon, Sunday, as clearing operations continued, many folks arrived back in Stouffville, some relating experiences they'll never forget. The majority, for one reason or another, had nothing but praise for the sometimes pesky snowmobile.

It would seem, that regardless of complaints and criticisms (some legitimate and some not), there comes a time when credit must be given, where credit is deserved.

So, from us, to you, it's a tip of the helmet for a job well done.

## Editor's Mail

Dear Mr. Thomas:

I am writing in response to a letter in The Tribune (Feb. 10) from a "Satisfied Resident" who expressed the view that the V.L.A. subdivision at Ballantrae had already proved itself.

I would certainly agree with the writer on some points; the homes are attractive and an asset to the area, and those residents who I have met are fine people whose presence will benefit the community.

However there are some aspects which I feel should be considered before more building is approved. The present public school at Ballantrae is very overcrowded - it is now accommodating twice the number of children for which it was intended. Plans have been approved for an addition, but building has not yet commenced and it will be some time before this addition becomes a reality. I believe it would be most unwise to authorize further development before this school is enlarged. If large developments are permitted, the school might be overcrowded even after it is enlarged!

Another problem is servicing the land - the water and sewers which city people take for granted. The houses in the present subdivision have wells. All these wells take their water from the same underground water system. If a great many wells are taking water from the same system, the water level will become lowered and residents will find their wells running dry. There is a limit to how many houses can be served by wells; when a community grows past the "hamlet" stage it becomes necessary to install a "town" water system, and this is costly. This would not only affect subdivision dwellers, but older residents and farmers might also find their wells running dry and would suffer the expense of digging deeper wells or paying for connection to a "town" system.

Similarly with septic tanks - what density of population can the area take

before a sewage system would be required? I would be interested to know if the Town or the developers have had any studies done with regard to the water resources in this area, and the number of septic systems that can be absorbed.

I would suggest that "Satisfied Resident" wait and see how his well holds out through one dry summer before coming to any conclusions. I think the Town's policy with regard to further development is a wise one. Further development can always be approved at a later date.

"Rural Resident"

Dear Sir:

Well as usual, it has happened again this winter.

Ontario County Road No. 23, (Whitby-Pickering Townline), is maintained by Pickering Twp. equipment.

During a period of six days, here is their record of performance.

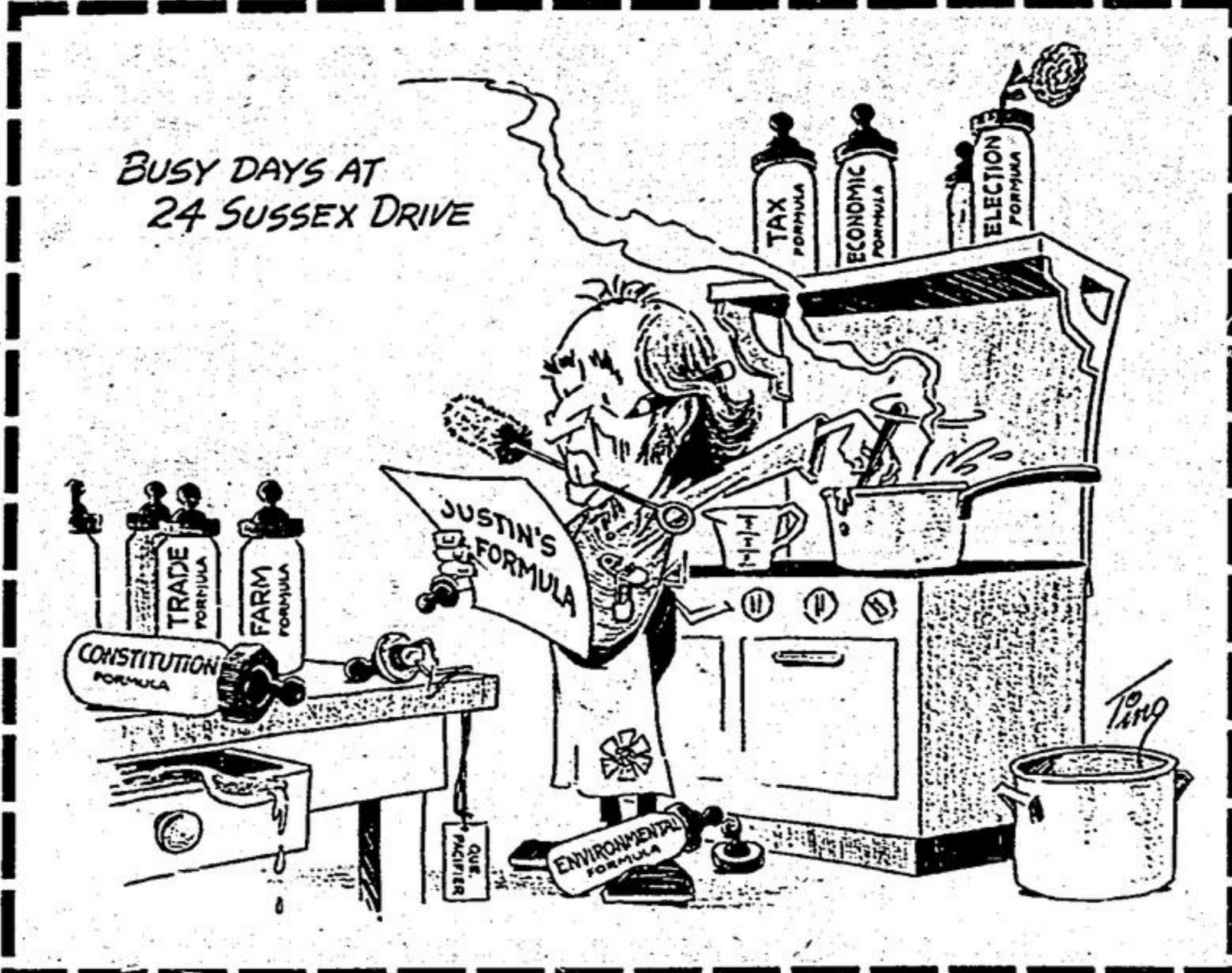
Feb. 4 - road plowed twice; Feb. 5 - road plowed at noon, 3 or 4 cars got through, then road blocked again. Plowed about 6 p.m., by request on account of sickness, one lane; Feb. 6 - road sanded, still one lane; Feb. 7 - nothing, still one lane; Feb. 8 - nothing, still one lane; Feb. 9 - plowed out.

There must be at least two school buses a day on this road.

Why the County of Ontario permits this kind of maintenance, I cannot understand. In the nearly 50 years that I can recall, the situation has been no better. Perhaps the municipality could learn a little from the Town of Whitby.

Since this is now a County road, why cannot it be maintained like all other roads under County jurisdiction.

W. Appleby,  
R. R. 1, Ashburn.



## SUGAR AND SPICE

### The way it was for Billy the Kid

By BILL SMILEY

In a nostalgic mood today. I've been thinking that, with the onslaught of the Speed Age, many of our fine old Canadian traditions have fallen by the wayside, died on the vine, or simply lain down and curled up their toes.

One of the first to go, of course, was the blacksmith. It hurts me to face the truth: that most people today under thirty have never known the sensory joys of a blacksmith's shop.

At this time of year, small boys used to squeeze through the ramshackle door, and edge as close as they could to the fire, freezing their bums and roasting their cheeks. There was a fine acrid stench of horse manure and scorched hooves. There was the leaping flame as the bellows blew. There was the ringing clang as the smith beat out the white-hot metal between hammer and anvil, and the satisfying hiss when the hot metal was plunged into the cold water.

At a certain age, most male kids would have settled happily for the life of a blacksmith, a free soul who spent his days doing the most fascinating work in the world.

The decline of the smithy, of course, was brought about by the gradual phasing out of another tradition - the horse-drawn vehicle.

I wonder how many kids of this generation have ever spent a winter Saturday "catching bobs". This was our term for jumping on the backs of farmers' sleighs.

All day long the farmers came and went to and from town. And all day long we hopped on behind a load of grain, left that for a load of supplies going the other way, picked up a sleigh piled with logs for the return trip, and shivered with delighted fear as the farmers shouted at us, and even sometimes flourished their whips in our direction.

As we grew a little older, about 12, we graduated to catching on the wing a cutter. This was more daring and more dangerous because they could really fly, the runner was much smaller, and the farmer could turn around and belt you one on the ear.

Most of them, of course, were pretty decent. I know now that they were more worried about us getting hurt in a fall

than they were about the extra weight their horses had to pull.

Then there were the butchers' cutters. These consisted of a sort of box with runners beneath, and a step at the back for the driver to stand on. The horses were not plugs, but real road-runners that went like a bat out of hell. They were every bit as exciting as a Roman chariot, and the drivers were the envy of every boy, in fur caps, reins in one hand, whip in the other, as they tore through the town like furies.

And I wonder how many boys have played hockey all day on a frozen river, when a hard shot the goalie missed might slide for a quarter of a mile. We never had to worry about ice-time, or changing lines. We could play until we were pooped, then sit by the bonfire until rested, and have another go. And there were always twenty or thirty playing at once, so everybody got a whack at the puck. Some great stick-handlers came out of that era.

Think of the depths to which we have sunk. The smithy, with its light and shadows, its reds and blacks, its earthy smells, its sense of life, has been replaced by the garage, a sterile thing with its cement floor, its reek of gas and oil, and its unspoken assurance that this-is-gonna-cost-you-plenty-buddy.

The cutter, swift and light as a bird, no longer skims the snow. It has been replaced by a stinking, snarling, skidding beast that only modern man could abide - the snowmobile.

No more meat-cutters, careening around the corners on one runner, delivering in any weather. Now, we plod like zombies through the supermarket, to moronic piped-in music, and pick up the odourless, antiseptic, cellophaned packages the great gods Dominion, Loblaw or Safeway have assigned to us, and carry them humbly to our cars, three blocks away.

Our kids have to get up at five a.m. to play hockey, and if they're not real "killers", get about four minutes ice-time.

Ah, those were the days! And I haven't even begun on the most vital of all winter equipment - the puck consisting of a frozen horse-bun.



**No. 47 - 'The great white way'**  
Underneath all this snow is Hwy. 47, east of Lincolnville, as it appeared at 1 p.m. Sunday. In the immediate foreground is a Volkswagen, all but buried by huge drifts. A front-end loader (rear), broke a path through after many hours of work. - Jas. Thomas.

# ROAMING AROUND

## 'Big brother'

By Jim Thomas

This is Brotherhood Week. From Feb. 19 through 26, we're asked to put aside all our little prejudices, our animosities, our bias, and think of everyone as 'a brother' or 'a sister' if you like, regardless of race, religion, color or creed.

To me, it's the most important period in the entire year, so important in fact, that it seems slightly ludicrous to establish one week - a mere seven days to accomplish so vast a feat. Why not 52 weeks - 365 days?

As you may have concluded by now, pro-togetherness has become a mania with me. I've expounded on the 'theory' many times, including several occasions in this column.

So it was, Sunday, when my pastor called to tell me he was snowbound and requested I take the morning service, I wasted no time in accepting the challenge. For the theme was obvious - Brotherhood.

Well, if there was ever an occasion to demonstrate it, Sunday was the day. For, as you may remember (how could anyone forget?), the area was inundated by the worst storm of the winter.

The signs of 'brotherhood' were everywhere. And folks, caught up in the fury of the 'blow', were appreciative, to the point of tears, for the co-operation shown in their time of extreme need.

I talked to dozens of them. And, in every case, the story was the same.

Like the snowmobile chap, who gave his name only as 'Al', rescuing a mother, father and three children from a marooned auto on the Bloomington Road, east of Hwy. 48. And a similar story from Ringwood - another snowmobile operator, picking up an elderly motorist who had started out to walk. The man was exhausted from the ordeal and near the point of collapse.

East of Lincolnville, a farm family opened up their home to a couple, after their Volkswagen became 'lost' in an eight foot drift. West of Ballantrae, a York Regional police constable went out of his way to pick up a stranded girl and take her to division quarters at Newmarket.

Vern and Audrey Davies, always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone in need, turned their dance pavilion at Cedar Beach into an overnight 'hostel'.

These are only a few of the stories. There are hundreds more.

But what, 'big brother', did you do, you ask?

Not very much, compared to some, I'm afraid, but at least I tried.

It was about 2 p.m. I was quietly brooding over my second cup of coffee at Bing's.

Suddenly, without provocation (on my part), a willowy blonde moved up to the counter and sat down only two stools away.

"Storm-stayed?" I asked, observing two suitcases with identification tags attached.

"Sure am", she replied wearily, "I've come more than 1,300 miles by bus; no sleep in forty hours and now, just seven miles from home, I'm stranded."

Funny, isn't it, how some days, a fellow, (even an innocent newspaper editor), would be inviting a poke in the nose, talking to a girl-stranger so personally. But not on stormy days. At least, not on stormy days in Stouffville.

I inquired further.

I learned her name to be Mary Anne - Mary Anne Williamson. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Williamson, reside at R.R.1, Goodwood.

Originally, Mary Anne had hoped to catch a plane out of Winnipeg on Friday, but due to the threatened air technicians' strike, no immediate flight was scheduled. Rather than wait, she took a bus to Toronto, and then to Stouffville, arriving in town about 12.30 p.m. However, at the corner of North Street and Hwy. 47 the route ended - solid drifts blocking both lanes.

With no chance of getting through to Goodwood for several hours, and anxious to prove that I "practice what I preach", I invited Mary Anne to spend the remainder of the afternoon at the Office, and then join our family for supper.

The kids - they thought it was great. My wife - one hundred percent approval, on one condition. That my mania is restricted to 'brotherhood' and nothing more.

When's Mother's Day?