

Plenty to lose in election bid

Will I or won't I? Should I or shouldn't I? This is a decision of major importance.

Will I toss my tuque in this year's election ring or should I remain a student crossing guard at Stouffville's Glad Park Avenue and Millard Street?

As column confrere Jim Mason would appropriately put it, I'm just another political wannabe. However, for fear of drowning in a sea of municipal mayhem, I'm presently unwilling to take the plunge.

For several reasons. First, should I run, my crosswalk services would immediately end. A section of the Municipal Elections Act, e-mailed to me by clerk Michele Kennedy, makes this decree abundantly clear.

Should I be successful, the end would be permanent. However, should I lose, I could be re-instated. I'm unwilling to run the risk.

Second, involvement in town politics is admittedly not my strength. The fear of losing friends and making enemies dampens my enthusiasm.

But a trustee on the York Region District School Board would have been both challenging and rewarding.

This won't happen. Fourth, my column-writing custom, continuous for more than 50 years, would also conclude.

And rightly so. The temptation to toot my own horn would be tremendous. Fellow politicians would treat me with contempt.

And third, wife Jean would file for divorce should I dare touch a toe in municipal waters.

So therein lies my dilemma. I'm dead if I do and dead if I don't.

Without wishing to expose an inflated ego, I honestly think I could make a good councillor. At least, health permitting, I'd make a gallant effort. During the last 60 years, I've learned a lot from watching politicians past and present give of their time and talents towards the betterment of our town. Harry Bowes was a prime example. So is his successor, Richard Bartley. Ward 5 was and continues to be



Roaming Around with Jim Thomas

well-served.

While grandstanding before the public and press is one thing, walking the beat is another. I'd detest the former. I'd love the latter.

What I don't like is the general disinterest among the rank and file of the Whitchurch-Stouffville populace. It's difficult to believe that, with so much at stake, less than 50 per cent of town taxpayers can be bothered to cast a ballot. Despite the fact our trek to the polls has been extended to every four years from three, it's unlikely the turnout will improve.

It's sad.

Truth is, unless personal problems arise, taxpayers don't seem to care. Or don't care enough. Most, I claim, can't identify their ward let alone their ward ambassador.

It's distressing.

So what does the opinion poll say at Tim Hortons on Main Street?

Some have suggested, with subtle faces, I should go the limit and run for mayor. Heaven forbid.

I have enough problems chairing worship team meetings at St. James Presbyterian Church let alone controlling the likes and dislikes of some well-known council critics. Who needs the aggravation?

In the final analyses, it all boils down to one of two choices - assisting 90 kids, three times a day, five days a week or deal with difficulties affecting 24,000 people over the next four years.

The answer seems simple. Let me continue to do what I enjoy doing most and leave problem-solving up to those who still do that best - the politicians.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.



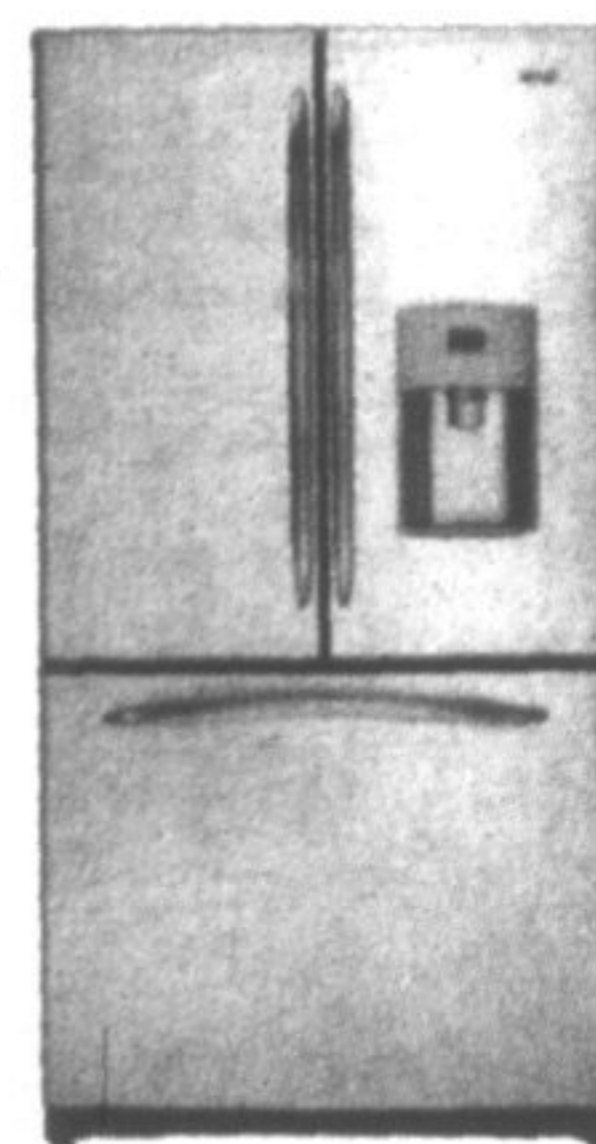
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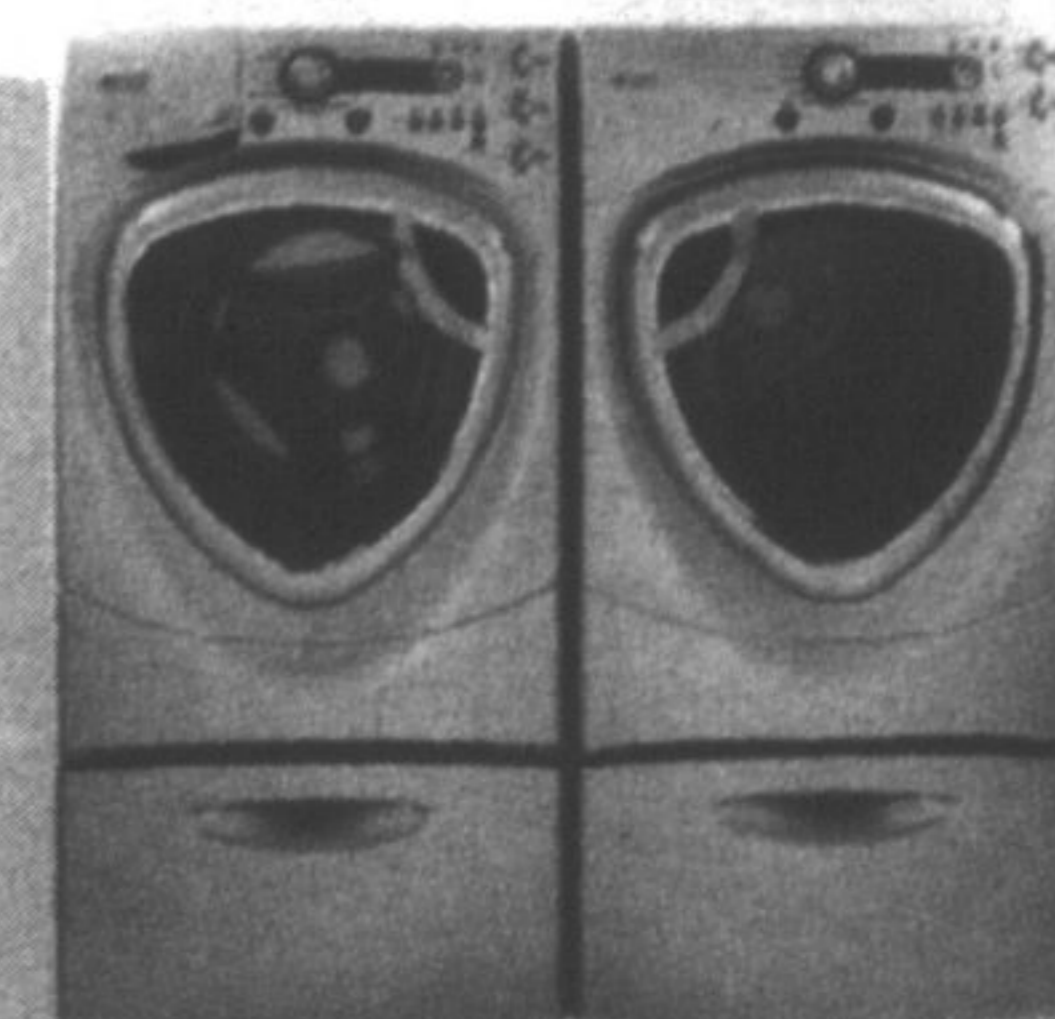
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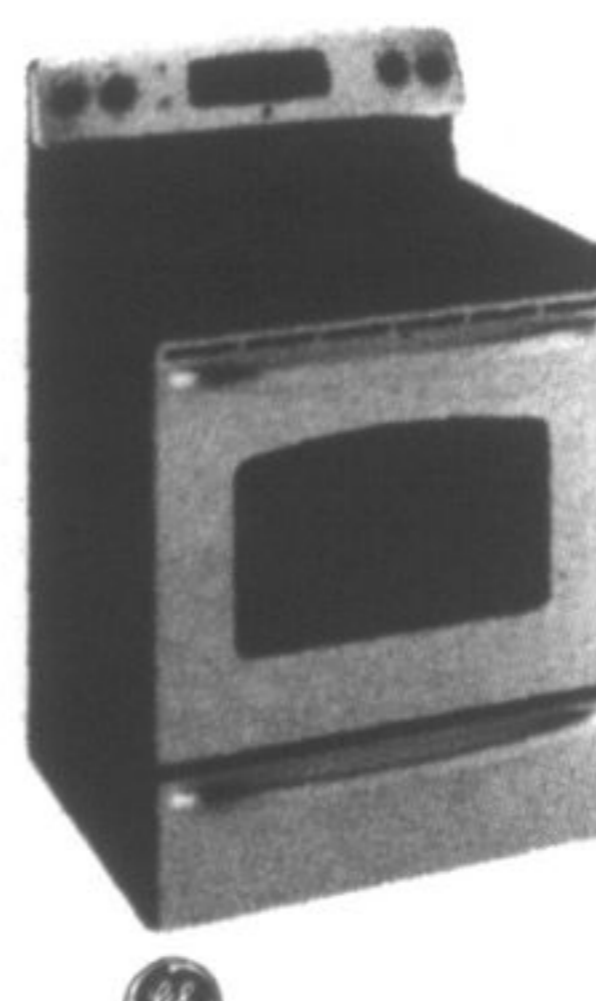


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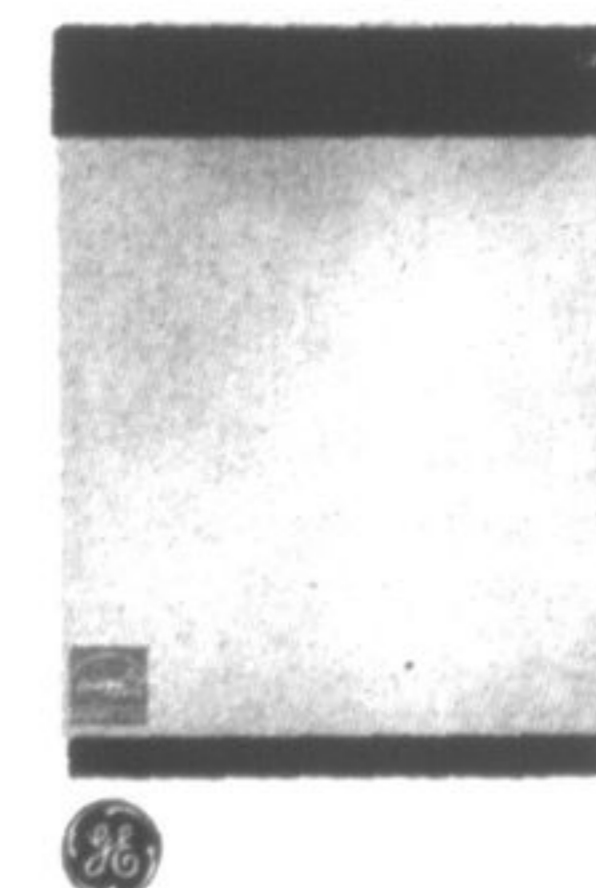


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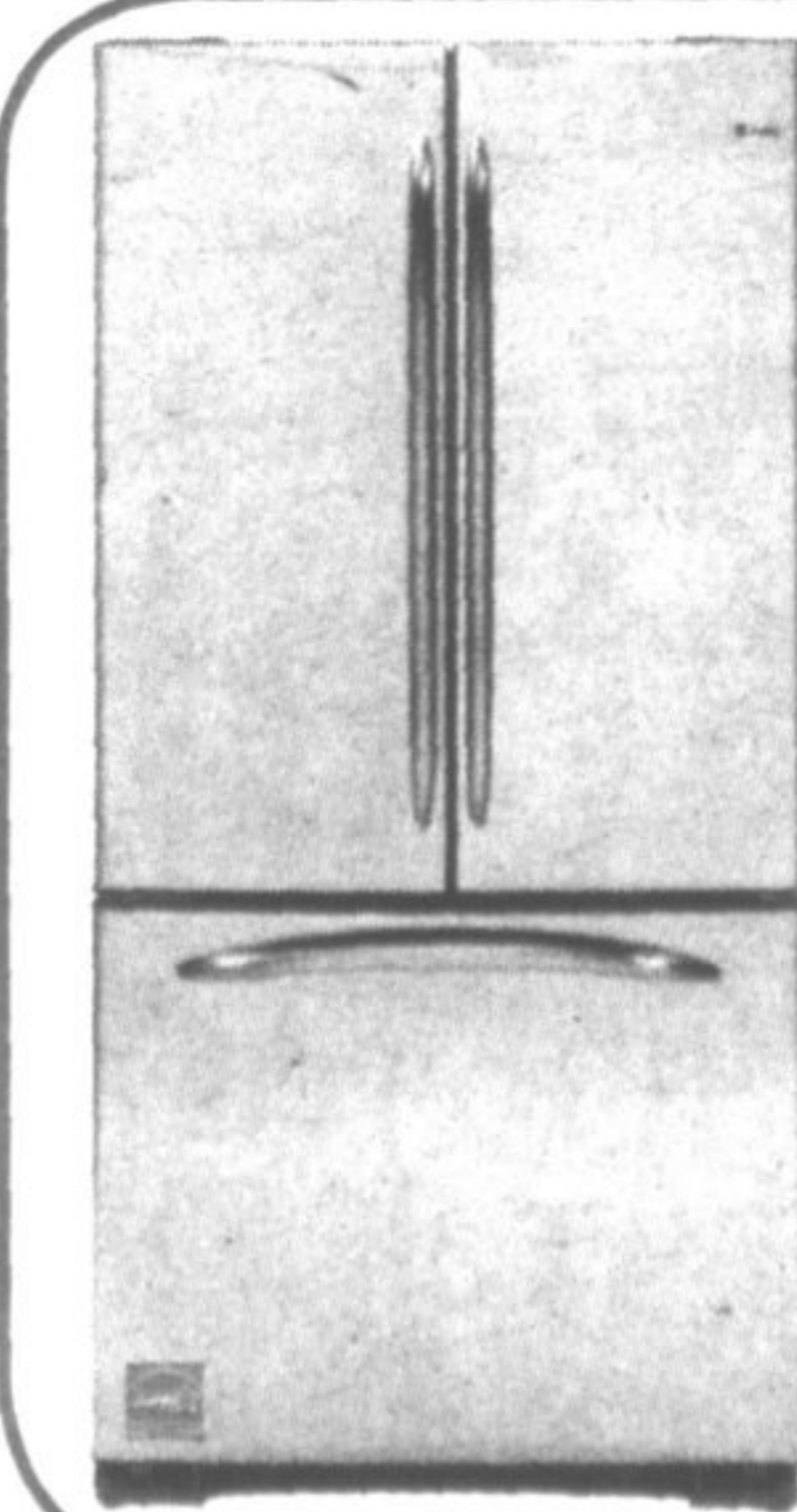
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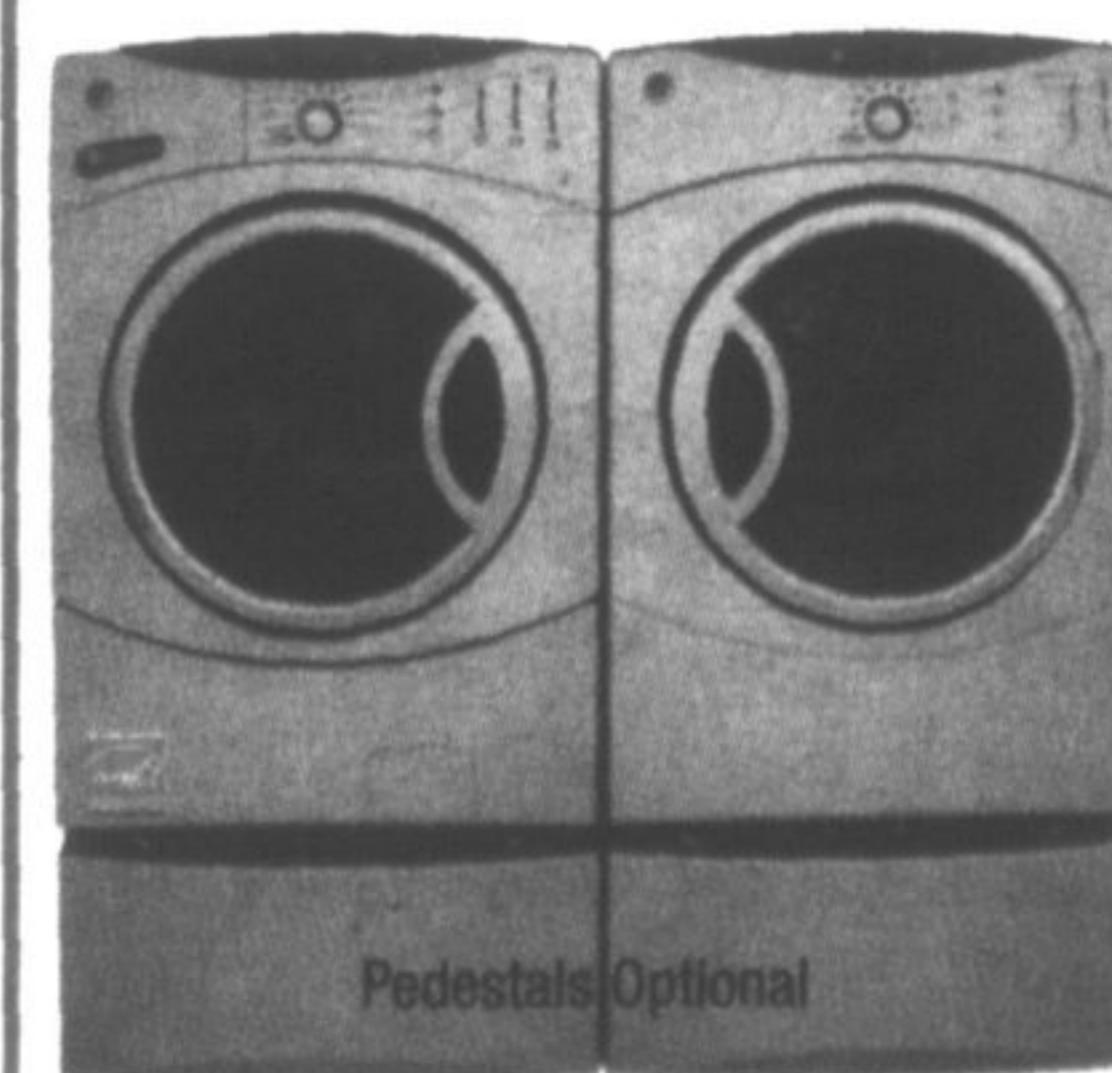


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