

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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

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

DISTRIBUTION
905-640-2612

EDITORIAL
Editor
Jim Mason
jmason@yrmg.com

ADVERTISING
Retail Manager
Mike Banville
mbanville@yrmg.com

DISTRIBUTION
Circulation
Supervisor
Carolyn Norman
cnorman@yrmg.com

PRODUCTION
Manager
Sherry Day
sday@yrmg.com

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

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LETTERS POLICY

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.

Letters to the Editor,
The Sun-Tribune
6290 Main St.
Stouffville, ON
L4A 1G7
jmason@yrmg.com

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OPINION

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Debora Kelly

BUSINESS MANAGER
Robert Lazaruko

DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS
Barry Black

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING, DISTRIBUTION
Nicole Fletcher

DIRECTOR, REGIONAL PRODUCTS, CLASSIFIED, TODAY'S HOMES
Debra Weller

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Terry would have been proud, Stouffville

Re: Stouffville breaks Fox records, Sept. 21.

An incredible showing of community spirit and a day that would make Terry Fox very proud.

Stouffville came out in record numbers Sept. 19 for the 30th anniversary of Terry's Marathon of Hope.

The 1,300 participants raised in excess of \$101,000 for cancer research.

Our local schools also participated in their own Terry Fox events in September taking our total to \$120,000 for our community this year.

On behalf of our dedicated volunteer team, many thanks to our wonderful community for keeping Terry's dream alive.

Some 40 lawn signs that help us remind our community of the event went missing this year. As the Terry Fox

HAVE YOUR SAY, WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

► What do you think of these issues or others? E-mail letters to the editor to jmason@yrmg.com

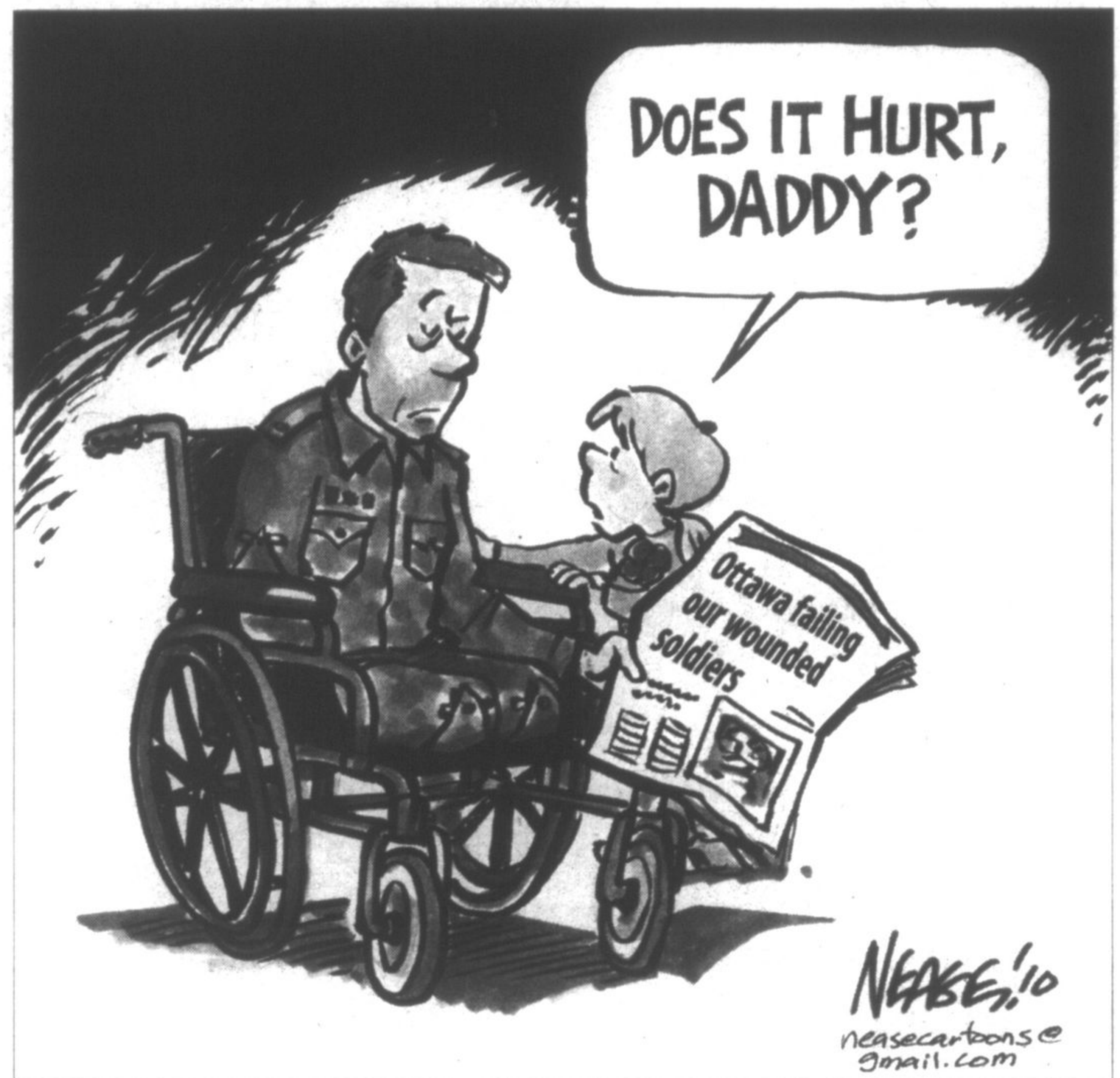
Foundation spends its money wisely on cancer research, we will not replace these signs.

If you happen upon any, please contact me at 905-640-4705 and I will be happy to pick up, no questions asked.

Or, alternatively, drop them at 268 Cam Fella Blvd. in Stouffville.

SANDY SCHELL KENNEDY
STOUFFVILLE TERRY FOX RUN

You can read letters, columns and stories from The Sun-Tribune on yorkregion.com



Let's hear party plans, not byelection slugging

It's a test run, in many respects. Vaughan, Nov. 29, be there or be square for a taste of the upcoming showdown between Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff.

Pundits say a lot is at stake in the Vaughan byelection in which Conservative law-and-order candidate Julian Fantino is pitted against Liberal businessman and community leader Tony Genco for the seat vacated by Maurizio Bevilacqua, Vaughan's mayor-elect.

The riding has been red for more than 20 years, handily won time and time again by Mr. Bevilacqua. Yet his piece of the voter pie had been dropping, while the Conservatives' fortunes were improving.

While other parties are represented in the campaign, the stage is set for an epic battle between the two strong candidates in a race too close to call.

One thing is certain, the loss of this seat would be seen as a blow to Mr. Ignatieff's leadership.

Mr. Fantino came out swinging, showing the Conservatives aren't wavering in a campaign strategy that favours aggressive partisan politicking, distortion and exaggeration.



Debora Kelly

Usually, the Liberals respond in kind, fighting dirty with dirty.

The former top cop in York and Toronto was quick to stake community safety as an issue: "Conservatives are on the right side of this issue: the side of law-abiding citizens and on the side of victims who want justice," he trumpeted.

He didn't mention his government has cut by 41 per cent the grants budget for the Victims of Crime Initiative and another 34 per cent — \$2.7 million — in program contributions.

His news release went on: "In

contrast, the Ignatieff-led *Coalition believes that rather than keeping real criminals in jail, they should be let out without paying their debts to society in full and before victims receive the justice they are owed for the crimes committed against them and their families."

(*Columnist's Note: Coalition? We're so over that. Hello? The 2008 prorogued parliamentary session called and it wants its coalition back, Mr. Fantino.)

Are there actually voters out there who would fall for that?

Mr. Genco called the claim "superficial" and "stupid ... frankly".

Statistics rank Vaughan/Markham among the safest communities in the country, so he wondered why "He's trying to create a perception that's not reality".

Mr. Fantino next issued a release over a comment made to a local newspaper by Mr. Genco. It stated the "Ignatieff-handpicked candidate" had "cavalierly shrugged off" "the notorious sponsorship scandal".

I'm not condoning Mr. Genco's response or dismissing a party scandal that occurred in Quebec after the 1995 referendum, but I'm more concerned about the present when it comes to accountability on spending.

Mr. Fantino stated, "There is only one party that values the people of Vaughan's tax dollars."

Valuing my money must mean blowing \$1.2 billion on a G8/G20 photo-op, \$130 million on partisan advertising and \$13 billion on super-prisons when crimes rates are dropping.

Here are real issues: household debt is at record levels, the unemployment rate is 1.9 per cent higher today than it was during the last election and Conservative spending has pushed the deficit to \$54 billion, the highest in our country's history.

A Canadian Medical Association poll shows 71 per cent of us want the government equally focused on health care and the economy and nine in 10 Canadians don't see any real solutions being put forward by the government.

Voters can, indeed, make the Vaughan byelection a taste of things to come.

It's not too much to ask candidates to focus on real issues — let's hear the plans for the economy and health care — and put aside partisan slugging, distortion and misinformation.

It all just gets in the way of voters trying to make informed, intelligent decisions about who they want leading their community and their country.