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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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OPINION

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Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

Straight goods on airport, please

It must seem like the movie *Groundhog Day* playing over and over for long-term residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville and area.

Every few years, plans for an airport in northern Pickering pop up. And, at least until this week, they retreat again.

The federal government said Monday it is one step closer to developing the airport.

That's nearly four decades after it acquired the land to build it.

A study released by Transport Canada says an airport will be required in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area as early as 2027 and that "Pickering Lands would be a prime location".

We've heard all that before.

The new findings, which considered passenger, cargo and recreational traffic needs, conclude the federal government should retain the site for the future development of an airport.

Been there, heard that many times over. The potential airport has been a fear in the area since 1972, when the federal government acquired the 7,530 hectares of land.

Anti-airport signs still stand in and around the proposed airport's base, near the Hwy. 7 and Brock Road community of Brougham. That's just south of Claremont, less than 15 minutes by car from urban Stouffville.

Homes on the land – those that haven't fallen into disrepair or worse – remain rentals. Many of the proud families that once farmed the land and called it home are long gone, many to new homes in the Stouffville area.

Jim Flaherty, minister of finance and responsible for the Greater Toronto Area, said the Pickering Lands provide an "economic and environmental opportunity" through "job creation, economic activity and environmental stewardship".

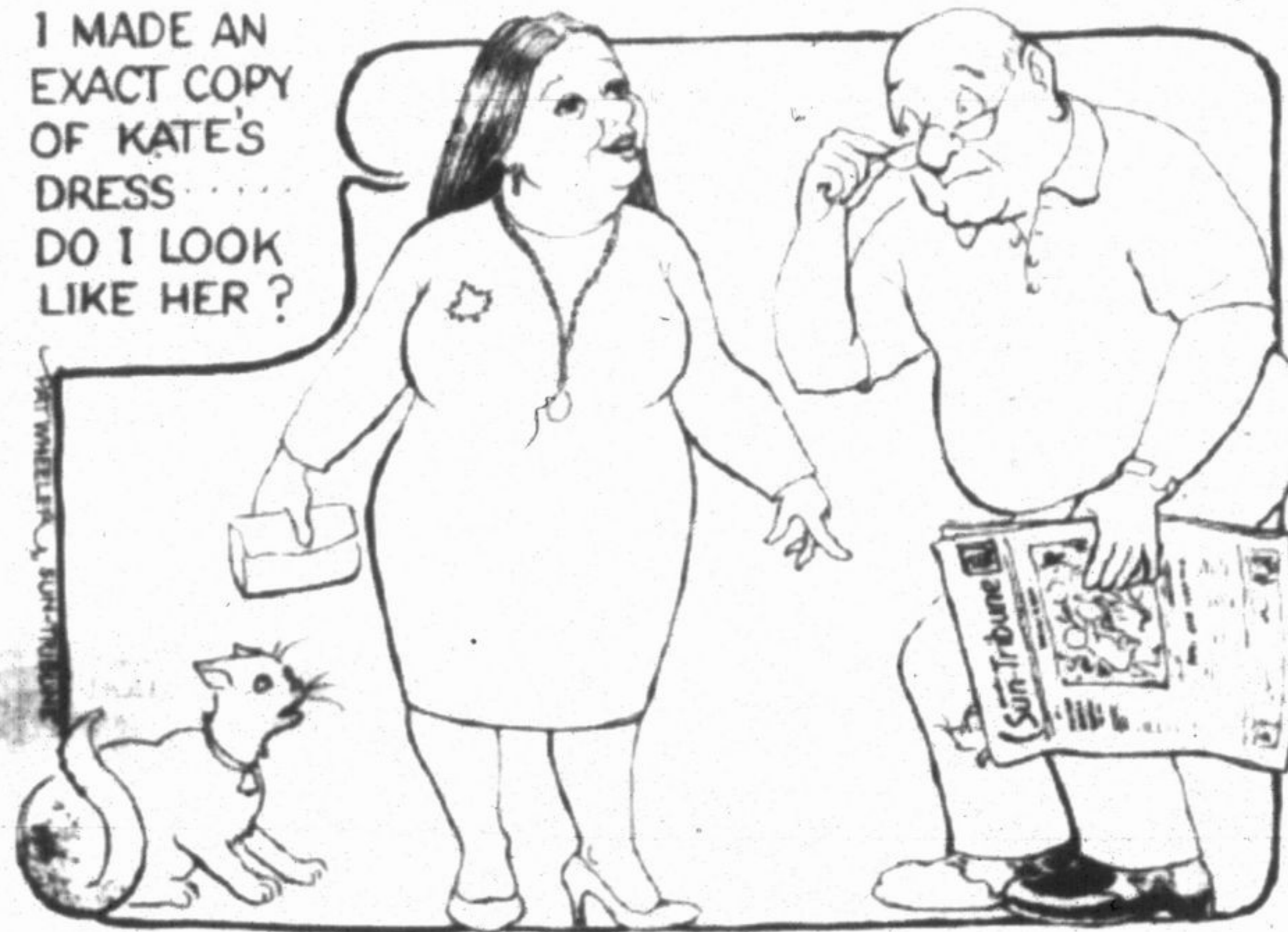
Anti-airport forces counter with the same argument they used 40 years ago: Farmland, and the feeding of the GTA, is more important than the added transportation benefits.

What will the impact be on Whitchurch-Stouffville? We've asked that question for more than 25 years.

The federal government, specifically MP Paul Całandra, owes us an updated and detailed answer to that question. What effect will proposed flightpaths have on residents? Are there other side effects, positive or negative, of having an airport in the neighbourhood?

Whitchurch-Stouffville council must push for a public meeting to clear the air and set the record straight, long before an airport moves in next door.

I MADE AN EXACT COPY OF KATE'S DRESS. DO I LOOK LIKE HER?



Letters to the Editor

Small town caring lives on

Even as our town has grown, we still have our small town ways.

In our neighbourhood alone, we have a street of angels.

I recently had a hip replaced and the residents of our street got together to help. A special toilet seat, walker, bath bench and reacher were brought in to assist me. Meals were delivered.

One neighbour, Ainsley (Card) Tucker, went back and forth to the rehab centre in Toronto with my laundry.

Thankfully, we remain a small town in many, many ways.

BERTHA SLAUGHTER
STOUFFVILLE

We must pay price for technological advances

Re: Drop NIMBY attitude, erect cell tower for all, letter to the editor by Frank van Veen, June 11.

I must endorse Mr. van Veen's comments. Improved communications capabilities will enhance life in this area of Whitchurch-Stouffville and improve our economic opportunities.

It seems to be human nature to want the advantages of technology without accepting any personal cost.

Transmission towers are necessary for wireless communications and, naturally, the closer they are to recipients, the better reception will be.

We have no high-speed Internet available in our area, poor cellphone reception and little hope of improvement any time soon, unless the proposed tower provides solutions.

If the Rogers tower is installed, I hope homes in the valleys near McCowan Road, where my family lives, are finally able to receive high-speed Internet and reliable cellphone service.

HAVE YOUR SAY

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

However, even if we are not that fortunate some people and the town will benefit, so I support the initiative.

GLEN E. MOREHOUSE
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Downtown businesses need support year-round

As a new resident to Stouffville, it was great to see the vibrancy of the town during the Strawberry Festival.

Our local businesses were buzzing with activity, which was much different from the usually quiet downtown.

It made me wonder how the town's Main Street businesses can thrive outside of festival times.

I certainly do my part to support my favourite spots, such as the exceptional Fishbone restaurant, where the food and service is of the highest quality and entire dinner experience a joy.

I cringe to think it may not be getting the support needed from our community to continue to welcome guests.

Local businesses need our ongoing support. Fellow residents, are you taking the time to discover and enjoy our Main Street businesses?

Give them a try and invite your friends to join you. You won't be disappointed.

CELINE GALAISE
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Alberta truckers pulling for Tony

Tony Rossi insulated homes for a living before his death last September. He didn't drive a big rig.

But the guy from Stouffville is a big name in Western Canadian trucking circles.

Thank his brother-in-law, Alberta oil tanker driver Tom Jack, and Tom's wife, Janice, for that.

The Jacks were back in Tom's native Ontario 14 months ago, staying with Tony and Pat Rossi in suburban Stouffville.

Tony was into his fifth year of fighting cancer, taking experimental drugs from Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto. Hope was running out.

"It's a 42-hour drive home to Vegreville from Stouffville and I got mad," Mr. Jack said this week, after pulling his new truck over near Wainwright, Alta.

With his wife's advice, he turned the anger over his brother-in-law's illness into action, organizing a fundraising convoy during those long hours on the road.

Six weeks later, 35 trucks hit the road last July and raised \$17,769 – a record haul for such a short period of organization, according to the recipient, the Alberta Cancer Foundation.

Tom put Tony on the phone at the start of the run so he could hear the symphony of truck horns blasting across the Prairies.

The horns will sound again July 23. Fifty trucks are expected to gather in Vermilion, Alta., for Tony's Convoy for Hope. This year's goal is \$50,000, all of it earmarked for cancer research and patient care.

"The convoy has really taken on a life of its own," Mr. Jack said. "The support we've been getting has been phenomenal."

Tony will be watching his truckers next week.

For more information, go to tonysconvoyforhope.weebly.com

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