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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is two-minute wait for bus that important?

Re: Bus stop makes no sense, letter to the editor by Roger Davidson, Dec. 27.

I can understand the frustration of some people in regards to the bus stop on Hoover Park Drive east of Ninth Line. I, too, tend to get caught up in that traffic and I drive a bus.

Several things come into play here, one being we now have four schools within a one-kilometre range that basically get out at the same time.

And there are a number of buses all leaving at about the same time and dropping off on Hoover Park and Reeves Way. Plus, they all have to stop for the railroads tracks.

The schools have also added a large number of cars to the roads, and students walking and trying to cross roads.

Two, the route in question used to have three stops in a very short span until being amalgamated into one large

stop by the school board. So, instead of stopping three times in 200 or 300 metres, the driver just has to stop once.

Having the bus turn off Hoover Park is not really an option as this stop also services students on the south side of the street. They need to cross the road, with the school bus warning lights flashing.

I have never witnessed small children falling off the bus, as was noted.

Getting the schools to change their release times would help, but I doubt that will ever happen.

Changing one's route or times on Hoover Park is another option. Going up to Main Street is another, but then one has to fight the traffic jams at the Ninth Line lights.

Or one can just sit back and enjoy the idle time. Are we that much in a rush these days that waiting two minutes for something, anything, upsets us? I hope not.

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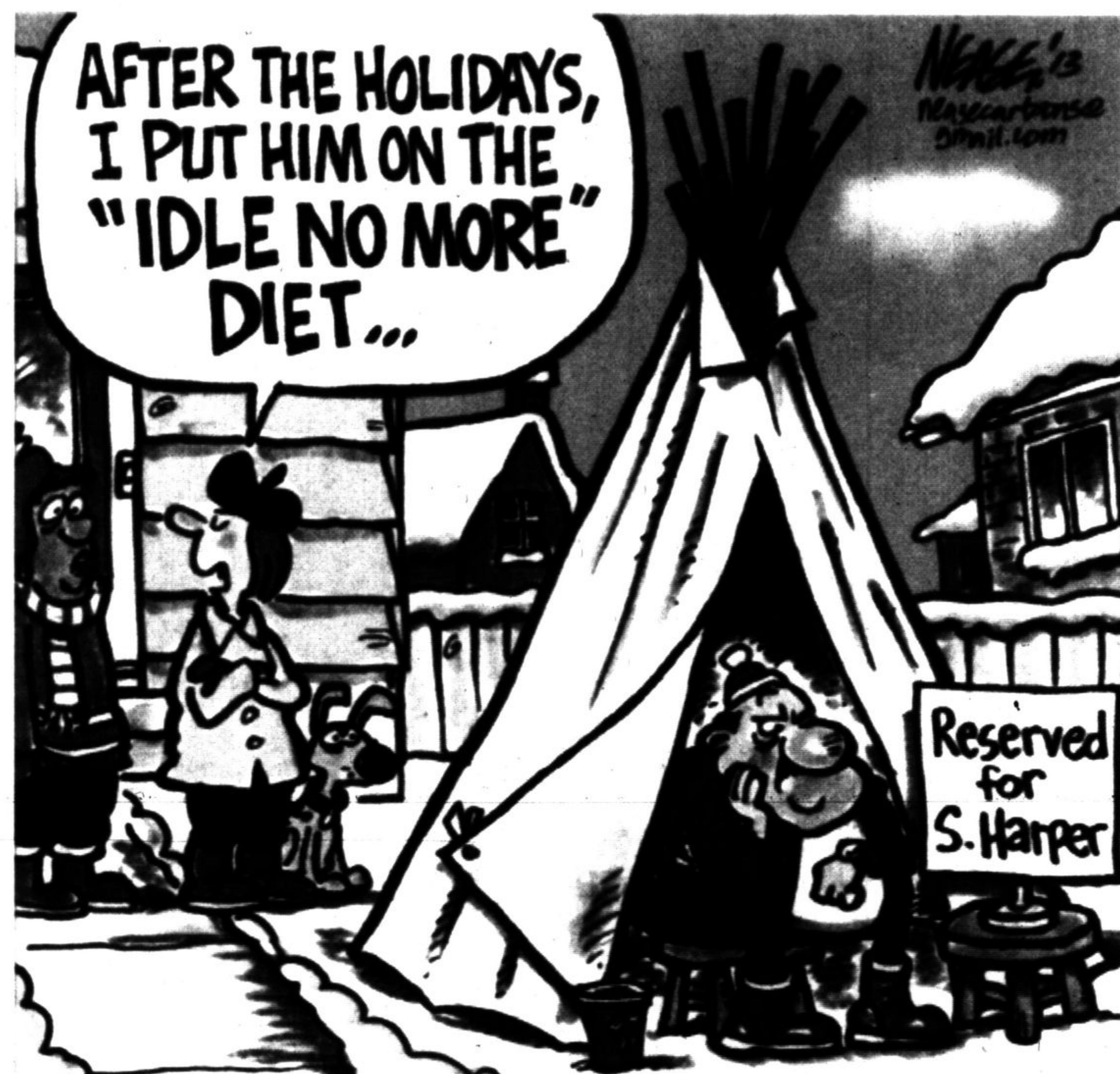
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Let us all resolve to start new year off right

I wanted to write a column about making and breaking New Year's resolutions until I realized I might be compelled to enter into some kind of discussion about my own faults, which are many and not my favourite topic — even though the subject matter offers no end of enjoyable conversation for the other people in my family.

Let's just say it starts with flipping off my socks while watching TV — and not picking them up until the next morning. I mean, come on! — and spirals downhill from there.

But, of course, the good part of considering New Year's resolutions is coming face to face with your own shortcomings, examining your own behaviour, reassessing the way you do things. And what's wrong with that?

Don't do enough to stay in touch with family who no longer live in the same city? You can do something about that by buying a long-distance card or getting all their e-mail addresses and sending them a note every Sunday night, or at least every second Sunday, OK, once a month.

Not doing your share of the housework? You can pitch in to change that



Bernie O'Neill

litter box or take out the kitchen trash with little reminders on your smartphone, or at least you can do those chores when someone asks you to, or at least most of the times they ask you to — just make sure it's at least half the time, or you're asking for trouble, as in falling asleep, sockless, on the couch.

Watch too much football on Sunday? Put that laptop on your lap and let it be known that you are also using the time to do online research about finishing a basement and how it might be better to hire professionals, seeing as you aren't that handy and no amount of resolutions about learning how to do home renovations will help you as, at this point, there aren't enough years

left in your life to learn anything worthwhile, considering how old you are and the pace at which you learn new things, say my sons.

All the clothes you wore the past week are in a pile on the chair in the corner of the bedroom and now the cat has made a cozy little sleeping area underneath said chair?

Score one for you for doing something nice for the cat for a change, instead of making fun of the way she meows, even though it's not so much a meow as it is a cross between a bark and "ugh".

Or, you could do a better job of, and I quote, "putting away your clothes neatly or depositing those items that need washing in the laundry basket".

Didn't think things through in some uniquely odd way that only you can muster and now: a) your car is at the garage overnight b) your son has his school concert this evening c) you've booked his orthodontist appointment for this afternoon, which will leave him with a mouth in obvious pain, which should be great for playing the trumpet and d) it won't matter anyway, because, as mentioned, you can't get him to the orthodontist or the concert because your car is in the garage.

So to recap: like me, your resolution might have something to do with being

more tidy, doing more around the house, using your time more wisely. Or, one of the big ones, like stopping smoking or drinking to excess or overeating, starting to exercise, watching your finances, cutting down on takeout meals, you name it, all virtuous goals.

But, of course, none of this will matter if you are not here to see those goals through, or at least give them the old college try.

We in the news business almost always come back after the New Year's holiday looking at a police account of someone who got themselves killed or killed some innocent person while drunk behind the wheel over the holidays. This, despite all the RIDE checks and public education campaigns.

It's sad and always seems like such a waste, making our resolutions to eat more vegetables or put less butter on our popcorn seem so trivial when some family in our community is starting the new year off with tragedy.

Let's pray this new year is an exception and we can start 2013 concerning ourselves with New Year's babies, weight loss tips and junior hockey games.

Stouffville resident Bernie O'Neill is a York Region Media Group editor.