

OPINION



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SATURDAY FORUM

School becoming community just like Huron-Wendats

From the beginning, our school, Wendat Village, has been a very special place.

When a site survey was conducted on our school grounds, archeological treasures were found.

An archeological dig began, led by Dr. Ron Williamson, chief archeologist at Archeological Services Inc.

The archeologists found many artifacts of the Wendat tribe and other tribes, from pieces of clay pots to arrowheads, to animal teeth and other interesting tools the Huron-Wendat community used in their daily lives.

It was referred to as the Mantle Site. Our school was named Wendat Village because the area on which it was built was discovered to be on the land of the Huron-Wendat peoples.

It was said different tribes came together and built a strong community, which is something we have done at our school as well.

Sept. 4, 2012 was the day our learning began. Even though the weather was dreary, all the new students and staff appeared with bright and welcoming smiles.

On that day, our school community began to develop the strong bond we share today.

We are a kindergarten to Grade 8 school and respect each other equally no matter what.

There are 470 students and 47 staff members. Our staff and students are driven to be the best we can be.

We have clubs; the waste minimization team, the inclusion club, the "Beleafers" and Hawks



Madison Campbell & Thomas Favorite

House, where students can go to play or sort out problems.

During our awesome first school year, we have had assemblies, a school rooftop photo, a spirit spiral, the Terry Fox run, spirit days and our first 100 days assembly and many more.

At our official school opening Thursday, we had many performances, including our school band performing Ritual Dance by Michael Story, a multi-disciplinary arts performance that included every student in our school, our school song, Wendat Village Our Home, speeches from our VIP guests and even a traditional smudging ceremony performed by elder Hector Copegog.

This was an incredible experience for all of us and we feel very lucky to have been a part of such a special event.

Our journey continues as a diverse community and we are proud to have a school we can call our home.

Madison Campbell and Thomas Favorite are Grade 7 students in Ms Hill's class at Wendat Village Public School in Stouffville.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How will middle-class families keep up?

Re: Can you afford to own here?, April 18.

Thank you, Sun-Tribune, for your informative series, On the Home Front.

My wife and I are constantly amazed at the price of new and resale homes in the GTA. We are both professionals and would be unable to afford the listed average price of a resale home in York Region; \$643,000.

Recently, we have been discussing Ontario's Sunshine List of public sector workers earning more than \$100,000 a year.

The article suggested a household annual income of \$109,000 is considered "low to moderate" in York. This is far above the income a police officer, firefighter or teacher would expect.

Using an online mortgage calculator with a 28-percent-of-income limit for payments, a family income of \$185,000 would be required to purchase the above-mentioned average resale home.

And this is assuming there are no car payments, credit card payments, other loan payments, etc.

My father, a new Canadian, was able to raise a family of five, buy a home in Bridlewood and cottage property in Muskoka primarily on a single income that topped out at \$60,000 when he retired in the late 1990s.

Yes, he maintained his cars himself and we often did without — no movies, dining out, etc. My mom is well cared for in her retirement. (Thanks, Dad!).

What I'm getting at is the idea of inflation and the pressure it puts on families to hold down multiple jobs and find creative ways to make ends meet.

House sharing and ever increasing consumer debt are just two of the ways families strive to obtain and maintain what is considered a middle-class lifestyle.

With wage increases being kept to a minimum in both the public and private sectors, how will middle-class families in the third millennium be able to keep up with what they have come to expect as their lot in life (home/car ownership, vacations, etc.)?

BRIAN O'SULLIVAN
STOUFFVILLE

Strangers to the rescue

I want to thank the wonderful, caring and kind people who assisted me. I was on Hwy. 404 near the Bloomington Road exit April 21 when I got a flat tire.

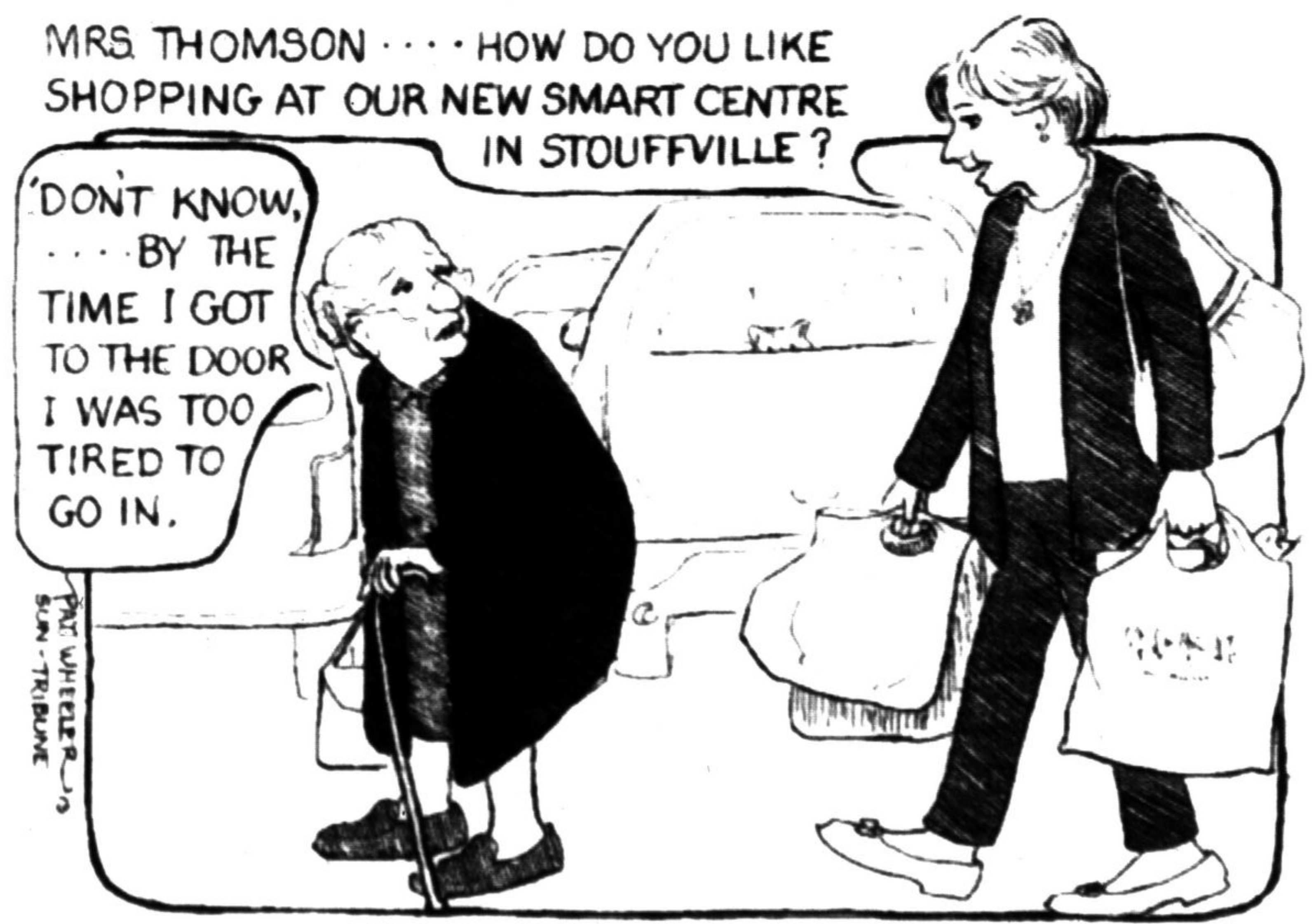
I drove up to the exit and asked a couple in their SUV where the nearest gas station was. They not only gave me directions but followed with their hazard lights on all the way to the Esso station on Woodbine Avenue north of Stouffville Road while I was doing 40 km/h. Thank you so very much for caring. You warmed my heart with your concern.

And thank you to Aman, the station attendant, who let me use his phone and made a fresh pot of coffee that we shared while I waited for CAA. It was wonderful chatting with you.

And lastly, thanks to the CAA couple, Jenn and Jess, who came so quickly and were so kind.

This night, despite my flat tire, left me feeling happy and warm in the kindness and concern of complete strangers.

DEBBIE SAVARD
TORONTO



Is there an issue about which you are passionate? You could be a Saturday Forum contributor and get the chance to have your piece published along with your name and headshot. E-mail your 450-word submission to jmason@yrmg.com