

Free Opinion



**JANN SMIT**  
April 3, 1955 – October 6, 2015

# Ten Year Mark A Bittersweet Milestone for the Free Press

This edition of the Stouffville Free Press marks the completion of our 10th full year, a decade of monthly publications going back to our inaugural issue in December of 2005. We feel both proud and privileged to have been able to succeed in our goal of providing an independent, locally owned and operated review style paper focussing on Stouffville, its residents and businesses. We are particularly grateful for the support we have received from the hundreds of loyal advertisers without whom we could not have put out a paper.

The Free Press has undergone changes in recent months as editor Kate Gilderdale retired after giving us such creative and inspired editorial direction from day one. Luckily for

us all Kate continues to contribute to the paper each month with her award winning column, Vintage Whine, along with a few other items.

However, our milestone has also been marked by great sadness. We regret to inform our readers and advertisers that Jann Smit, who has been a valued and respected ad sales representative since our first edition in 2005, died on October 6. Jann had been wrestling with a stubborn form of cancer for over a year, bravely enduring treatments and remaining hopeful until the end. Working out of her home office, she would somehow manage to balance her work duties with hospital visits, doctors' appointments and much needed rest time. She wore her fervent Christian

faith like a shield, always expecting the best outcome when it was time to go in for tests to see how much progress she was making. Not one to complain that life wasn't giving her a fair shake, Jann soldiered on from month to month, often working while experiencing pain and discomfort. Many of her customers didn't even know she was ill. The ones that did were amazed by how she was able to retain her positive attitude and friendly ways despite what she was going through.

The Free Press wishes blessings, peace and comfort for Jann's husband John and their daughter Kiana, along with all other family members.

She will be missed.

Out In Write Field



## Happy Days Revisited in Stouffville Basement

By Bruce Stapley

Climb down the stairs into the basement of Barb and Gary St. John's home and you are immediately taken back to the days when Elvis was King, Brylcreem was big and the Maple Leafs played in the old six team NHL.

The St. Johns have created a shrine to the 1950's in the finished room of the basement, using memorabilia they have been stashing away for decades. Upon entering you almost expect to see the Fonzie come shuffling across the black and white checkered floor to grab a Coke out of the 1950's Coca Cola cooler. There is a working Wurlitzer juke box in the corner beside a life sized cardboard Elvis, and the walls are adorned with the likenesses of 50's recording legends Fats Domino, Jerry Lee Lewis, Hank Williams and a very young Johnny Cash. Oh and of course Marilyn Monroe is there too, along with her fellow 50's sex symbol Jayne Mansfield.

Metal door pushes carry 50's stalwart product names such as Pepsi Cola, Coca Cola, Pure Springs, Five Roses Flour,



Barb and Gary St. John bring back the Fabulous 50's in their basement shrine. Bruce Stapley photo.

Salada Tea and The Toronto Daily Star. One of them advertises Buckingham Cigarettes, with 'Throat Easy' in quotation marks, while a three foot tall metal Fahrenheit thermometer with 'Chew M&L POUCH Tobacco' printed boldly on top is another testimonial to how the times have changed when it comes to advertising tobacco products.

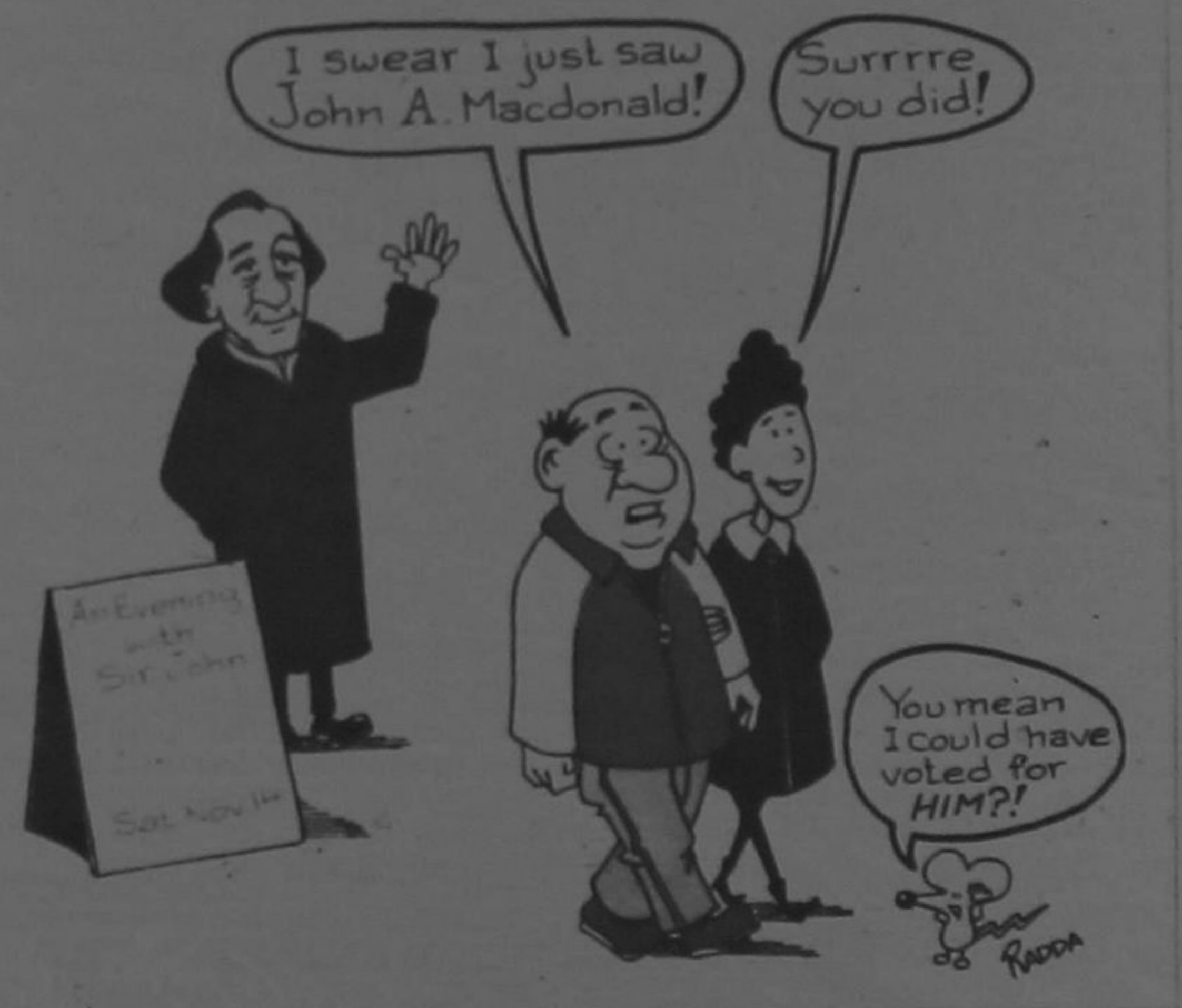
Sitting in a collection on a platform just under the ceiling is an assortment of kids' metal lunch boxes including the Roy Rogers original that Gary took

to elementary school as a little boy growing up in Goodwood. Others are adorned with such logos as Kellogg's Frosted Flakes (complete with Tony the Tiger), the Lone Ranger and various Disney characters.

Gary and Barb have travelled as far as Tennessee to acquire some of these items. Others have been found in Chatham, Odessa, Pickering and as close to home as Uxbridge. They've also picked up a few on Kijiji.

The couple, who were married

Symptoms of post-election stress disorder may include hallucinations...



in 1960, are steeped in 50's culture. They got to see Elvis when he was performing in Buffalo in 1976, and can remember coming to Stouffville from Goodwood to get a burger and Coke at the old Mayfair Restaurant on Main Street way back when. They also recall how they would go dancing at the site of the bowling alley that stood until recent years in Stouffville's

Downtown.

Gary and Barb say they aren't finished yet. They have plans of filling another couple of rooms in their house with toys from the 1940's and 50's. But for now they're happy to slip downstairs in the evening, open a Coke and listen to Fats Domino sing 'I found My Thrill on Blueberry Hill.'

Please feel free to send emails to us at: [stouffvillefreepress@bell.net](mailto:stouffvillefreepress@bell.net)

# Stouffville Free Press

Whitchurch-Stouffville's independent community owned newspaper

UP AND COMING

The Stouffville Free Press welcomes community event listings from non-profit groups and organizations. Please send a brief synopsis of upcoming events by email to [stouffvillefreepress@rogers.com](mailto:stouffvillefreepress@rogers.com)

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