

New day, look and name for local news

It's a big week for those us at the Stouffville Sun — and for the community newspaper itself.

The Sun is switching days of publication, officially amalgamating with its sister paper and about to sport a new look.

This is the final Tuesday publication of the Stouffville Sun as you see it now.

Starting next week, the Sun and the Stouffville Tribune become one under the name the Stouffville Sun-Tribune. The paper will be published Thursdays and Saturdays.

The amalgamation answers several questions and should clear up some confusion in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Many readers are unaware the Sun's former owner, CCG Publishing, was bought in 2000 by Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd. community groups send duplicates of notices thinking the Sun and Tribune are still separate entities. Readers phone in story ideas to both papers. Advertisers do the same. Using one name, Sun-Tribune, should clarify the situation.

Many readers have also told us they don't want to receive a community newspaper three times a week. Heck, as a community newspaper editor of 25 years, I thought small town residents would take community news on a daily basis if we could get it to them.

But that's not that case. It was especially clear in the survey of Whitchurch-Stouffville readers we conducted late last year.

Retailers, the owners of businesses in the Stouffville area, agreed. There wasn't enough advertising to justify three



JIM MASON
OFF THE TOP

editions of a community newspaper being printed and distributed in Stouffville any longer.

We listened, and I think we have a solution.

When the Thursday edition of the Stouffville Sun-Tribune debuts a week from Thursday (March 20), we hope you agree.

Inside will be many of the features you've told us you enjoy the most in the Stouffville Sun and the Tribune. The work of Stouffville-based reporters Hannelore Volpe and Joan Ransberry will be prominent.

Columns by Jim Thomas and some guy named Jim Mason will move to Thursdays. (Note to self: this gives you two more days to write this column, Mason.)

Stouffville area sports will be reported on under the eye of longtime sports editor Mike Hayakawa.

Photos by full-time photographers Sjoerd Witteveen, Steve Somerville, Mike Barrett and Bill Roberts will be featured.

Like the Stouffville Sun, the Sun-Tribune will be most concerned with what's happening in Whitchurch-Stouffville. We'll leave the York Region perspective — which survey respondents also said they wanted — to the Saturday

edition of the Sun-Tribune.

If I've learned anything from living in Stouffville and serving as editor of this paper for 20 years, it's that people are passionate about this community. They don't just sleep or work here. They live here. This is their home town.

They want to read what is going into the new plaza being built on Main Street or into the new factory going up on the Aurora Road between Vandorf and Ballantrae.

They — you — want to read about their neighbours. About the kid down the street starring on the junior hockey or fastball team, or their family pharmacist on Main Street who wrote his first book this year.

They don't always agree with what town council, the local hockey coach or a developer does — and that's good. That's what separates Whitchurch-Stouffville as a community from so many of the suburbs dotting the Greater Toronto Area.

One of the beauties of localizing the Thursday paper is it gives local news to more residents, especially those in the Ballantrae, Musselman's Lake and Gormley areas. Many of them did not receive the Stouffville Sun previously. They will now get the Sun-Tribune.

We hope you enjoy the new-look Sun-Tribune. We think it better answers the community's need. Let us know after you see a copy starting next week.

Thanks for reading, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Jim Mason is editor of the Stouffville Sun and the Stouffville Tribune. He can be e-mailed at jmason@yrmg.com

STOUFFVILLE SAYS

BY HANNELORE VOLPE

"Should extensive spraying be carried out here to control mosquitos that could carry West Nile virus?"



ALMA DAVIS

"I think the West Nile virus is a dangerous thing. I am for the prevention program. It is worth doing because they are expecting it to be very bad this year and the virus could be fatal."



BILL WOOD

"I think it should. We have people who are responsible and knowledgeable and we should trust in their knowledge. I think the West Nile virus is a real threat."



MARGARET CRISSON

"I am very worried about the West Nile virus. It will affect me, my family and my dogs. I have lived in Bermuda where they have eliminated mosquitos by a spraying and prevention program. I believe York Region should do more, sooner."



SHARON MONESTIME

"If it can be done in a properly controlled manner and we can be aware of the pros and the cons, it should. I would like more information from York Region. West Nile virus is a big concern because we have four children."



WILL PENWELL

"I don't think it will stop the virus. I think the larvicide would be harmful to the environment. They used DDT for decades before they found out it causes cancer in people."

Councillors overpaid or trustees need a raise

For time spent on the job, how much is a town councillor worth? Ward 5 member Harry Bowes admits receiving just over \$18,000 in 2002, most of which he gave back.

In the same breath, he claims a school trustee works five times harder, due to the fact he represents a much larger area. If this is so, then councillors, salaries are grossly inflated and should be cut back to say, around \$3,600. Are you listening Municipal Affairs Minister David Young?

LOST OUT: I'm a strong supporter of the Christian school system. I believe the current public education program (all things to all people) leaves much to be desired. Be this as it may, it appears staff and students of Stouffville Christian School will continue to endure sub-standard accommodation at the former Altona Missionary Church, having lost out in a bid to acquire a much better facility at Dickson's Hill.

APPLAUSE: How often in Stouffville is a speaker (or anything else for that matter) interrupted by enthusiastic applause — not once, not twice but three times? It happened Feb. 24 when Argo coach Michael "Pinball" Clemons addressed a coffee fellowship in the Missionary Church. For almost an hour, he held 150 men in the palm of his hand. He can catch a football, too.

REMEMBERED: Stewart Wideman, able organizer of these coffee fellowships, the fourth Monday of each month, told his audience Jim Thomas — that's me — has been writing stories so long, he still uses a quill. Stewart, too, has a history. I wonder how many know that, 50 years ago, he made



JIM THOMAS
ROAMING AROUND

door-to-door deliveries as an employee of Stouffville Bakery? Female clientele, it's been said, always looked forward to his arrival for, in addition to a friendly smile and engaging personality, Stewart had "the best buns in town."

BOGGED DOWN: Who has the responsibility of plowing snow inside the Stouffville cemetery? Obviously no one, the day I paid a gravesite visit. The car bogged down in bumper-deep drifts. Fortunately, three lads, taking a short-cut through the site, helped me out.

WAIT AND SEE: Has the annual pantomime, hosted by the youth group of Christ Church Anglican, reached the end of its road? Director Denise Pettit and script-writer Charles Parker hope not. It depends on whether replacements are waiting in the wings. Sold-out performances, Feb. 28 and March 1, concluded 10 successful years.

CONGRATULATIONS: Four Stouffville girls, all members of the Markham Elite Edge novice synchronized skating team, placed fourth in the Canadian championships at Montreal recently. Hats off to Kristen King, Caitlin Leger, Heather Higgins and Gillian Scott on this achievement. The

Markham Elite Edge junior team, including Stouffville's Kimberley Hord and Alyshia Higgins, came in 10th.

FOND FAREWELL: St. James Presbyterian Church was filled to capacity, March 3, as friends and relatives, many from a distance, said their farewells to Howard Burkholder, a native of Bethesda and more recently, Second Street, Stouffville. The memorable service included a medley of Howard's favourite hymns, sung by son Chris Burkholder of Port Coquitlam, B.C.

CHOIR TO ATTEND: The 50-voice primary choir from St. Brigid Catholic School, Stouffville, will attend the 33rd annual Sacred Music Night, May 2, in St. James Presbyterian Church. The guest list also includes The Kennedy Family Singers and a male gospel barbershop quartet from the Mega-City chorus out of North York.

PERSONALITY PICK: This month's business personality pick is Rob Croxall, manager of Stouffville IDA. Rob is always front and centre in the store's drug prescription department. His personable approach to enquiries and problems keeps customers coming back.

MASONIC MOVE: If the sale of their temple is approved, the Markham Masonic Lodge will move its meetings to Richardson Masonic Lodge in Stouffville. Taxes on the former Markham High School site now exceed \$6,000. Heating costs are also high.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.