

Sun-Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Gun photograph disgusting

Re: Young gun photograph, Sun-Tribune, May 8.

I have to tell you of my absolute disgust at the front-page photo on last Saturday's issue depicting a 14-year-old boy receiving instruction in handgun use "under the watchful eye" of a range supervisor.

What on Earth were you thinking? With everything going on in the world, with youth violence and gang violence, you show a teenager learning "proper use" of a handgun?

There is no proper use of a handgun, believe me, in my seven years of working for GTV news. I have to say under no circumstances have I come across a situation where a teenager needed to know the "proper use" of a handgun.

What is the message here? My two young children, both of whom have been told that guns, all guns, are wrong and bad saw your newspaper and asked why the teen was able to use one with an adult around. I told them it was because his parents were idiots.

Any parent who believes his child needs to learn how to handle a pistol is a fool, regardless of what justification he pulls out of his hat.

People like that are usually the first ones to testify at an inquest into the accidental shooting death of a child and say, "I have no idea how it could have happened... he took a course."

Having guns in the home, any kind of weapon, rifle or pistol, is just stupid. Whether for sport or not, we have a responsibility to our children and the youth of Whitchurch-Stouffville to keep weapons away from them, not encourage their use.

I can only imagine the reaction this photo will get from his classmates, now they all know he can handle a weapon.

And how many teenagers out there whose parents own weapons are now thinking if this kid can handle a weapon, so can they?

I suggest an article on youths and violence to temper the bad example set by this photo.

DENIS LANGLOIS
STOUFFVILLE

Province forcing care cuts

We've seen how many nursing homes in York Region have been forced to make major renovations or rebuild because they no longer meet government standards.

Now, when we finally have decent facilities, we much be vigilant about maintaining them or history will repeat itself.

Now the province is reconsidering annual increases in funding and wants to change the rules involving municipal and capital tax refunds for private care institutions.

Because of these changes, I found out the Woodhaven long-term care facility in Markham is losing housekeeping staff and having hours cut, yet it still needs to maintain

a certain level of cleanliness.

Many people think as long as the nursing staff isn't affected, cuts won't mean much to their loved one, but I think we are going down a slippery slope. If the province gets away with these changes, what will come next?

Let's fight to keep standards high in these facilities, not only for those who currently reside there, but for those yet to arrive.

SHEILA LEGER
MARKHAM

Socialists behind improvements

Re: Socialism doesn't build character, letter to the editor by Bud O'Connor, May 8.

Normally one would ignore Mr. O'Connor's thoughts, but just in case a reader may have thought his letter made sense, here's a bit of clarity.

The international democratic socialist movement supports the right of all working people to form associations (trade unions) to protect and promote their interests, and rights.

Such associations, just like law societies, medical associations and other professional bodies, are organized and run on democratic principles. They are essential in modern life.

One should not forget the part democratic socialists played in history. For instance, 70 years ago in Berlin, the only democratically elected politicians to stand and oppose the act that made Adolf Hitler dictator were 94



Explanation doesn't help

Re: Markham Stouffville Hospital advertisement on parking situation, April 29.

No doubt everyone saw Dr. Jim MacLean's full-page response to the public's concerns about the new parking system at Markham Stouffville Hospital. How could anyone miss it? I'm curious to know how many parking tickets had to be purchased to pay for a full-colour spread like that.

I have yet to see any explanation or advice on how to use this parking system for decreased mobility seniors and the handicapped. Are they expected to somehow get themselves to the ticket machine, return to their vehicles, then make it to their appointments with ease?

Perhaps they should arrive at the parking lot an hour early to allow themselves walking time. And what happens to these people in the winter?

What I fear most as a result of this new system is one day hearing some poor, slow elderly person, or someone who needs a couple of canes to walk, has been hit in the parking lot while tottering from their vehicle.

If that happens, I'll be interested to see the size of the newspaper ad the hospital purchases to explain itself.

S. PARKER
MARKHAM

Theatre would draw people

Whitchurch-Stouffville's arts and culture committee is appearing before council Tuesday at 7 p.m. to ask for funding to create a concept and feasibility plan for turning 19 Civic Ave. in downtown Stouffville (the old town hall) into an arts and entertainment centre.

This is the first step toward a facility that would include a theatre for live performances and movies.

The old town hall is empty. Our council recently put aside money to bring this building back to life. Before that can happen, we must decide what that building will be.

As a growing community, it is essential we continue to work to preserve our "country close to the city" way of life. What better way than to create a town centre full of life.

A theatre will do this. It will attract more businesses, increase our commercial tax base and, more importantly, create a place where people can meet face to face.

In order for this funding request to pass, it is imperative council hear voices of support.

We have a new council, most of whom have run on a platform of listening to the people. Now is the time for your voices to be heard.

Come to the meeting, call your councillors or send them e-mails.

Our previous council has said one of the reasons the theatre idea has never gone forward is that no one came pounding on its door. Now is the time to start pounding.

PAM MANDICH
ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE MEMBER

LETTERS POLICY

The Stouffville Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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