

# OPINION

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## Editorial

### Can we afford more funding for Olympic athletes?

Many Canadians are upset by the country's relatively poor showing at the Athens Olympics. A national disgrace, it has been labelled.

Even International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge got into the act this week. He said pushing Canada to spend more money on sport was "very high on my agenda".

Canada won 12 medals, including three gold, an average showing for our country. We won 14 in Sydney three years ago and 22 in Atlanta in 1996.

We are a much better winter Olympics nation.

We ski, play hockey and skate better than we swim and run.

Everyone is now calling for an influx of cash into the nation's sports systems. Opinions on where to spend it, from the youngsters at the grassroots of the game to the medal contenders, are out there.

Assuming we're all in favour, from where should the money come? This is a country struggling to get its act together on one of its major calling cards, socialized health care. Should it be funding sports for the most healthy when it can't look after the very ill?

*We ski, play hockey and skate better than we swim and run.*

Where were the cries for athletic funding at election time? Funding of sport was not a major issue. In fact, we can't remember it being raised by any of the parties or lobby groups.

If there is a national will to produce gold medal swimmers and marathon runners, fine. We can give corporations larger tax breaks to encourage support of individual sports and athletes.

We can decide to build national and regional training centres and hire top-notch coaches. We can pay national team members more so they don't have to take on multiple jobs to feed themselves.

We can build more facilities and write training manuals so the youngest of our future stars can be taught properly.

Canada once competed at or near the top of the international swimming pool. Not anymore. Why?

Two months from now, people will be more worried about the state of our health care.



## Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Little Baden battles back with help

Fred and Jo Klein led their two young children through the crowded picnic grounds.

A magician was amazing youngsters under the late afternoon Sunday sun. Service club members handed out prizes like summer Santas. Burgers and dogs sizzled on the barbeys.

Life hasn't always been carnival-like for Fred, a former Stouffville resident, and his family, now of Kitchener.

Like a lot of Ontario parents, when their son Baden was born 18 months ago, "We imagined him one day playing for the Leafs, and we anticipated lots of fun in our future."

Baden now looks like a future Brian McCabe, but last year he was at death's door on multiple occasions.

After being continually sick during his second and third months on the planet he was first diagnosed with leukemia.

A month later, the Kleins found out their ill little lad actually had Wiskott Aldridge Syndrome, an immune disorder often called the boy in the bubble illness.

"We were devastated. The only cure for Baden was a bone marrow transplant," recalls Fred.

Another month later, doctors put Baden into isolation and the Kleins were told to expect a stay at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto for six months.

"It's really overwhelming the thoughts that go through your mind. Will Baden be OK? Will we find a bone marrow match in time? What will we do with our daughter Alison (now four)? What will we do with our home? How will we pay our bills?," Fred said.

The Coles Notes version tells us it all worked out, thanks in part to the hosts of Sunday's picnic in Uxbridge. The Jennifer Ashleigh Foundation, the brain-child of National Sports stores owner Norm Clements, paid for two months of the Kleins' stay at Ronald MacDonald House in Toronto. The foundation's mission is to assist chronically and seriously ill children and their families.

Mr. Clements established the foundation in 1990 in memory of his granddaughter, Jennifer Ashleigh Clements who died at age six months from a degenerative muscular disease. Her younger sister, Danica, died in infancy of the same illness two years later.

The Clements' girls family lived in Stouffville, two block from Fred Kleins' family home.

Small world, eh? Better world.

*Jim Mason is editor of the Stouffville Sun-Tribune.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Not waiving Parkview fees slap in face of local seniors

Re: *Parkview, must pay fees for new home, Aug. 26*

I am appalled to think our council has so little regard for we seniors that we can be placed below the animal kingdom.

Council waived some fees for the Ontario SPCA headquarters but not for the new Parkview Home.

We are really hurt. Many of us are third generation residents who have helped build this town into what it is today. To get slapped in the face is deplorable.

Parkview Home has an excellent reputation. All we need is help in financing a new building, as the present one does not meet today's government-mandated standards.

I was a registered nurse with the Victorian Order of Nurses. I could write a book on the condition of other seniors facilities.

Parkview Home is superior and we seniors do not want to leave our surroundings to be placed in another community away from family and friends.

Council should see fit to give Parkview some consideration. It has set a precedent for our furry friends that should be extended to our seniors.

JEAN BARKEY  
STOUFFVILLE

The Stouffville Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address.

The Stouffville Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

Write: Letters to the Editor, 34 Civic Ave., P.O. Box 154, Stouffville, L4A 7Z5, e-mail jmason@ymg.com

### Downtown Stouffville flowers brightened up summer

Next time you plan on taking a walk along Main Street in downtown Stouffville, I suggest you take your camera.

The displays of flowers are spectacular and perfume the air.

Stroll down the flower-laden areas around the clock tower, Lions gazebo, Latcham Gallery and train station.

Many hands have worked hard to add beauty to our town. The flower vandals seem to have mended their ways. Water restrictions haven't had to be enforced. And, unlike last year, there hasn't been a power outage.

When all is said and done, has it really been a bad summer?

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