

Stouffville  
**Sun-Tribune**

A Metroland community newspaper  
34 Civic Ave., Stouffville, ON L4A 7Z5

PUBLISHER **Ian Proudfoot**

# OPINION

EDITOR IN CHIEF  
**Debora Kelly**  
BUSINESS MANAGER  
**Robert Lazaruko**  
DIRECTOR OF  
PRODUCTION &  
INTERACTIVE MEDIA  
**John Fuithey**

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR,  
RETAIL & FLYER SALES  
**Nicole Fletcher**  
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR,  
CLASSIFIED, REAL ESTATE  
& EVENTS MANAGEMENT  
**Gord Paolucci**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Don't let cats run wild

Re: *Careless drivers killed cats*, letter, Oct. 30.

Why was your cat on the road? Do you think it's acceptable to let your pet run wild?

If a motorist slams on his brakes to avoid hitting your pet running or standing in the middle of the road, he could be charged for careless driving. I suggest you keep your cat on a leash or on your own property and it won't get run over.

Be responsible for your own actions. Your cat is dead because you let it run wild.

WILLIAM CAMERON  
MARKHAM

### Bat houses were an opportunity

Re: *Disease fear shelves Ballantrae bat boxes*, Oct. 28

Open letter to Ward 2 Councillor Phil Bannon, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

I read the article with outrage. I attended a council meeting in support of a naturalization project near the Ballantrae school, as did many of my neighbours.

Despite the overwhelming number of people who attended in support of the project, despite the majority of councillors who listened with an open mind to all residents' concerns and ultimately voted in favour of the majority of the proposals, you apparently contacted the health department in a continuing

attempt to subvert this project.

It is apparent your position on council is not being used to enhance Ballantrae or handle residents' concerns in an even-handed manner, but merely to put forth your own private objectives and those of your immediate neighbours, namely, to enhance the area in question in accordance with your own desires.

To dismiss or outlaw everything that could potentially cause a problem would be to deny ourselves many pleasures. Our flower gardens would be empty of many flowers we now enjoy, as they are poisonous.

No bat houses near the school are a denial to the Ballantrae students of an opportunity to study bats in a natural setting.

You had an opportunity to educate not only yourself but your immediate neighbours, whose stories might be funny if they were not so pitiful in their lack of knowledge.

One of your neighbours doesn't think she can barbecue outside without constantly scaring away bats; another is afraid of his children playing in the yard because of garter snakes.

Instead of leading these people, obviously new to a rural environment, to an appreciation of the marvellous opportunity our area provides to study nature, you inflame their fears by your own fears and limited perspective.

I wish you bats in your attic to match the bats in your belfry.

VALERIE TETTMAR  
BALLANTRAE



## Discovery of mini-hominids rocks scientific community

For this column, I was going to write about the American missile defense system, but something far too fascinating came along, and I just could not pass it up.

Recently, scientists discovered a new human-like species that lived at the same time as modern Homo sapiens and died out less than 18,000 years ago.

The discovery was made in a remote area of the island of Flores in Indonesia and was revealed in a recent edition of the journal Nature. It has scientists stunned.

The new species, Homo floresiensis, came out of the blue. Few expected to find another human contemporary, certainly not in this area. The ancestors to Homo sapiens, Homo erectus, are thought to have migrated out of Africa about two million years ago, but it was thought unlikely they could have made it to remote Indonesian islands because to do so would have required advanced skills to cross large bodies of water, skills believed to be unique to Homo sapiens.



David Suzuki

But several years ago, 800,000-year-old stone tools were discovered on Flores, suggesting that our less-developed relatives had indeed successfully accomplished ocean travel. The new findings of Homo floresiensis, not only supports this theory, but suggest an entirely new species evolved on the island from those early ocean-going Homo erectus.

Flores man, or in this specific case, a woman, was about 30-years-old, stood only one-metre (three feet) tall, yet walked upright on two legs as we do. She had a prominent

brow ridge and no chin, like more primitive hominids, but she also had a small, delicate face and modern teeth.

Her brain was about one-third the size of ours, but she appears to have used advanced tools. In fact, she may have hunted and dined on pygmy elephants; another creature that, due to its genetic isolation and limited natural resources, had also shrunk to dwarf size.

Astoundingly, she may have carried out her daily activities long after modern humans had migrated into the region, even after our ancestors had begun settling into villages, growing crops and making pottery. How long her descendents may have existed on the island is unknown, as is their fate, but her discovery raises new questions about the evolution of human beings.

Not long ago, it was believed human evolution proceeded inexorably along in a linear fashion. The recent findings of the Flores people again show this is simply not the case. In fact, it seems for the majority of humanity's 160,000-year history, we shared the earth with

other intelligent, bipedal beings.

A very short time ago — less than 30,000 years — modern humans actually shared this planet with at least two other cultural contemporaries, Neanderthals and Homo Floresiensis. Both of these species appear to have made relatively advanced tools and may have even had unique cultures that involved behaviours such as burial rites.

Both species also died out, possibly after coming into conflict with modern humans, or possibly due to a changing climate or other problems to which they were unable to adapt. But the findings beg the question — how many other hominid species did modern humans share the planet with?

Homo Floresiensis has raised this question and more about the history of hominids and humans on the planet. More important, it raises the question of what it really means to be human.

Take the Nature Challenge and learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)

### EDITORIAL

Editor **Jim Mason**  
[newsroom@econsun.com](mailto:newsroom@econsun.com)

### ADVERTISING

Managing Director

New Business

& Distribution Sales

**Dawn Andrews**

[dandrews@yrmg.com](mailto:dandrews@yrmg.com)

Classified Manager **Ann Campbell**

[acampbell@yrmg.com](mailto:acampbell@yrmg.com)

Real Estate Manager

**Mike Rogerson**

[mrogerson@yrmg.com](mailto:mrogerson@yrmg.com)

### PRODUCTION

Production Manager

**Pam Nichols**

[pnichols@yrmg.com](mailto:pnichols@yrmg.com)

Director of

Distribution/Circulation

**Barry Black**

[bblack@yrmg.com](mailto:bblack@yrmg.com)

Director of

Distribution/Circulation Systems

**Lynn Pashko**

[lpashko@yrmg.com](mailto:lpashko@yrmg.com)

### ADMINISTRATION

Office Manager **Vivian O'Neil**

[vooneil@yrmg.com](mailto:vooneil@yrmg.com)

### York Region Events

Managing Director

**Debra Weller**

[dweller@yrmg.com](mailto:dweller@yrmg.com)

Shows Manager

**Stacey Allen**

[sallen@yrmg.com](mailto:sallen@yrmg.com)

### York Region Printing

General Manager **Bob Dean**

[bdean@yrmg.com](mailto:bdean@yrmg.com)

### EDITORIAL

905-294-2200 /

Fax: 294-1538

### ADVERTISING

294-2200 / Classified: 1-800-

743-3353 / Fax: 853-4626

### DISTRIBUTION

905-294-8244

CCAB

Canadian Circulations Audit Board Member

Ontario Press Council

Stouffville  
**Sun-Tribune**

A York Region Newspaper Group community newspaper

The Stouffville Sun-Tribune, published every

Thursday and Saturday, is a member of the

Metroland Printing, Publishing and

Distributing Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary

of Torstar Corporation. Metroland is

comprised of 65 community publications

across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper

Group includes The Liberal, Serving

Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan

Citizen, The Era-Banner serving Newmarket

and Aurora, Georgia Advocate

and York Region Business Times,

North of the City, [yorkregion.com](http://yorkregion.com)

and York Region Printing

### LETTERS POLICY

The Markham Economist & Sun

welcomes your letters. All submissions

must be less than 400 words and must

include a daytime telephone

number, name and address.

The Economist & Sun reserves the right

to publish or not publish and to edit

for clarity and space.

Letters to the Editor,

The Economist & Sun

9 Heritage Rd.

Markham, ON

L3P 1M3