

# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**  
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## Editorial

### Hospitals looking outside box

You get sick or injured and you go to hospital.

It's as simple as that.

Or is it?

They're thinking outside the box with a revolutionary marriage of health care and community in Markham.

Plans call for two hospitals, a health and wellness centre and a recreation/community centre, including a library, to be built on one campus. The proposal, which was before Markham council Tuesday, goes to a public meeting June 29.

If built, it will be the first of its kind in North America.

Markham Stouffville Hospital and a new Toronto Grace Hospital, which would specialize in geriatric, rehabilitation and palliative care, would be the centrepieces.

But the facility will be far more than a traditional hospital.

And it should be examined by other providers of health care in York Region.

Think of it as a massive health care shopping centre.

The 150,000-square-foot health and wellness building would be home to clinical services, including day surgery bays, asthma and diabetes clinics, outpatient rehabilitation programs and doctors' offices.

It could also house centres for massage therapy, weight management, smoking cessation, yoga and seniors care, plus retailers selling hearing aids, medical equipment, eyeglasses, pharmaceuticals and orthotics.

The community centre would include an indoor pool, library, meeting rooms, gymnasium and fitness centre.

With 2,000 employees on site, this will be a community within a community.

And that's the point.

Markham and much of the GTA is heavily congested.

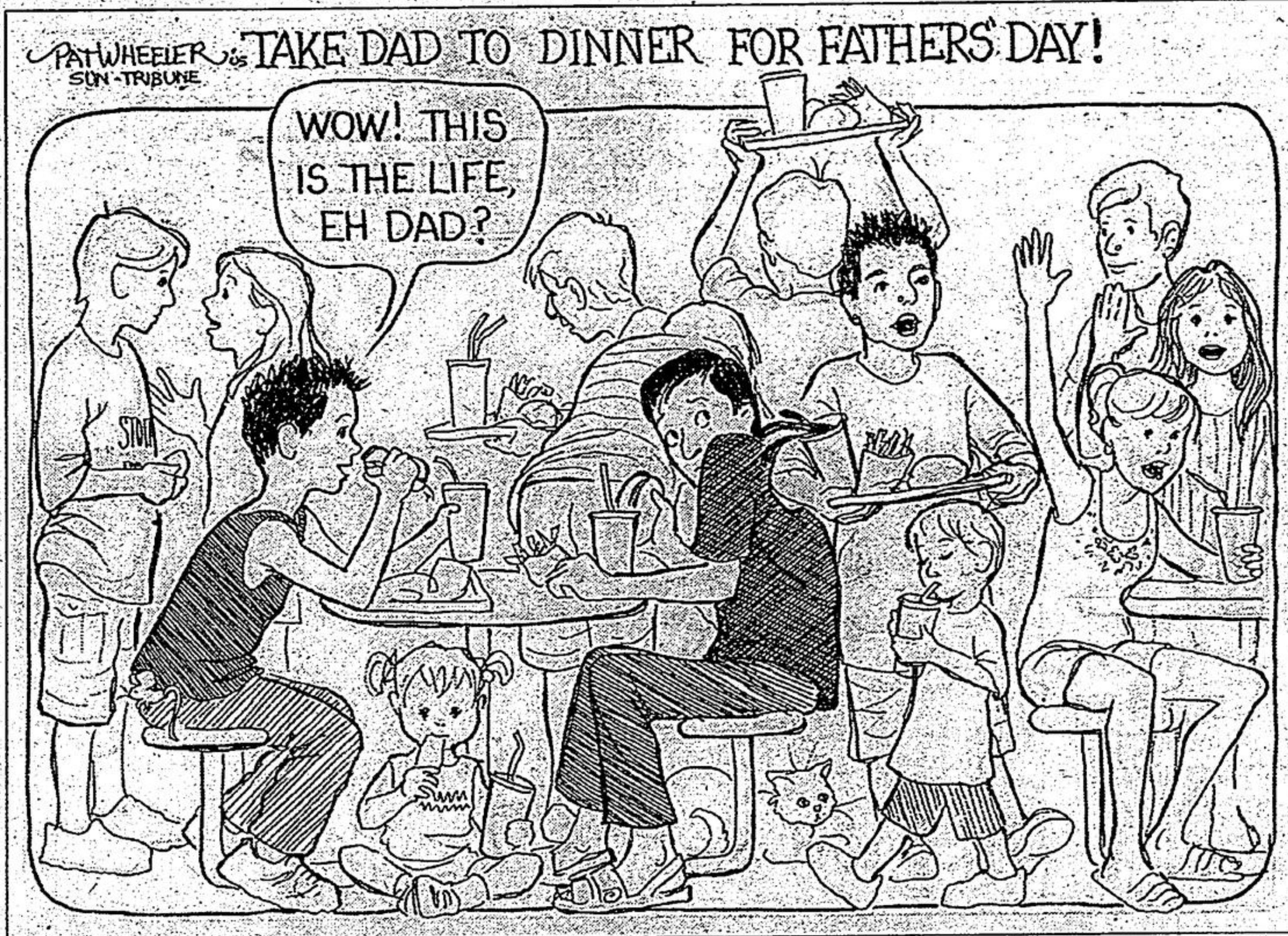
Traffic moves at a snail's pace at rush hour. Improvements to public transit, including the much ballyhooed Viva lines, are on the books. (A transit terminal is part of the health campus plan.)

But instead of trying to move people more efficiently, why not let them do as much as possible within one space?

For example, a worker at one of the Markham hospitals could walk before or after work to the drug store, a fitness or swim class or to borrow a book.

A senior citizen with a prescription to be filled or a piece of medical equipment to purchase could do so more easily.

Less travel. Less congestion. Less smog. It all makes so much sense.



## Letters to the Editor

### Cancer canvassers make a difference

This April, the Canadian Cancer Society had more than 350 canvassers in the Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville area going door to door in their own neighbourhoods collecting funds for cancer research and community programs.

Our residents are always generous and ready to support worthy causes and 2005 is no exception. The people who helped us are, in many cases, the same people who donated to the tsunami disaster.

Money from our April campaign is important for several reasons, but one of the most pressing is our local transportation program helping patients get to and from treatments. Some families are not able to drive their members every day for five or six weeks and we have volunteers who take on this responsibility on a regular basis.

Canvassing not an easy job, as many of you who have tried it may know, but we sure do appreciate the efforts of all of you.

**JANET CAMPBELL**  
**VOLUNTEER PRESIDENT**  
 CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY  
 MARKHAM/WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE UNIT

### Doors Open timely, informative

Just wanted to say thank you to the organizers and volunteers of Doors Open Stouffville for creating such a wonderful opportunity for residents to become better acquainted with their community.

Although a lifelong resident of Stouffville, until the June 4 event I had never visited the Altona Mennonite Meeting House and cemetery where Abraham Stouffer, the founding father of our town, is buried, nor stopped to go inside the Cedar Beach Pavilion despite driving by it for years on the Musselman's Lake road.

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@yrng.com](mailto:jmason@yrng.com)

I'm almost embarrassed to say that the event was also the first time I have visited Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum, a fascinating and important part of our community. The staff and volunteers at all the locations I attended were most knowledgeable and welcoming.

At a time when the town is being subjected to massive change resulting from new development, this celebration of Stouffville's heritage and distinctiveness is timely and most appreciated.

**JILL MCWHINNIE**  
 STOUFFVILLE

### Councillors stuck in middle

Meetings of the Whitchurch-Stouffville council sometimes have their pathetic side.

Knowledgeable members of the public address council, providing it with well-documented information.

Senior members of the town staff then make verbal responses, which tend to discredit the documented statements made by members of the public.

This leaves council in the middle, not knowing whom to believe.

**MARGARET L. MAY**  
 STOUFFVILLE



## Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### It's midnight: Do you know where your children are?

As certainly as the swallows will return to Capistrano and someone will mistake me for City-TV's Mark Dailey, it will happen.

Vandals will strike one or more Stouffville neighbourhood.

They'll leave a trail of broken beer bottles and upset residents after damaging vehicles, ripping up gardens and otherwise acting like perfect jackasses.

In some places, young people's hearts turn to love in spring. In Whitchurch-Stouffville, their fancy turns to wanton destruction.

The letter to the editor and phone calls to the mayor will quickly follow.

York Regional Police will be on the case, trying to justify time spent on it while other communities complain about assaults and drug labs, or worse.

It's an annual ritual that stands out as a black mark in a town better known for its friendliness and good neighbours.

In the early 1990s, it wasn't unusual to see people carting cases of beer and picnic tables through Stouffville Memorial Park, past the T-ball players and their parents, to a party zone where the Lebovic Leisure Centre now stands.

More recently, the locations of choice have been conservation areas, parks and undeveloped lots on the outskirts of Stouffville.

You could open another youth centre, and build a movie theatre, amusement park and shopping centre and our little problem wouldn't go away.

The knee-jerk reaction is to rekindle Neighbourhood Watch on the affected streets and petition York Region's finest for more officers on the streets and in our parks. While you're at, spend some municipal tax dollars bringing in more security guards and dogs.

Sorry, parents, but that doesn't cut it any longer. It's all on you.

If your 15-year-old is wandering the streets and parks late at night, taking part in knife fights and acts of vandalism, you're responsible.

Not the police. Not the mayor. Not the neighbourhood.

It all sounds good to say we'll "take back our streets" from the thugs and low-lives.

We should really be talking about taking back our families, Stouffville.

*Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.*

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