

# OPINION

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**Sun-Tribune**

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34 Civic Ave, 3rd floor, Stouffville, ON. L4A 7Z5  
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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Safe shopping lesson learned hard way

Re: Practise safe shopping through holiday season, Dec. 3.

I firmly agree safety is extremely important and should be the focus of everything people do, including shopping. I think safe shopping should be practised throughout the year and not just at Christmas.

In addition to shopping during the day or with a friend or family member, it is also important to stress you should arrive and leave the mall with someone else.

I figured this out the hard way in September. I was walking home from Markville Shopping Centre at closing time, when I was harassed in the parking lot and followed by a man in a car.

He attempted to get me to get into the car with him. Luckily, I was able to contact my mother just as he cut me off with his car.

Coincidentally, my mom was at the mall and was leaving at the same time. She drove toward me and I got into my mother's car and the other driver drove off. This was an unfortunate situation, but it could have been a lot worse.

I think that practising safe shopping should be stressed all year round.

ALYSSA PENNY  
MARKHAM

### Public transportation would make events safer, healthier

Re: Midnight Madness this Saturday, Nov. 17.

I don't think there are sufficient parking spaces on Main Street for such an event.

The large number of cars being driven to such events cause too much pollution, which will guide the world one step closer to global warming.

Although Christmas shopping and free carriage rides may seem thrilling and most enjoyable, the impatient waiting for the limited parking spaces along Main Street becomes an issue, especially when everyone is eager to enter the shops.

Driving may be dangerous because drivers are racing around to compete for parking spaces. Shoppers will be dashing across streets to the stores.

It's an unsafe environment. The vehicles cause major traffic jams, confusion, anxiousness, tension between drivers, and more pollution than necessary.

The solution would be to create a public transportation system for annual Main Street events by assigning buses to travel from specific bus stops to Main Street. The buses will escort the people safely and conveniently ensuring safety for all.

JENNIFER LEUNG  
MARKHAM



## Businesses want stable climate too

When industry groups start to sound like environmentalists, you know you've got either a big problem or a big opportunity. In the case of climate change, it's both.

Last week at the ongoing United Nations climate conference in Montreal, a group representing some of Canada's largest corporations released a joint statement about the need to reduce the greenhouse gases overheating our atmosphere. But it wasn't a complaint that targets were too strict or that it couldn't be done, that the climate isn't really changing or that taking action will crush the economy or any number of other well-worn clichés.

Instead, it was a call for leadership.

"To help us do more, we need policy certainty for post-2012," they wrote in a joint statement. "We need a strategy now for the

next 50 years, with short and medium-term targets to guide us. Governments must set clear markers along the way to unleash competitive market forces and allow the discovery of a long-term value for carbon emission reductions."

The group calls itself the Executive Forum on Climate Change and it includes companies such as Shell, Alcan, Dupont, Bombardier, Home Depot and many others.

In a letter to the prime minister, they recognized the "consensus that climate change raises the risk of severe consequences for human health and security and the environment."

That's right, these huge companies all recognize climate change is a big problem and that they are part of it. Now they want political leadership. They want certainty. They want a level playing field. They want to know what their targets should be and they



David Suzuki

want governments to set the markers for long-term greenhouse gas reductions.

Their concerns make a great deal of sense. Businesses need certainty. Investors want to know what the landscape will look like over the long term. They don't like surprises.

As former chairperson of Shell Oil Lord Ron Oxburgh put it, "What we don't want to see is in two years' time the government simply becoming bored with cli-

mate change after we've invested a lot of our shareholders money"

That's why medium and long-term emissions targets are so important for businesses, or for anyone else planning for the future. The Kyoto Protocol effectively expires in 2012. And Kyoto was always going to be the first step toward much bigger changes.

To prevent what scientists call "dangerous climate change", research is pointing to a need for substantial cuts to our emissions, as much as 80 per cent by 2050.

Such dramatic change cannot be accomplished overnight, but it can be accomplished. I vividly remember when the Soviet Union shocked the world by launching Sputnik in the fall of 1957.

In the succeeding months, the Soviets scored first after first (first animal, first cosmonaut, first team, first woman) as the U.S. failed spectacularly to duplicate the first feat. But the U.S. didn't roll over and complain that a space

race would ruin the economy. Instead, it committed itself to winning it and look at the dividends today — the U.S. practically owns the Nobel prizes.

Effectively fighting climate change will require an initiative even greater than the space race.

But this new race, the energy race, will pay off with even greater dividends. By learning to be more energy efficient, we not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we also save money and we reduce pollution. By switching to renewable energy sources, we create long-term jobs and diversify our economy. We improve our quality of life.

Clear goals and timetables will help unleash the market forces that will ultimately drive the creativity, ingenuity and inventiveness we need to move to a new energy economy.

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

### LETTERS POLICY

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

Letters to the Editor,  
The Sun-Tribune  
34 Civic Ave.  
Box 154  
Stouffville, ON  
L4A 7Z5

[jmason@yrg.com](mailto:jmason@yrg.com)

### EDITORIAL

Editor  
**Jim Mason**  
[jmason@yrg.com](mailto:jmason@yrg.com)

### ADMINISTRATION

Office Manager  
**Vivian O'Neil**  
[voneil@yrg.com](mailto:voneil@yrg.com)

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### Managing Director,

Real Estate  
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[mrogerson@yrg.com](mailto:mrogerson@yrg.com)

### EDITORIAL

905-905-513-1717  
Fax: 905-513-7525

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