

# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**  
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## Editorial

### Change rules on floor crossing

Sometimes the rules of politics can be so far removed from the workings of the real world, they make you shake your head in disbelief.

Crossing the floor from one party to another, from one ideology to another, after campaigning diligently against the platforms and philosophies of what has become your new party, reeks of hypocrisy and opportunism for some.

For those who cast their ballots to elect a party, rather than an individual, floor crossing is an insulting slap in the face.

People in Newmarket-Aurora are all too familiar with this kind of controversy.

Then former Conservative Belinda Stronach crossed the floor and accepted a cabinet post last year. She was vilified as a traitor by Tory faithful in her riding and even shunned by some Liberals.

But in the last election, she was easily returned to Ottawa as a Liberal as her community accepted her as a hard-working politician.

Ms Stronach has welcomed an ethics investigation into her defection.

Then her Tory critics were silenced when one of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's first acts in office was to woo Liberal David Emerson to his cabinet.

Mr. Emerson's constituents, those same constituents were outraged he could change his stripes so quickly after an election.

But whatever the voters might think, ethics commissioner Bernard Shapiro ruled Monday Mr. Harper and Mr. Emerson were operating within the rules of Parliament.

The voters continue to demand a byelection. It doesn't look like they will get one. It appears the rules are at odds with the will of voters. So, perhaps it's time to change the rules.

Here's Mr. Harper's opportunity to make politicians accountable to the very voters who put them in office.

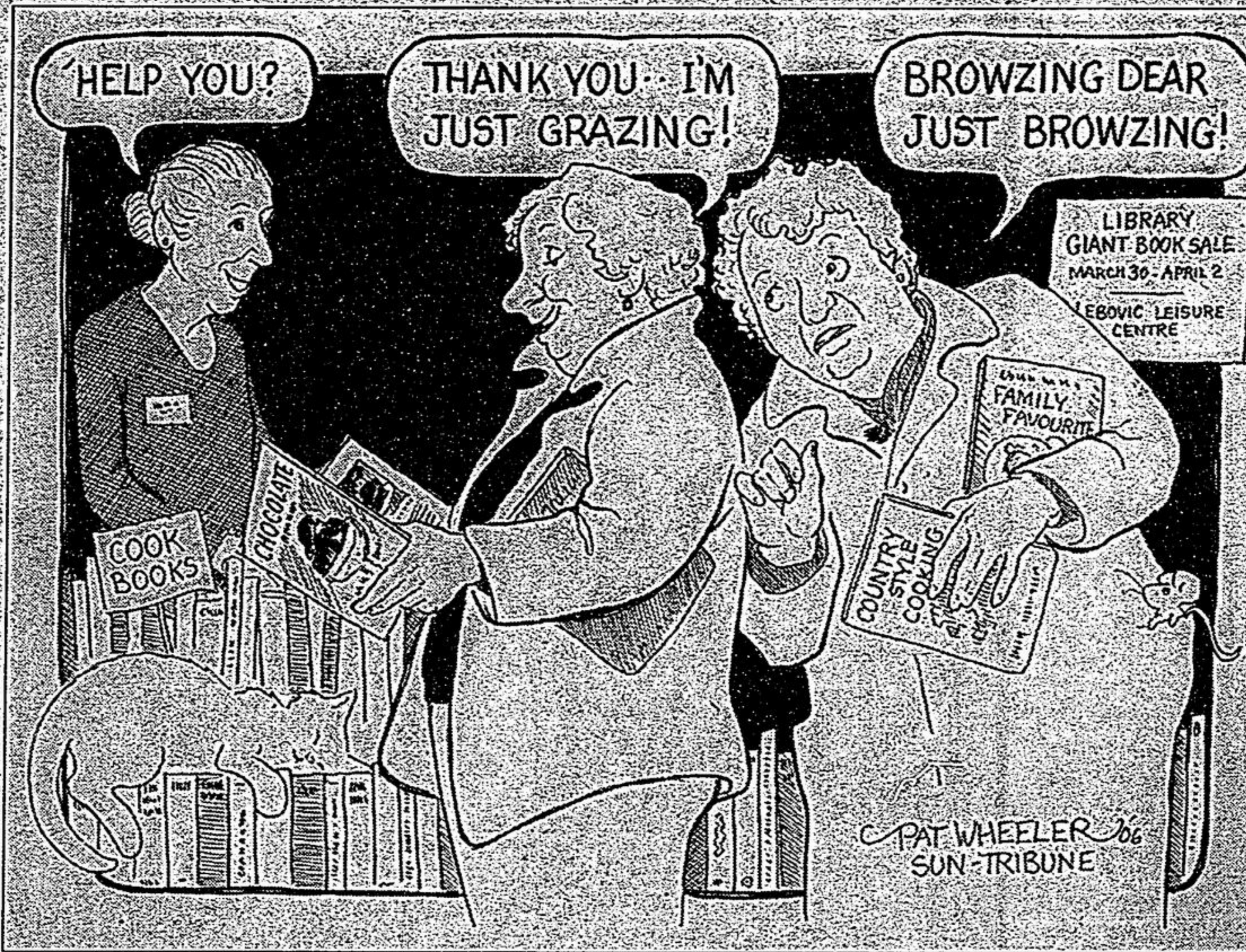
The NDP has called for legislation that would force a defecting MP to sit as an independent until he or she can run under another party's banner in the next election.

Under this policy, Mr. Emerson could vote with the Conservatives if he chooses to do so, but he wouldn't be given a plum position for changing his mind.

Or, if Mr. Harper really wanted him in Cabinet, he would have to accept that the rules of party discipline wouldn't apply.

Tory MP Jason Kenny says his party would allow a free vote if somebody puts forward a motion on the issue.

And let's hope MPs vote with the voters' best interest, rather than their own, at heart.



## Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### When it wasn't fashionable to be a Spirit fan

Thirty Ken Burrows remembers the number vividly, like it was his PIN or his mom Lorna's birthday.

Thirty people dotted the bleachers in the Stouffville Arena that Saturday night 10 years ago.

Apparently, some of the parents and girlfriends of the Stouffville Spirit players elected to watch Hockey Night in Canada or catch a movie rather than see their fledgling Jr. A hockey team lose another one.

Ken Burrows, a local minor hockey star in the 1980s, had just agreed to be a part-time scout with the Spirit. Looking around at the emptiness, he wasn't sure what he was getting into. The Spirit was in last place, its playoff hopes extinguished very early in the season.

Fast forward a decade to last Sunday afternoon.

More than 1,000 fans filled all of the bleachers and lined the boards. And when the Spirit left the ice after a marathon match of two overtimes with its first ever trophy, those fans saluted the freshly crowned champions with plenty of high-fives, applause and back-slapping.

In the mix was Ken Burrows, smiling from ear to ear. From scout to assistant coach and general manager, he has seen it all in Spiritland.

From Stouffville businessman Ed Hakonson rescuing the floundering franchise in its first season to a steady stream of community minded volunteers. From the thousands of players who have tried out for squad every spring to the few hundred who have donned the black, white and red, and the purple and red before that.

From the near misses in attempts to win three grueling playoff rounds and the North Conference championship of the Provincial Jr. A Hockey League to Sunday's oh-so-sweet trophy presentation.

Hockey aside, community is what drives the Spirit. From the players reading to primary students in local schools to assisting at minor hockey practices. They wash cars for the Terry Fox Run foundation and play road hockey at summer fairs.

From the super fans, like Ringwood's Alice Vague, who baked cookies and delivered them to the Spirit bus before road trips 10 years ago, to Mayor Sue Sherban, resplendent in her Spirit jersey in Sunday's throng.

Thirty? Not any longer. **Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune and a director with the Stouffville Spirit.**

## Letters to the Editor

### Ancestors donated land, facilities for Memorial Park

*Re: Residents should get involved to ensure Memorial Park survives, letter to the editor, March 16*

The land for our park in downtown Stouffville was donated by the Sangsters, two brothers who were medical doctors in our community many years ago.

The picnic shelter, a nice place to come for a family picnic, was donated by the Lions club.

The outdoor swimming pool was donated by the late Art Latcham; in summer, who wants to swim indoors?

Now, council wants to build roads through the park and eliminate two ball diamonds. The town is also talking about putting a road behind the grandstand and Latcham Hall, which will all but destroy the main diamond.

What good will that road be? There will be no businesses on it to deliver to, save for the post office.

Council annually closes Church Street through the park every summer, so why put another road through the area?

Stouffville's residents deserve a park in the heart of their community to which people can come and enjoy.

What good are little parks with splash pools? After children get to be 10 or 12 years old, they can't have a game of ball of any kind in parks of that size.

Please reconsider ripping apart our park, town council.

GERALD ACTON  
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@yrng.com](mailto:jmason@yrng.com) or fax 905-513-7525

### Rural mail delivery change inconveniences seniors

My husband and I have lived in Whitchurch Stouffville for 32 years and have had a rural mail box, on RR3 Newmarket, as long as we have lived here.

Due to changes made by Canada Post earlier this year, we now must pick up our mail in a community box at Kennedy Road and St. John's Sideroad on the next concession from our house.

My husband has macular degeneration and does not see well. He has given up driving and we must take a taxi to town for shopping every two weeks. I am 80 years old and my husband is 78. Do we now have to walk one-and-a-quarter miles on busy Kennedy or take a taxi for our mail, too?

To post our outgoing mail, a neighbour would have to go to our box and get our incoming mail, come to our house to pick up our outgoing mail and then return to our box.

This is not convenient.

ELSIE MENZIES  
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

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