

OPINION

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

With growth come improvements

Who said you can't teach an old dog new tricks?

Not the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Because not all things growth related are negative.

Yes, the building boom that has hit Stouffville particularly has brought added noise, dust and traffic to our once sleepy suburb. But, there are positive aspects to growth:

- The first dedicated bicycle lanes in Whitchurch-Stouffville are in place. Take Millard Street west of the Ninth Line for a look at our future.

Now, council must look at adding bike lanes to existing streets. High-traffic areas, including routes to schools, libraries, recreation centres and sports fields, should be priorities.

The Bethesda Road fields, being developed just west of the 10th Line, is a prime example. As mayoral candidate Pamela Courtot said last fall, soccer and ball players shouldn't drive to their games; they should walk or cycle.

Council critics have asked for such lanes to link communities, including Stouffville and Bloomington via the Ninth. If we are going to encourage residents to get out of their cars and use public transit and bicycles, we must make the alternatives safe, convenient and attractive.

- The same goes for the extension of Stouffville's trail system, linking the Millard Street reservoir with the downtown core.

Construction has been overdue. The reservoir, with its wildlife and wooded trails, is a hidden gem all of Stouffville should discover, especially as our community becomes even more urbanized.

- Council has made our community a safer place by insisting developers install sidewalks on both sides of busy streets. Well done.

- Staying on Millard, the roundabout west of the Ninth Line is a brilliant addition to the local network of streets.

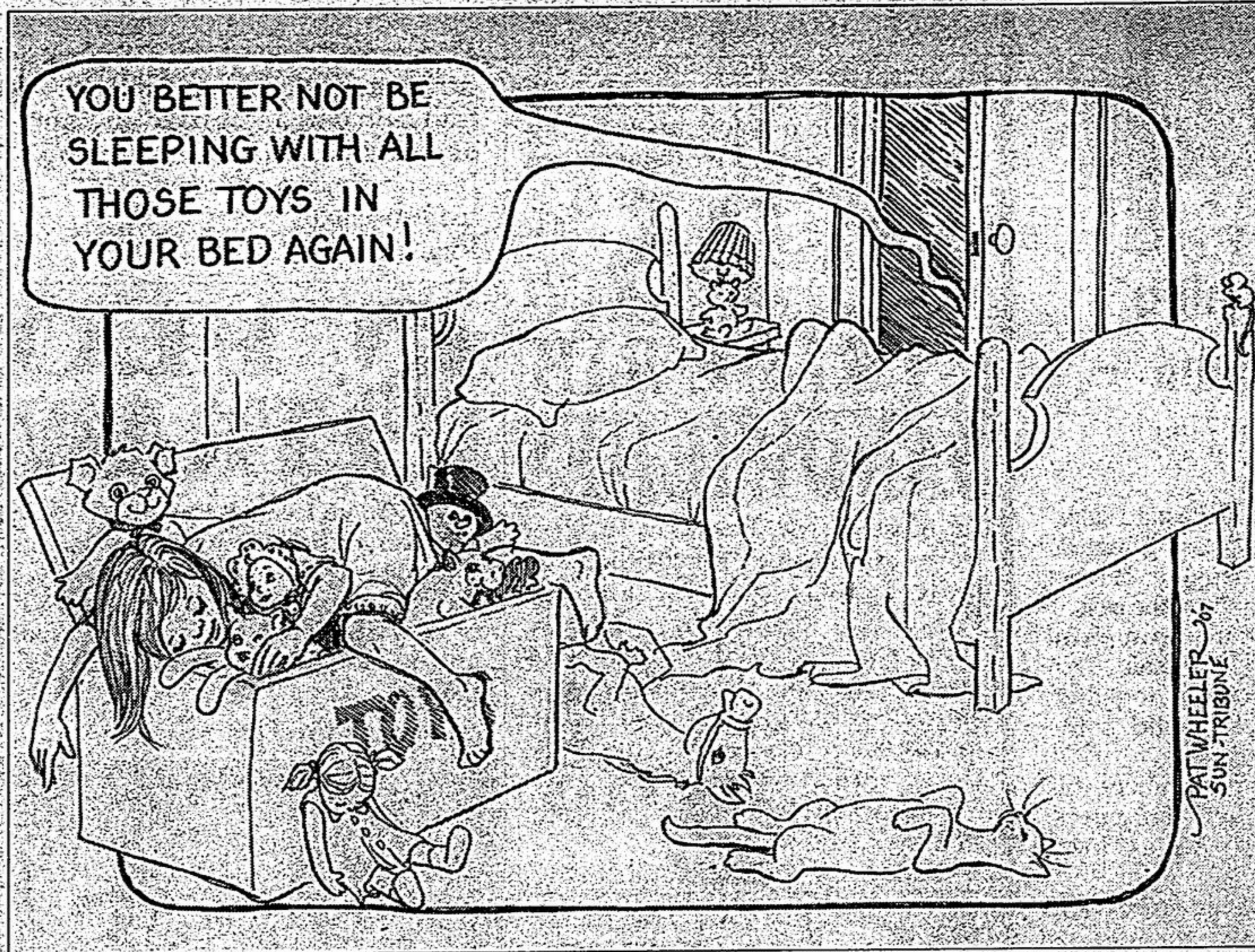
It makes sense for moving traffic and improving the environment.

Now, council must work to make similar improvements in existing subdivisions.

It can start with sidewalks in high traffic areas where none exist. The 10th Line between North Street and the Stouffville Country Market and Rupert Street west of the Ninth Line are prime candidates.

Residents literally take their lives in their hands walking along the side of these streets.

Will it take a fatality to have sidewalks installed?



Letters to the Editor

Tim Hortons commercial unrealistic

There is no doubt the new Tim Hortons commercial with Sidney Crosby is great, but unfortunately it no longer represents the reality in Ontario, and especially in our own community.

If someone can show me a place in Ontario where a Timbit hockey player (or a young figure skater) can have the ice "for just a couple more minutes", to practise their skills, I will buy that person free Tim Hortons coffee for a year.

Perhaps, with a new arena, Stouffville's own budding Sidney Crosbys, or Kevin Reynolds or Cindy Klassens could actually get those extra minutes of practice to hone their skills, which could actually make a difference in the future.

In today's reality, it's the arena staff who unfortunately take the heat as they marshal us off the ice at the exact second our time is up because the demand for ice far exceeds supply.

I wish the Tim Hortons old-fashioned Canadian outlook was our reality here in Stouffville.

GREG SMITH
STOUFFVILLE

No excuses for littering, Stouffville

There is no denying the effects of global warming anymore: the above average temperatures we have been experiencing this "winter"; the news that a large section of the arctic ice shelf has broken off; and the onslaught of information in the media about the very concrete science surrounding this issue is overwhelming.

Yet today, as I was walking my dog along Rupert Avenue, I saw a young girl toss her coffee cup carelessly on to the grass of the park.

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, 6290 Main St., Stouffville, L4A 1G7, e-mail jmason@yrng.com or fax 905-640-8778

My first instinct as a high school teacher was to reprimand the culprit and to point out the error of her ways. But reason told me that lecturing a teenager on the effects of her actions on the environment at that point in time seemed pointless.

But I am astounded that there are so many individuals who have no regard for the world around them. How can anyone in good conscious throw garbage on the ground without a care in the world? How can people give such little thought to the impact of their actions?

Needless to say, it is not just teenagers who are littering, but people of all ages who are of the belief that this is "not their problem" and that "someone else will take care of it".

In this day and age, it is absolutely unacceptable to litter and this is something that we all must take action against. There are many small and simple things that we all can be doing. We do not have the luxury of excuses any longer.

So walk that extra 10 feet and throw your coffee cups into the garbage cans the town has provided. This is everyone's problem and it is time that we all open our eyes.

NATALIE GUNN
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Send our snow to Vancouver, please and thanks

So, that new snow thrower is working wonders as a dust collector in the corner of the garage, eh?

In behind the shovels, the tree and the boxes of decorations. Perfect.

You got tired of firing it up and walking it out around the driveway, like there was a winter to deal with.

Nice Christmas gift. Meanwhile, the children have ripped up that landscaping job of last summer, taking the sleds and other gear where snow should be covering.

The good news is the money you were going to spend to take them to Disney World this spring can pay for more sod and shrubs.

Heck, by March break it should be down right Florida-like here in balmy Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The skeletons of outdoor rinks lie neglected in parks and back yards around Whitchurch-Stouffville.

That Wayne and Walter Gretzky-like bonding you had planned for your future Hall of Famer will have to wait. You will always have the chalk talk and post-game video review sessions. Not to mention the time talking on the way home from road games, especially losses. And there's always next year's NHL draft.

Peevd over the lack of winter? Hardly.

Keep the snowshoes and the balaclavas tucked away. Pull out the flip-flops.

Forget about new skis and an all-year lift ticket.

Denver can have its snowbanks and road closures.

Let Vancouver know what winter is once in a generation.

Keep Mel Lastman and the Canadian Armed Forces at bay. Our soldiers have bigger fish to fry in Afghanistan and other hot spots around the world than road-clearing in the Big Smoke.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

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A York Region Media Group community newspaper. The Sun-Tribune, published every Thursday and Saturday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. Metroland is comprised of 100 community publications across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper Group includes The Liberal, serving Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan Citizen, The Era-Banner (Newmarket/Aurora), Markham Economist & Sun, Georgina Advocate, York Region Business Times, North of the City, [yorkregion.com](http://www.yorkregion.com) and York Region Printing.