

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

What's the future for our seniors?

Stouffville has a history as a community for seniors.

When this was more of an agricultural area, farmers would sell their farms and move to communities like Stouffville. That still happens, on a smaller scale.

Now, seniors and other retirees move here for other reasons.

Parkview Services for Seniors has been looking after our oldest residents for decades. From its original home for the aged on Rupert Avenue, Parkview has become a seniors campus between the Ninth Line and Weldon Road.

Parkview offers rental apartments and leased suites to nursing care on one site, all with its Christian touch.

There are other nursing homes and apartment complexes offering different levels of care in Whitchurch-Stouffville, including Elmwood Gardens and Buckingham Manor. Specialty Care's Bloomington Cove is known for its work with people with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Diversicare is adding to the stock, with construction of its Stouffville Creek Retirement Residence in downtown Stouffville. The 90-suite home will open next fall.

In east-end Stouffville, the Northern Gate and Eastern Gate communities offer bungalow living. Many seniors have down-sized here.

Ballantrae Country Club is not a seniors-only facility, but hundreds of people have retired here in the last five years.

If our facilities are coming close to meeting demand, they won't be forever. Thousands of baby boomers in our area are approaching retirement age.

That will put pressure on our area hospitals. Markham Stouffville hopes to launch its first expansion since it opened almost 18 years ago.

A cardiac unit at Southlake Regional Health Centre serving York Region is a great addition, as will a cancer care unit at the Newmarket hospital. Will they be enough?

Locally, the immediate need is for a new seniors centre. The Silver Jubilee Club, a converted post office, does not offer the proper facilities or location. Seniors deserve areas for programs, including woodworking and fitness, at a site with proper parking and access.

It's now up to town council to build a new centre, perhaps in the municipal complex the old Stouffville District Secondary School may become.



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Meet the champ: King of Canadian boxing hungry for fights

Quick, who is the Canadian professional heavyweight boxing champion?

It used to be a no-brainer. George Chuvalo, Trevor Berbick and Lennox Lewis, sort of.

Time's up. The answer was at Crossroads Restaurant in Stouffville Saturday, talking to fans and showing off his big red belt between bouts of the ultimate fighting card on pay TV.

Ray Olubowale, all six feet, seven inches and 265 pounds of him, is the champ.

The guy they understandably call Mount Kilimanjaro is 5-2-1 as a pro after going 36-12 in the amateur ranks. The Toronto resident won the title in September over Dave Cadieux of Quebec.

This is not the golden age of boxing in Canada, he admits.

"Before the belt, I could walk down the street and nothing," he says.

Even now, there's only the odd public appearance and little publicity.

His goal is a world title shot.

"But right now, I just want to stay busy," he said. "There aren't a lot of promoters in Ontario and those there are have a hard time (booking bouts.) In two-and-a-half years, I had two fights. That's ridiculous."

Getting this fall's rematch to a controversial loss to Mr. Cadieux in 2005 was not easy, despite promises to the contrary.

"I'll fight anyone worldwide," he said. "With Cadieux, I called him out, I went on the Internet, I did everything but go to his house and fight him in his driveway."

Rayo, as friends call him, says he'll fight again in January, at the new series at Casino Rama, in Quebec or Germany.

Anywhere, says the native of Nigeria. In the meantime, he trains, teaches the sport, works as a doorman at Crossroads and runs a variety of competitions for high school students across the GTA.

The champ nobody knows.

For now, Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

• VALERIE ASHTON
STOUFFVILLE

Letters to the Editor

Latcham Gallery puts Stouffville on artistic map in Ontario

I wanted to thank the staff at the Latcham Gallery for allowing me to be a part of the current show, Portraits of the Everyday.

I wonder sometimes if many of the residents of Stouffville realize what a wonderful venue we have here in the gallery. When I talk to professional artists in Toronto and other cities in Ontario, they know Stouffville because of the gallery.

In the artistic community, Latcham Gallery has an incredible reputation. I know of artists who are willing to take the time, inconvenience and expense to mail their art to gallery's juried show on the slim chance their work will be accepted.

Artists from all over Ontario are willing to travel whatever distance necessary to bring their art to Stouffville to show at the Latcham.

Why? Because these artists know that to be able to say they have shown at the gallery will increase their credibility as an artist.

The current show brings together artists from Stouffville, Hamilton and Peterborough. I have heard some people say Stouffville doesn't need Latcham Gallery because we have the Lemonville Community Centre. Lemonville is a good venue for local artists to sell their work.

Latcham is a great venue for those artists who wish to take their art to another level, whether those artists are from Stouffville or from other cities in Ontario.

Latcham is not a venue for selling art. It is a place to showcase art, to educate the public to different forms of art, to allow us the opportunity to see art and artists we would not otherwise have the

opportunity to see.

Submitting a proposal to show at Latcham takes time and effort, but is definitely worthwhile. I know that now, when I submit an art proposal to other galleries, my chance of being accepted to show will be greatly increased because I have now shown at the gallery.

Stouffville should be very proud to have a gallery with the reputation and quality of the Latcham Gallery.

Bruce's Mill needs immediate help

In this day and age, when countless millions are being spent on arts centres and museums, while the coffers in Ottawa have billions in surplus, I wish to voice a cry for help from an old friend.

The mill at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Whitchurch-Stouffville is a gracious old lady and a witness to our pioneering past. One of the few surviving grist mills in the province, I found it grossly neglected and in urgent need of basic prevention maintenance during a recent visit.

Beside peeling paint, I noticed several pieces of siding were missing, permitting rain to enter the structure. If this isn't fixed, expensive restoration work will be next.

Obviously, it has fallen on hard times due to a lack of foresight or funding.

Bruce's Mill is a precious jewel and should be preserved at all cost for future generations. Mills, like the railway, were the cornerstone in the foundation on which this country was built.

N. BATSH
RICHMOND HILL

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