

OPINION

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

6290 Main St.
Stouffville, ON, L4A 1G7
www.yorkregion.com

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Debora Kelly

BUSINESS MANAGER
Robert Lazaruko

DIRECTOR
INTERACTIVE MEDIA
& **TECHNOLOGY**
John Futhey

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING
& **DISTRIBUTION**
Barry Black

YORK REGION PRINTING
GENERAL MANAGER
Bob Dean

DIRECTOR, CIRCULATION
SYSTEMS
Lynn Pashko

Editorial

Referees deserve more thanks

If you were in your favourite coffee shop, perhaps even one named after an NHL hockey player, and you did not like the way a 16-year-old server had filled your order, would you start screaming at him or her? Would you yell, "What the *&@%#\$. Open your eyes! That's a double-double. I wanted black, one sugar! Wake up!" at the top of your lungs?

If you did, someone nearby would likely pull out their cellphone and dial 911. Your aggressive, loud-mouthed behaviour was uncalled for, especially when directed at a teenager — a not very highly paid one at that. Perhaps it would be best for all concerned if the police were on their way.

Considering this would be the reaction of most people — call the police, this person is nuts and their verbal abuse may turn into physical violence — one wonders why we don't apply this same standard at our local hockey rinks, soccer fields and baseball diamonds.

League organizers in York Region tell us they have a challenge finding referees to oversee hockey games.

While many factors were cited, one clear problem contributing to refs leaving the game and young hockey lovers refraining from picking up the whistle, is the verbal abuse they are forced to put up with from coaches and parents.

It's surprising this behaviour, a Canadian style of psychotherapy, getting out of one's frustrations through yelling at officiating crews, is still tolerated.

It is wonderful to be passionate about a sport. But it is quite another to take out our frustrations on young men and women who take up officiating as a part-time job, or simply as a way to stay involved with a sport they love.

While much has been done to improve the behaviour of coaches through police checks and mandatory courses that stress fair play and level-headedness, one wonders if the time has come for parents to take a similar course and sign a code of conduct when registering their child to play. That code of conduct should spell out that, while parents are encouraged to cheer for their children or boo at a bad call, yelling, screaming and spewing profanity at officials will not be tolerated. When parents behave this way, the game will be halted until the parent leaves. Repeated incidents will result in a ban from the rink, ball field or soccer pitch.

These games cannot happen without officials. If we continue to expect them to put up with a form of abuse we would not allow in any other workplace, we will end up without enough refs to run the games.

Even NHL referees make mistakes. Our minor hockey officials, young and old alike, are vital to keeping our kids on the ice. We should be yelling out a big thank you to them during each game.



PAT WHEELER '08



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Catch future stars before they move on to the show

Got game? Forget the NHL and its bunch of millionaire whiners. They don't play real hockey until April. Those teams that make the playoffs, that is, Leaf fans. You're missing a chance to see future pros and college stars right in your own back yard. And they're playing for their future every week.

Unless you're one of the 227 people who show up for Stouffville Spirit home games every Thursday. Then you know about the 16 to 20-year-olds playing in the Provincial Jr. A Hockey League.

The Stouffville Arena, with its colder than Arctic temps, bench seating and bad sound, is one of the most uncomfortable places to watch a game in the 36-team league. But you can't ignore the fast pace right in front of your face, five minutes from your home. If the game's a stiff, you've lost what? Ten bucks.

The Spirit takes a six-game winning streak into its game at home tonight to the first-place Huntsville Otters.

The players still sign autographs and talk to kids after the game at this level. They take part in the community.

With James McIntosh accepting a deal to Bowling Green Friday, a team record six Spirit players have scholarships to major U.S. schools this year. The previous high was two scholarships.

Two recipients, Ethan Werek (Boston University) and Pat McEachen (Maine), are home-grown products.

Another, Corey Trivino, should break more ground in June's NHL draft. The nifty playmaker is the top-ranked Jr. A player in eastern Canada, at 46th among North American skaters.

During the Spirit's 13-year history, no one has made it to the show, as they call the NHL. You may be watching history.

If you only watch playoff hockey, the Jr. A post-season starts in mid-February.

Remember the Spirit's run two springs ago to its first North and North/West championships? The rink was packed.

Keep the spirit, Stouffville.

Jim Mason, a former director of the Stouffville Spirit, is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

Letters to the Editor

Politicians helped students' cause at St. Mark Catholic School

On behalf of our Grade 5/6 class, I want to thank everyone who helped us.

We appreciate getting recycling back at St. Mark School.

Not only did you help our school, but, with your effort, you all so helped St. Brigid get theirs back, too.

We had politicians come to our class, some wrote letters to us, the mayor phoned and Mr. Tadman from the Catholic school board came to our school.

And, after all that, we finally reached what we were fighting for.

You may not realize how much you helped us and our school. And our school is like our second home.

Thank you and we appreciate it very much.

RYLEY ROBINSON
ST. MARK SCHOOL
STOUFFVILLE

St. Brigid got recycling back, too, thanks to help from community

Speaking for my whole school, we are really pleased to be recycling again.

Thank you, thank you to everyone for trying and caring about this issue. You certainly made a difference.

It is exciting to think that I made a difference and helped my whole school with something important. I realized that not only my class helped with this, you did.

Mr. Tadman the school board's person in charge of recycling came to talk to us.

He told us how our recycling is back and because of our letters, St. Brigid in Stouffville has its recycling back, also.

Stouffville's newspaper, The Sun-Tribune, even printed an article about our concerns. A few kids in my class were quoted in the story.

HAYLEY BARNES
ST. MARK SCHOOL
STOUFFVILLE

We love letters to the editor

Have an opinion on something happening in Whitchurch-Stouffville? Care to share it?

We love to receive letters to the editor on a variety of topics from a wide range of Whitchurch-Stouffville residents.

How do you feel about the 19 on the Park arts centre? The new twin pad ice complex approved by council? Downtown Stouffville and the new shopping areas of west Stouffville.

E-mail your letters to jmason@yrmg.com or mail them to 6290 Main St., Stouffville, L4A 1G7. Please include your daytime phone number.

LETTERS POLICY

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

Letters to the Editor,
The Sun-Tribune
6290 Main St.
Stouffville, ON
L4A 1G7
jmason@yrmg.com

EDITORIAL
Editor
Jim Mason
jmason@yrmg.com

INTERACTIVE MEDIA
Marketing & Advertising
Manager
Dawna Andrews
dandrews@yrmg.com

ADVERTISING
Retail Manager
Stacey Allen
sallen@yrmg.com

Classified Manager
Ann Campbell
acampbell@yrmg.com

Assistant Classified
Manager
Bonnie Rondeau
brondeau@yrmg.com

PRODUCTION
Team Leader
Sherry Day
sday@yrmg.com



EDITORIAL
905-640-2612
Fax: 905-640-8778

ADVERTISING
905-640-2612
Classified: 1-800-743-3353
Fax: 905-640-8778

DISTRIBUTION
905-640-2612



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 and York Region Printing.