

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

The heart of a hockey town

Detroit is the original Hockey Town.

And Whitchurch-Stouffville was not named the grand prize winner of the Kraft Hockeyville 2008 contest this week.

But, make no mistake, this is a hockey community.

Whitchurch-Stouffville has a proud history with the sport, dating back to 1900 when the first teams were organized.

The ice pads at the Stouffville Arena are the sixth and seventh arenas in the community's history. Two more will be built starting later this year on Weldon Road near Stouffville District Secondary School.

Ontario championship banners decorate the rafters of the rinks, dating back to the middle of the last century. Titles have been won by teams of men, boys, girls and high school students.

And this has been a very special year for Stouffville hockey:

- Three Stouffville Clipper teams won Ontario Minor Hockey Association titles. The previous best was one championship. (The bantam Clippers, who represented the town in Europe at Christmas, are in New Liskeard for the all-Ontario championships this week.)

- Stouffville Secondary's boys team won its second straight Ontario championship Saturday. The girls won provincial titles in 2006 and 2007.

- The Stouffville Spirit reached the North Conference Jr. A final for the third straight year in front of hundreds every playoff game. A team-record six Spirit players earned full scholarships to U.S. colleges.

But trophies are just part of the hockey story in Stouffville.

Not everyone is into the sport, just as not all appreciate the opera or soap operas, but it is a community.

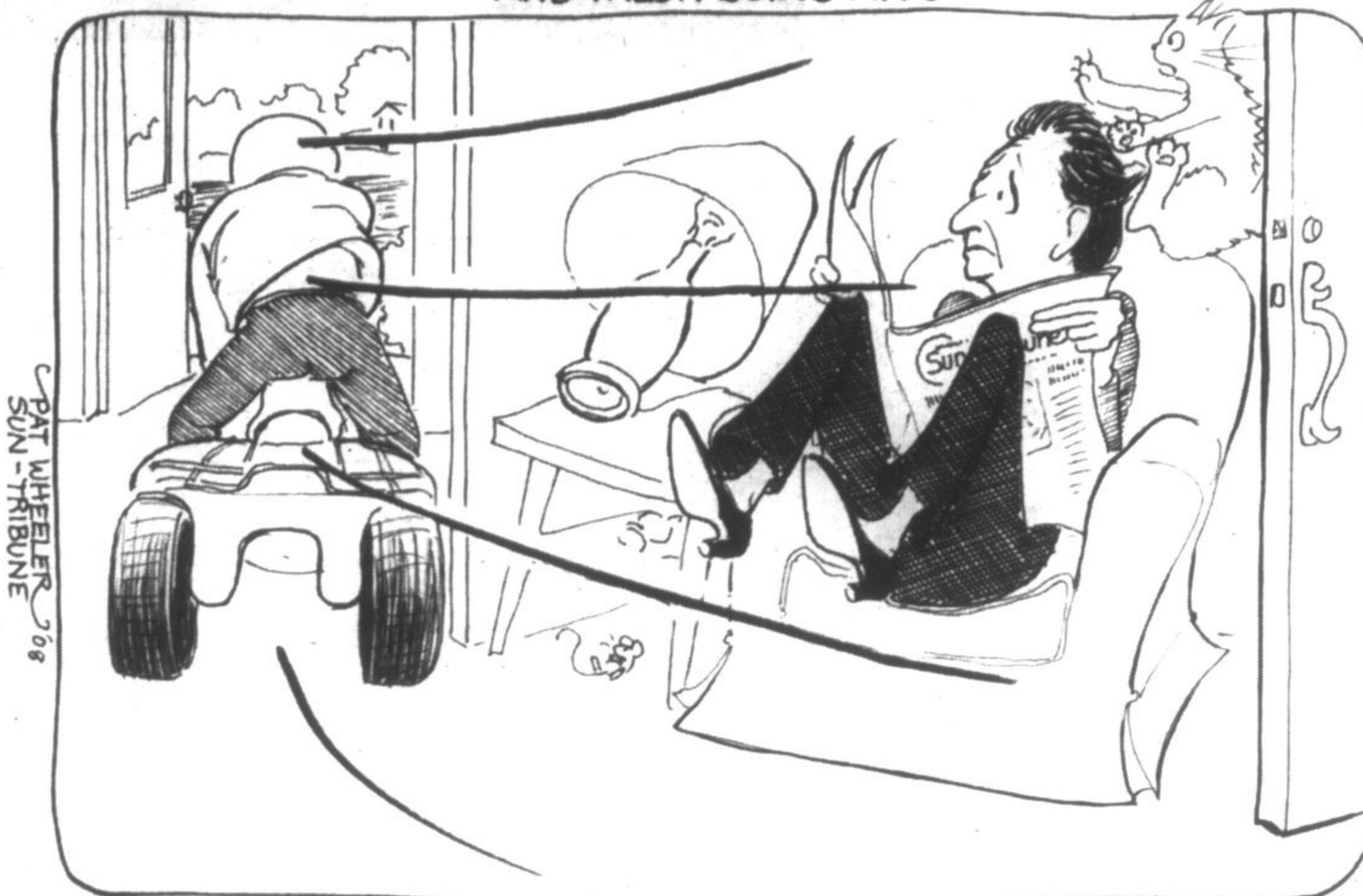
Everyone can admire the heart of the hockey crowd.

Minor hockey players have donated money to the Terry Fox Run and disadvantaged players in the other communities this year.

The Stouffville Amateur Hockey League shone on the weekend. A 20-team shinny tournament raised money for the daughters of Pat Madigan, a former president of the 32-tam league for women and men who died in February.

The event showcased Stouffville at its best; the residents of this still small town caring for each other.

MUSSELMAN'S LAKE RESIDENTS ARE BOTHERED BY NON-STOP NOISE, AND TRESPASSING ATV'S



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Lack of applause from arts community for 19 on Park?

It should be a glowing moment in downtown Stouffville tomorrow afternoon.

A cheque for almost \$1 million will be presented to town officials from the province. (One can only hope that it's not of the oversized variety, physically not monetarily, the kind of cheque presenters assume we in the media love but we really don't.)

The money is for the conversion of the old town hall into 19 on the Park, an arts centre.

The project launch which will happen at least ceremonially tomorrow, is as almost as overdue as a Stanley Cup parade down Yonge Street.

The municipal offices vacated almost in the middle of the night 10 years ago, with the then CAO saying the structure was unsafe.

It's had minor re-births, particularly as artists studios, and more proposals for re-invention than Maple Leaf Gardens.

A performing arts theatre was usually the focal point, but today's council emphasizes that 19 on the Park is more multi-use.

And there in may lie the rub, folks. The province is behind it, at least financially. The business and development community anted up \$300,000 at a fall wine and schmooze, with more fundraisers promised.

The cheque-writing may not needed, thanks to the McGuinty Liberals. But the non-financial support of patrons and performers of the facility would be nice.

It was stunning to read in this paper last month Mr. Emerson saying, "... we have had very little input from the arts and cultural people in town". A week later, nothing had changed, he said.

So, for whom is 19 on the Park being remodelled and expanded at cost of \$3.4 million? Is it too small for the theatre crowd, the same way the second pad of the Stouffville arena is to the hockey and skating community?

Will potential users step forward? Jim Mason is editor of *The Sun-Tribune*.

Letters to the Editor

Use road money from province on stretch of McCowan, council

Re: \$535,000 for town roads, April 3.

I noticed we have received money from the province to be applied to road repair for local roads.

Well, I sure hope some is earmarked for McCowan Road between Aurora and Bloomington roads by our town council and roads department.

This stretch of road is, at best, a death trap. In the 15 years we've lived in this neck of the woods, I've traversed this section of roadway almost daily, plus many more times on my motorcycle.

On more occasions than I care to remember the ruts and potholes have literally picked up and moved my bike a foot or so in unwanted directions. The bike weighed more than 850 pounds.

It seems everywhere else, except this stretch of road has been addressed.

For the exorbitant amount we pay in taxes, it would be nice to see some of it wisely spent here, before someone's killed.

MARK STRAIT
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Find better location for new doctors without displacing bowlers

If the Stouffville Bowling Centre is closed then Stouffville will lose another part of its history, as well as the centre for a much needed activity for people of all ages.

It's an old-time bowling alley. No automated

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scoring; scores are calculated with paper and pencil by teammates, friends or coaches.

The facility is small enough you can see how the players on other lanes are doing and hear them giggle when not all of the pins come down in place on a re-set.

This all helps foster a much friendlier atmosphere than at the new larger and more modern centres.

On Sunday afternoons, a Special Olympics bowling league takes to the lanes at the Main Street centre.

I participate as the mother of a participant and a coach of one of the teams.

It is heartwarming to observe the respect and kindness showing to the bowlers by John White, the proprietor of the centre.

Mr. White knows all the league members by name and always remembers their shoe sizes. He has created an atmosphere that is welcoming, encouraging and competitive.

Yes, we do more doctors, but surely a better location can be found without displacing a business that has a history in Stouffville and a proprietor who has contributed to the community for 11 years.

CAROLE HENRY
STOUFFVILLE

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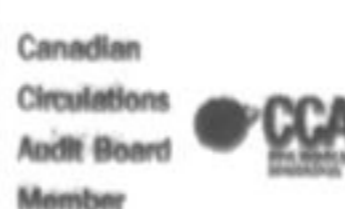
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