

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

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Debora Kelly

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nothing for adult singles to do in Stouffville, either

Re: *Nothing for teenagers to do in growing Stouffville*, letter to the editor by Brian Hadaway, May 3.

I commend Brian for raising the issue. Here, I thought I was the only one.

But let me take my case a notch further considering the fact I'm 12 years older than him and I'm not a native Stouffvillian. I arrived here a year and a half ago from Hong Kong to work as a nanny.

I find Brian luckier than I am, considering he goes to school and has tons of opportunities to meet friends. I live and work in the same house and meeting friends on my own is close to impossible.

The fact I'm a newcomer and have no known relatives here makes it much worse.

Breaking down almost every night has been a normal occurrence to me and I've even considered it a necessity, lest I want to suffer mental breakdown. This is one of the ways I deal with boredom and loneliness.

My neighbours are suburban people with young children and definitely not of the same age group as I am. Their priorities are different from mine.

I engage in physical activities that can at least divert my attention from boredom and further isolation.

I sometimes bike, savour the fresh air in one of our parks and swim at our pool at

least twice a week.

This is not enough. There has to be a social activity. After all, man is a social animal.

I would suggest someone with strong organizational skills and generous help from others organize social activities for adult singles.

Please don't interpret this as an ulterior motive of me looking for a date.

I would suggest Boston Pizza organizing a singles night with a specific theme. Nights such as these will bring in revenue to the establishment as well.

Other activities? How about trail running for singles, biking for singles, book reading for singles, singles volunteering for the elderly or maybe a photography club. I would love to be there and meet other Stouffvillians who share the same interests.

Parents can be accommodated as well, as long as they don't bring their children along. Consider this day as a "couple's day off". This would at least relieve them from stress associated in taking care of their children.

If nothing can be done with my plea or Brian's, then I rest my case and continue to judge Stouffville as a typical suburb devoid of life, whose inhabitants just come home to sleep.

T.C. NG
STOUFFVILLE



You are paying more for bottled water than gas

The water coming out of most city taps in Canada is pretty clean. Yet, many people prefer to spend money on bottled water, believing it is somehow safer.

Now, we are learning the stuff in plastic water bottles may be more harmful than anything in our tap water.

Bisphenol A is just one chemical that's been in the news and in many plastic bottles, recently.

This compound mimics estrogens (human female hormones) and has been linked to breast and ovarian cancers and childhood developmental problems.

It is found in clear, hard polycarbonate plastic commonly used in household and commercial water coolers and some reusable bottles and it is just one potentially harmful substance associated with plastic containers.

The presence of chemicals isn't the only reason we should try to wean ourselves from the bottle, though.

For one thing, bottled water is expensive, costing more than a

comparable amount of gasoline.

Unlike most nations on Earth, Canada has vast quantities of fresh water.

Have we so polluted our water we feel compelled to pay a lot for it?

And from beginning to end (and for plastics, that end is a long time away), plastic bottles contribute to causing environmental problems.

To start, the manufacturing process is a factor in global warming and depletion of energy resources.

It takes close to 17 million barrels of oil to produce the 30 billion water bottles U.S. citizens go through every year.

Or, as the National Geographic website illustrates it: "Imagine a water bottle filled a quarter of the way up with oil. That's about how much oil was needed to produce the bottle."

It also takes more water to produce a bottle than the bottle itself will hold.

Canadians consume more than 2 billion litres of bottled water a year and, globally, we consume about 190 billion litres a year.

Unfortunately, most of those



David Suzuki

bottles, more than 85 per cent in fact, get tossed into the trash rather than the recycling bin.

The pollution from plastics affects our air, land and water.

Many plastic bottles end up in landfills or get incinerated and burning plastic releases toxic chemicals into the air.

Plastic that stays on land or buried can take hundreds of years to break down and even then it doesn't completely biodegrade.

One of the most disturbing things is what happens to plastic that ends up in the oceans, which

is about 10 per cent of all plastic produced, according to Greenpeace. About 900 kilometres off the coast of California, a massive, expanding island of plastic debris 30 metres deep and bigger than the province of Quebec swirls in what is known as the North Pacific Gyre.

In a recent column for CBC's website, writer Heather Mallick described it as "a hideous chyme stretching and pulsing in the sea like an underwater gob of spiky phlegm".

Plastic doesn't biodegrade. Rather, it photodegrades, which means, under sunlight, it just keeps breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces.

The tiniest bits of plastic, called nurdles, enter the food chain when eaten by marine animals and birds.

Nurdles also soak up toxins, adding to the poisons consumed by animals and every creature up the food chain.

More than one million birds and marine animals die every year from eating plastic waste or from becoming entangled in plastics.

If the environmental dam-

age caused by plastic bottles or the existence of potentially toxic chemicals in the bottles isn't enough to make you avoid them, how about some reasons that hit closer to home?

First, there is the fact many bottlers get their water from municipal supplies.

Coca Cola filters and bottles water from municipal sources in Calgary and Brampton for its Dasani brand.

Pepsi's Aquafina comes mostly from Vancouver and Mississauga.

That's right, they are taking your tap water and selling it back to you at a markup that can be as high as 3,000 times the price you pay for it through your taxes.

There is also a danger governments may use the growing reliance on bottled water as an excuse to avoid their responsibility to ensure we have access to safe drinking water.

The federal government must address any existing concerns about drinking-water quality with enforceable standards designed to protect human health.

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



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