

# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**

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## Editorial

### Ensuring our festivals prosper

The 24th annual Strawberry Festival is history, with organizers already preparing for the silver anniversary edition in 2009.

They deserve a large ovation for this year's big show.

There literally was something for everyone, as organizers promised, from events for babies to seniors.

The festival is a wonderful showcase of the best Whitchurch-Stouffville has to offer.

From our service clubs and businesses, to our sports teams and performers from the arts community, they all have their chance to shine.

It's important to note the festival is run by volunteers who solicit an annual grant from the town and money from sponsors to put the show on.

It's come a long way from a softball tournament with a craft sale and pancake breakfast to a six-day celebration centred around the Canada Day holiday.

But there are no guarantees the festival will go on forever. When the Strawberry Festival was in its formative years, it was often compared to the much larger and older Spring Water Days festival in Uxbridge. That event, which once stretched over two weekends, eventually died.

Festivals, like local clubs and businesses, must grow and change or face the same fate.

A few suggestions for our festival:

- Would the Saturday parade held at 9 a.m. still work later in the day when crowds are much larger?

The one-day street closure isn't unique to Stouffville by any means, but still remains one of the coolest scenes in town.

And with alternative east-west route opening, can we close Main for other events? How about amalgamating the Elvis festival with a classic car show and lining the downtown core?

Or what about a three-on-three basketball tournament? Is there room and time for a fall festival in Stouffville?

- Speaking of bigger audiences, should the citizen awards move back to Canada Day from Thursday night when many more people can honour our best residents?

It would also be a fine time to introduce the festival volunteers to the community and hopefully recruit more help for future festivals.

And to say thanks.



A STOUFFVILLE FARMER SAYS COWS CAN TRAVEL SEVERAL MILES WALKING THROUGH THE NIGHT!



### Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Discovering your home town one step at a time

Another Blue Jays' season was over just after it started.

You can only watch replays of Jeopardy so often, even if your new intellect is impressive to visitors.

The lawn doesn't need cutting again.

So, what are you to do with your steamy, summer evenings?

Take a hike. Literally.

Strap on the walking shoes and explore the back streets, new horizons and green spaces of your home town.

It's the cheapest of dates, as well as being healthy and educational.

It's great medicine, as long as you don't stop for a milkshake every time. Or one of Stouffville's finest drivers, the ones who think STOP means slow down so you can take the corner on two wheels, doesn't get you.

You can discover Stouffville's oldest homes, built in the 1800s. My favorite streets are stately Church and O'Brien with their mixes of architecture from so many generations.

Want to see some early row housing, from the young 1900s? Check out of the Albert Street Terrace. Can't miss it.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, our newest developments have their redeeming qualities, if not the heritage.

Start with sidewalks, something many older areas could still use. Ever try walking to the Stouffville Country Market while battling highway-like traffic?

The trail system being installed in our newest subdivisions may create a privacy issue in homes that back on to the paths, but it's a wonderful alternative for walkers.

A tip? Don't stare at someone's home for too long even if to only admire the landscaping or trim colour. It's unnerving for someone inside to see the gawkers and pointing fingers.

Another tip? The Stouffville Reservoir, Bruce's Mill Conservation Area and York Regional Forest have their own trails, complete with wildlife. All are in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Get out there, right at home.

Jim Mason is editor of *The Sun-Tribune*.

## Letters to the Editor

### Citizen of year award delightful surprise

I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the honour given to me last week.

I was certainly surprised and delighted to be named your Whitchurch-Stouffville Citizen of the Year for 2008.

I want to thank The Sun-Tribune for sponsoring the award and the event and for the commemorative plaque. Thanks also to MPP Dr. H. Jaczek for her interest in our festival and for the scroll.

I also want to thank the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville for the beautiful inscribed watch.

The Strawberry Festival Committee that has worked so hard to produce one of the region's outstanding happenings also gave me a plaque I shall treasure.

Finally, a huge thanks to those who took the trouble to send in a nomination on my behalf. I will try to ensure that their confidence in me is sustained.

DON PETRIE  
STOUFFVILLE

### Residents went out of way to help senior visiting Stouffville

I'd like to thank those who offered me assistance in Stouffville June 4.

I am an 86-year-old senior from California visiting my family here.

Even with my cane, walking is sometimes strenuous as I'm frequently short of breath.

### HAVE YOUR SAY, WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

► What do you think of these issues or others?  
E-mail letters to the editor to [jmason@yrmg.com](mailto:jmason@yrmg.com)

I was on my way to Frank's Hairstyling, trying hard to cover what may be a short distance for some from the corner of Tindale and Manitoba streets to Main Street, though to me, seemed endless.

A car with a young mother of two children pulled out of the fire hall lot, stopped and asked me if I was OK.

She offered to take me to Frank's and, once there, proceeded to ask proprietor Frank Frano to look after me.

I am sorry to say I did not get her name to thank her personally. She did mention her husband is a firefighter stationed in Stouffville.

I would also like to give thanks to Mr. Frano himself for looking after me. Once my hair was cut, he drove me back to my family's home.

I was extremely touched by the generosity of these people who went out of their way for a total stranger such as myself.

CHARLES E. SPITERI  
CALIFORNIA

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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.

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