

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 Lazurko

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING
& DISTRIBUTION
Nicole Fletcher

YORK REGION PRINTING
GENERAL MANAGER
Bob Dean

Editorial

Are 14-year-olds public enemies?

Is a big problem facing our country too many 14-year-olds committing serious and violent crimes and getting away with it?

That is the sentiment Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservative colleagues are appealing to with the announcement they will introduce legislation that would treat those convicted of serious and violent crimes who are as young as 14, more like adults.

They would no longer be eligible for house arrest but, rather, would serve their time in our prisons.

They would no longer be afforded a protection that has been part of Canadian society for nearly 30 years — prohibiting their names from being published by the media.

And if they committed a murder, either in the first or second degree, judges would have the option of sentencing them to life in prison.

Some people will likely say it's about time. They never liked the Young Offenders Act or the Youth Criminal Justice Act that replaced it.

It was the latter that made it even more difficult for newspapers to report on crimes committed by young people for fear we might identify the alleged perpetrator or victims.

For instance, in 2006, one in 10 youth crimes in Canada occurred on school property, something you don't get to read about because the law would typically prevent us from identifying the school, because we might identify the parties involved.

Still, this new law may go too far.

Remember what it's like to be 14?

If your birthday is in the first half of the year, you can turn 14 while you are still in grade school.

Yes, old enough to know right from wrong, but not really mature enough to understand the lifelong consequences of a criminal act.

That's a far cry from the 17-year-old who is old enough to drive, have a job and so on.

Those are the criminals to whom our government should be paying more attention — the ones who are by all measures adults and should be treated that way. But 14-year-olds?

The Conservatives run the risk of sounding like reactionaries rather than lawmakers who are dealing with a serious problem in a serious manner.

If they were talking about 17 and 16-year-olds now being more likely to get the treatment of adult court, the average voter might be more receptive.



Letters to the Editor

Stouffville run envy of province

Stouffville didn't give up. They didn't quit. In spite of the threat of fallout from a hurricane, nothing got in the way of the wonderful residents of Stouffville coming together Sept. 14 for a common goal. They came by the hundreds to celebrate the lives of loved ones and that of a young man they had never met.

The Stouffville Terry Fox Run was another huge success. About \$85,000 was raised for cancer research. More than 100 residents volunteered to make our event one of the best in the province.

Neighbours new and old came together. Music, laughter, sweat, tears, snow cones, apples, Vachon cakes and lots of water were all part of the day.

To our local schools, we appreciate you sharing an incredible part of Canadian history with our children.

Our community is the envy of the entire province. On Sunday, Sept. 14, our wonderful community continued the Marathon of Hope. To all involved, in every capacity, a heartfelt thank you.

SANDY SCHELL KENNEDY
CHAIRPERSON
STOUFFVILLE TERRY FOX RUN

More people should speak up at council

Re: Letter to the editor by Marilyn Agnew, Two men didn't speak for all, council, Sept. 18.

I would suggest Marilyn Agnew attend a few more council meetings before she passes judgment on my husband, Bob James. He was speaking loudly and clearly so all could hear his comments regarding the park at Musselman's Lake. If she was more interested and informed, she would know this has been a very long, drawn out and frustrating subject since June 2007.

HAVE YOUR SAY, WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

► What do you think of these issues or others?
E-mail letters to the editor to jmason@yrmg.com

The sound system in the council chambers, most of the time, does not pick up people speaking and, many times, council attendees have asked that the person addressing council speak louder or even the council themselves to speak up.

If truth be known, we need more people like Mark Carroll and my husband to speak up and be heard and not be led along like sheep to a slaughter.

Naturalizing the shoreline along the Glendale Beach property would alleviate the town's concern over the liability of having a waterfront park.

The intent of the suggestions was not to naturalize the whole lake.

According to the town report, staff and council will decide where the park will be located. This council needs to be watched. Musselman's Lake has been ignored for too long. This has to change.

MARY ANN JAMES
MUSSELMAN'S LAKE



Off The Top

with *Jim Mason*

New in town? Have we got an assignment for you

Are you new here or something?
If you are, you're in demand.

And not just by telemarketers and contractors wanting to sell you a pressure-treated back yard or a finished basement for your new two-storey.

To borrow an old Billy Squire song, Everybody Wants You.

Stores, schools and parks have been built on former farmland for you. (You'll pay for it all, too, eventually.)

Most Stouffville organizations have been drooling at the thought of you moving in. They see their memberships growing with the fresh blood from all of those new homes going up on all corners of the community.

Information fairs have been held to introduce the newcomers, and even some oldtimers, to the organizations of Stouffville.

Some groups have commissioned marketing studies that include a look-see at the newcomer.

Many groups, from concert producers and hockey clubs, to service organizations and church congregations, have brainstormed over how to attract you.

You've seen, and maybe met, some going door-to-door. You've read lawn signs, brochures and flyers.

And, hopefully, newspaper stories, columns and advertisements.

We sincerely hope you get involved in this place we call home. It's not perfect. It doesn't offer all of the facilities and opportunities of our neighbours to the south and west.

If there's an edge here, it's the friendliness so many visitors and new residents lap up. I felt it for the first time more than 25 years ago, the same year this town was officially proclaimed friendliest in Ontario in a university study.

But before jumping at the first club, congregation or team that offers you a spot, do your homework. Every situation is not the right fit for everyone. Make your decision wisely.

And have fun out there.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

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
Dianne Mahoney
dmahoney@yrmg.com

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.