

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, ADVERTISING
& DISTRIBUTION
Nicole Fletcher

YORK REGION PRINTING
GENERAL MANAGER
Bob Dean

Editorial

Election choice for interesting times

May you live in interesting times is purported to be an ancient Chinese curse. May you govern in interesting times might be more apropos for today's political hopefuls as voters in York Region join their fellow Canadians in choosing a new federal government Tuesday.

These are, indeed, interesting times. One might argue the party that forms the government next week will have its hands full.

While the environment, health care, Arctic sovereignty, crime or national unity might have been issues on our minds a year ago, the economy is clearly dominating our thoughts just days before the polls.

An election that started off being about leadership has suddenly boiled down to the question of leadership through some of the troubled economic times we fear may be ahead. Before we move too quickly, it is important to examine that fear and ask whether or not it is well founded.

The United States is facing a financial crisis brought on by deregulation in mortgage lending and economic woes in general. It has led to a credit crisis globally that central banks and governments are trying to fix.

But that does not mean the Canadian economy is about to collapse. Indeed, there are differing views from our own experts at banks and universities about whether or not our country will even fall into a recession.

Consider that government debt has declined. Yes, manufacturing jobs have been lost, but the unemployment rate is low. There is even a labour shortage in many places. Canadians do have more debt than they did, but providing the jobs picture remains good, it should be manageable. Inflation is under control. All of which suggests that if we cast our vote next week for one party or another in a state of panic, we are quite likely to make the wrong choice, in the same way anything we might do in a state of panic might produce a bad result.

Keep in mind there is only so much a government can do in the face of a global phenomenon that is not of its own making.

While the Conservatives may look like they are not offering us a magic bullet to protect us from the potential fallout, the pledges of the other parties to hold emergency meetings and/or spend billions don't offer much more. It will be sad if we choose a government based on who came up with the best response on the fly to a crisis few saw coming. As we all gather for Thanksgiving and those lucky enough to be with family and friends get a chance to talk about what might lie ahead, let's try to take a step back from the panic and choose a government that will represent our views, be responsive and govern well with strong, knowledgeable MPs, without looking for a saviour to deliver us from economic woes that may not even lie ahead, or be beyond their power to do much about.



Off The Top

with *Jim Mason*

Friday night Toronto bus trek the way to GO

The Friday night crowd boarded the GO bus at its Stouffville-area stops.

They were headed for the lights of the big city, some in nearby Markham, but most at the end of the line, in Toronto. Several riders were hopping across Bay Street to a Leafs-Penguins pre-season tilt at the Air Canada Centre.

The stops sounded more like an old-time stage coach route: Lincolnville, Stouffville, Ringwood...

Gotta love Lincolnville, the new train depot and stop that opened at Tenth Line and Bethesda Road last month. To think there was thought of naming the stop Bethesda, which is already a community kilometres away at Bethesda and Warden Avenue.

Lincolnville, technically at Tenth and Bloomington Road, has history of its own. Good on GO and the town for reviving the name.

The Stouffville travellers got on and paid their \$7.05. And, if they were lucky, they got a seat. By the time the green and white bus hit Unionville, it was standing-room only.

A good sign, probably spurred on by extra-large gas prices. More people on the bus, and the five GO trains that connect Stouffville and Toronto on weekdays, mean fewer vehicles on the 404/Don Valley Parkway combo and smaller carbon footprints all around.

We did have to endure a 100-minute trek instead of the promised 75 minutes. We can partially thank the boys who tried to ride to Toronto after only buying tickets to Unionville. (Why they weren't booted off and fined the way train riders without proper tickets are, only GO knows.)

Heck, if GO had enforced its no-drinking policy on the dudes shotgunning cans of beer, we may still be on the bus.

Delays and imbibers aside, it's a service we should be thankful for and use as often as possible.

Tabulate the costs of driving, the joys of road angst and the kilometres we've already put on the environment and it's a no-brainer, Stouffville.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

Letters to the Editor

Vote for party that will fight for troops

In a democratic country such as Canada, it is your choice whether to vote or not. In Whitchurch-Stouffville, we look forward to elections. We enjoy seeing the different colour of signs on the roads and private property.

To Canadians, elections are traditional. We expect them. Although it costs money, it is another way of re-investing in the economy.

Everyone is spending money by donating to the candidates and parties. The candidates spend their money faster than they receive it. They spend it on signs, office rental, campaign managers and in restaurants.

Is there a choice in parties? Yes, there is, as confusing as it may be. You could go left, right, centre, and even green. Hundreds of ideas are discussed.

During an election campaign, anything is possible, but after the election little changes. Most of the same candidates are back in office, again spending more money on thank-you letters in newspapers and publishers of every paper are happy once again. They make money having the winners and losers run ads. You never know, you might be remembered for the next election.

Now, Parliament has to deal with the issues at hand. If there is a majority government, the party in power will try to please its supporters. That is why Canada works better with a minority government.

I would like to see all parties agree on bringing our troops back. No one knows why we are fighting a war with a country that never did anything to us. I feel sad over all the soldiers who have died. Make this issue an important one. Canada always sent

peacekeepers, not combat troops. So, why now?

Please, nothing else matters. Bring the troops home. No more war. Vote for the party that will promise to fight for the troops in Parliament.

STEVE PLIAKES

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Pig alert in York Region forest

A strange occurrence has been happening in north Stouffville.

It seems some pigs escaped from their barn yard and are at large. I first noticed this at the new parking area for York Regional forest access points. In particular the lot at McCowan and Aurora roads, have been littered with garbage.

These pigs have been using the parking areas for their personal dumping grounds for plastic bottles, cups, paper and food bags. As I backed on to the forest tract, I couldn't figure out how these pigs were coming and going without notice until I realized they are capable of driving automobiles.

These pigs are also able to walk upright on two legs. These swine are not to be confused with our four-legged pork friends who are highly intelligent. It's obvious the two-legged variety do not fit into this category.

As these pigs have no concern, regards or courtesy for the privilege of using the forest, perhaps we can all be on the lookout to take down a license number of the cars the pigs drive and report them to the proper authorities so they may be returned to the barn yard pig sty from which they came.

MARK STRAIT

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

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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.

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

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