

# 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

### Doctor hotline won't cure problem

The launch next month of a telephone service that matches up patients with doctors willing to take them on does remarkably little to address what is arguably the most critical health care issue in our communities: a shortage of doctors.

Come February, the estimated half million Ontarians who are without a family doctor can call a new 1-800 number and a Telehealth Ontario staffer will try to connect them with a family doctor in their area.

The hotline, called Health Care Connect, is part of a commitment by the health ministry and the Ontario Medical Association to find physicians for the one in 13 Ontarians who do not have a regular family doctor.

This service would be fine if there were enough family physicians to go around, but let's face it, there aren't.

When you consider that this same match-up of patients and doctors is already available to people online through the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons, it seems like the classic definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over and hoping to get a different result.

There's really no point in paying the current stock of doctors a one-time bonus to take on new patients either, which, at the moment, is \$350 for a patient with complex medical issues and \$100 for a person under 65 who is in relatively good health.

There are only so many hours in the day to see patients and if a doctor's waiting room is already bursting at the seams, chump change isn't going to change that.

There is no one magic pill to cure the doctor shortage, as some residents of York Region and its surrounding communities know so well.

But when you look at the drivers of doctor demand – a growing senior population, people living longer with chronic illnesses and rapidly increasing medical technologies such as MRIs – it's easy to see that the situation will get worse before it gets better.

Health care policymakers are on the right track in re-organizing existing family physicians into health care teams that can provide better and more comprehensive care to those who already have their own doctor.

But there's no getting away from the fact that nothing short of a substantial infusion of new doctors in the neighbourhoods that need them most is what's urgently needed.

All other measures are akin to dressing a shark bite with a Band-Aid.



### Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Going shopping on lessons from Stouffville 101

The co-worker was a Stouffville newbie. All wet behind those city slicker ears.

He didn't know the Tenth Line from a hydro line. Didn't know how to negotiate those tricky jogs of the Ninth and Tenth lines through Main Street.

No clue that the Tenth Line became Reesor Road, or that Hwy. 48, Markham Road and Markham's Main Street were one in the same, in parts.

He needed help. Didn't know where to buy a dozen dinner rolls, renew his driver's licence or get his skates sharpened.

We longer-term residents take all of this local knowledge for granted. Driving short cuts. Prime parking spots. And, in the spirit of George Costanza, the location of public washrooms.

The rules also apply in business. We know where many of the hidden commercial gems in Whitchurch-Stouffville are. But newer residents have asked out loud if Stouffville has a car wash, sporting goods store and a hotel. (The answer is yes to all of the above.)

The back and side streets, especially in the commercially advanced west end (that was a cry of envy from we east-enders), are lined with stores and services, including many unique offerings. Trouble is, they're often on dead-end streets many never travel on.

Just as those shop owners should be promoting their wares, especially to our new neighbours, we owe it to ourselves to discover our community. Use this newspaper, the Internet or our chamber of commerce.

Not only can you reduce your environmental footprint by staying local, but you're recycling your dollars at home. You're creating jobs for your neighbours and, hopefully, spinning money back into our community. That's especially important in these tough times.

So, when your child's sports team, the hospital gala or the church bazaar are out of sponsors, you'll know who is responsible.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

## Letters to the Editor

### Three vehicles on small lots too much

Re: *Too many vehicles, not enough spaces, Jan. 24.*

To those Stouffville residents who are arguing there are not enough parking spaces for their cars, I can only say that they, along with the builders, should have thought about that problem prior to building this style of home or purchasing it after the fact.

I blame the builders for cramming hundreds of homes into a small plot of land; homes that require a shoe horn to squeeze them in. The only option these residents should receive is to enforce parking one vehicle into their single garage. Or, here is a thought, sell the other vehicles.

The last thing Stouffville needs is to congest its side streets with one vehicle after another.

Think about it. If some of these households have up to three vehicles and are only parking one vehicle on their property then that means one or two cars will be parked on the street. Imagine that outcome.

Wake up, people. Too many vehicles and too small a property size doesn't work. If we expect residents to move into smaller spaces then maybe an alternative method of travel should have been established prior to construction.

Where are the bus stops with a more reliable and more convenient scheduled service? Or, perhaps people would still be unwilling to part with their cars. With that I can only respond with: "Purchase a home with more parking and garage space".

D. BAIRD  
STOUFFVILLE

### 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)

### Were guns registered or smuggled?

I read last week in a bigger GTA paper of four shootings, including two that were fatal. A nagging question comes to light that begs to be answered.

In all of these shootings, where and how were these firearms obtained? Were they (A), registered firearms under the auspices of the controversial gun control or were they (B), smuggled in from the U.S. or other countries?

So here is a thought. As police nationwide have daily, unfettered access to the firearms registry (C-68), they would be able to immediately ascertain the origin of these firearms.

We then could tally up the A's vs the B's at year end and evaluate the validity of this legislation as either an effective deterrent against crime in which all Canadians are safer or the billion-dollar boondoggle it has so often been touted as being.

After all, a billion-plus dollars could put a lot more police on the streets, provide better health care coverage right across the board and fund a pile of infrastructure projects in the GTA alone.

MARK STRAIT  
STOUFFVILLE

### 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](mailto:jmason@yrmg.com)

EDITORIAL  
Editor  
**Jim Mason**  
[jmason@yrmg.com](mailto:jmason@yrmg.com)

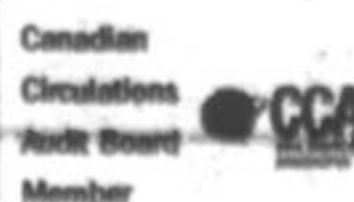
INTERACTIVE MEDIA  
Marketing & Advertising  
Manager  
**Dawna Andrews**  
[dandrews@yrmg.com](mailto:dandrews@yrmg.com)

ADVERTISING  
Retail Manager  
**Dianne Mahoney**  
[dmahoney@yrmg.com](mailto:dmahoney@yrmg.com)

Classified Manager  
**Bonnie Rondeau**  
[brondeau@yrmg.com](mailto:brondeau@yrmg.com)

Special Events Manager  
**Pam Burgess**  
[pburgess@yrmg.com](mailto:pburgess@yrmg.com)

PRODUCTION  
Team Leader  
**Sherry Day**  
[sdayer@yrmg.com](mailto:sdayer@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](http://yorkregion.com) and York Region Printing.