

Sun-Tribune

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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.

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OPINION

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Editorial

Time to feed the neighbours

Were you extra hungry last week? One of your neighbours was. Food bank use is up across York Region.

That shouldn't shock you. We are all well aware of the global recession.

The numbers should shock you.

York Region isn't Detroit or Oshawa, but the implications hit home here, too.

Jobs have been lost. Some households that required two incomes to pay the mortgage have been reduced to one, or in some cases none.

Experts often say food is the first item to be cut when money gets tight.

Of the 4,000 York Region residents who use food banks monthly, more than 1,600 are children, York Region Food Network executive director Joan Stonehocker said last week.

In the first four months of this year, food bank access in the region has increased 29 per cent over the same period last year. The number of new families accessing food banks has increased 51 per cent in that same period.

On average, people who use food banks spend 60 per cent of their income on housing.

June 2 was National Hunger Awareness Day, co-ordinated by Food Banks Canada and community food banks across Canada, including York Region.

While York's eight food banks serving our nine municipalities are holding their own, residents are urged to donate. A new Give and Go Summer Food Challenge was launched last week to encourage donations during the quieter months of vacation and easy living.

But, it's this fall when at least one food bank in the region is expecting to feel the pinch.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank has seen its numbers spike in 2009. Shortages haven't been an issue for the small operation in a relatively affluent community.

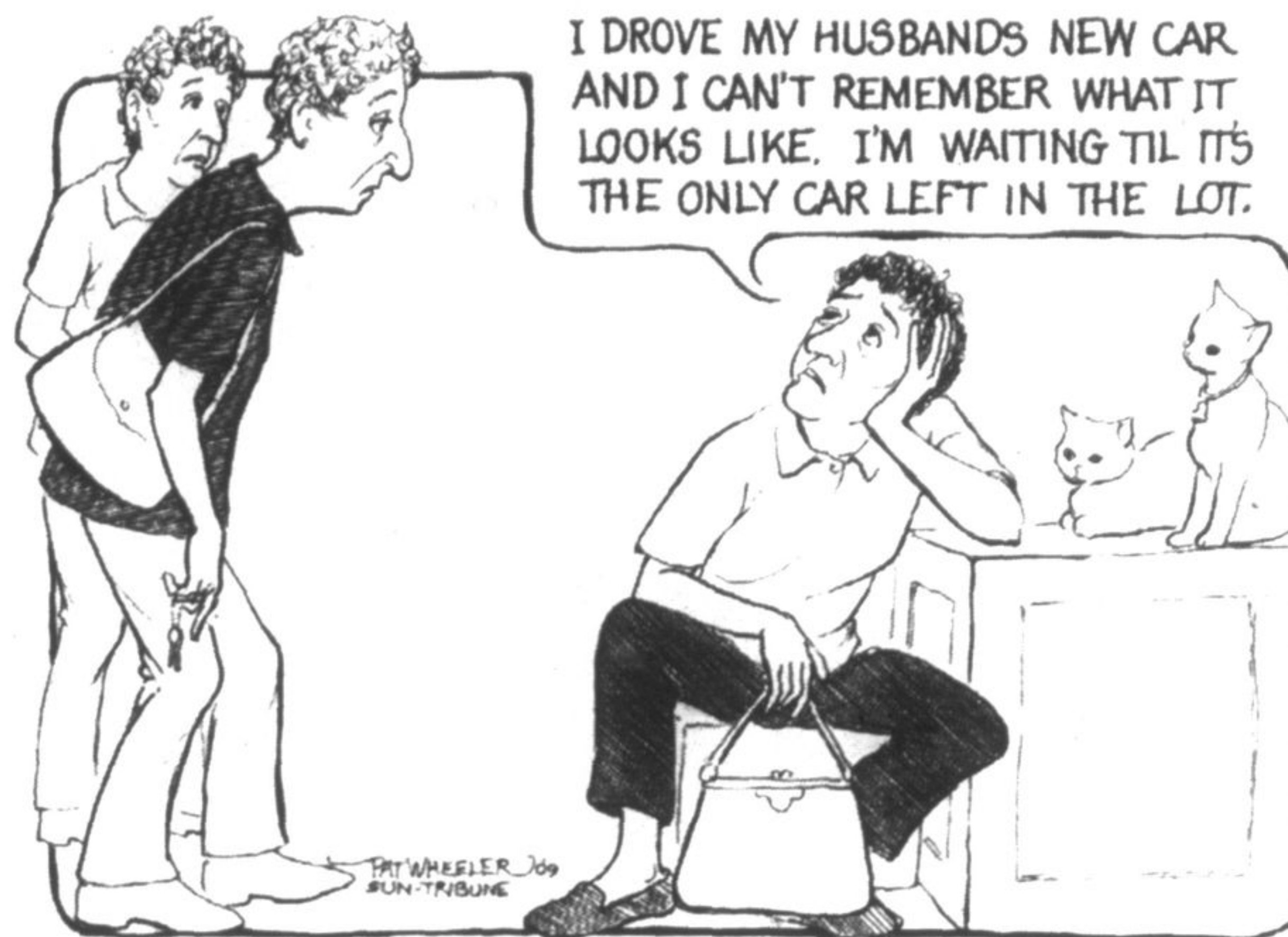
No more.

Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmer-son is co-ordinating a town-wide food drive Sept. 24. He's asking service clubs, churches, youth groups and schools to pitch in.

The goal is to stock enough food to fend off shortages next winter, when Mr. Emmer-son thinks the economy could worsen locally.

Look for similar drives in communi-ties across York Region during the next year.

We will all be asked to help feed our neighbours. That's assuming we are not the recipients of such care.



Letters to the Editor

Incidents shake faith in safe Stouffville

I love Stouffville.

My family moved here in 2000 looking for a welcoming community, and we found it.

We are well settled here. My daughters play in the Stouffville soccer club and hockey for the Stars.

My husband coaches soccer and plays hockey in the men's league.

I am a well known mom and volunteer at my daughters' school.

We know and love our neighbours, swim in the Lebovic pool, and put our trash out every other Tuesday, just like everyone else in town.

We have come to know and love Stouffville as a pleasant and safe place to raise our family.

And so it saddens me to say that this spring, we have twice been the victims of petty crime.

It was a Monday, I was sick in bed. When the doorbell rang I didn't answer it even though I knew it was the carpet cleaners that I had hired. I was that sick. I heard the doorbell ring over and over.

Then I heard someone go around the house and try every door, eventually opening the back door. I walked in to my living room and found a man. I ordered him out of my house.

I phoned the police and reported the incident. I wasn't traumatized by it. I just felt it was wrong.

And people, carpet cleaners and the rest of us, should know that entering someone's house uninvited is called breaking and entering in the Criminal Code.

I drive my kids to school every day and one afternoon when the battery in my van went dead, I decided to rely

HAVE YOUR SAY

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

on an area taxi company to bring them home. The girls arrived safely, but later my daughter said her backpack had been left in the taxi.

The taxi company said the driver had the bag and that if I would pay his gas money he would return it.

Later, he said it wasn't our bag. We looked at school and home. Nothing.

I'm not naming names, but I wonder how greedy, desperate and callous a person must be to steal a backpack from an eight-year-old girl?

I still love Stouffville. It is a great place to live.

But my heart is heavy when I re-live these incidents.

TONDE WIRTH
STOUFFVILLE

Tourist train too pricey

Re: Railway opens season with free rides for kids, June 4.

Let me get this straight.

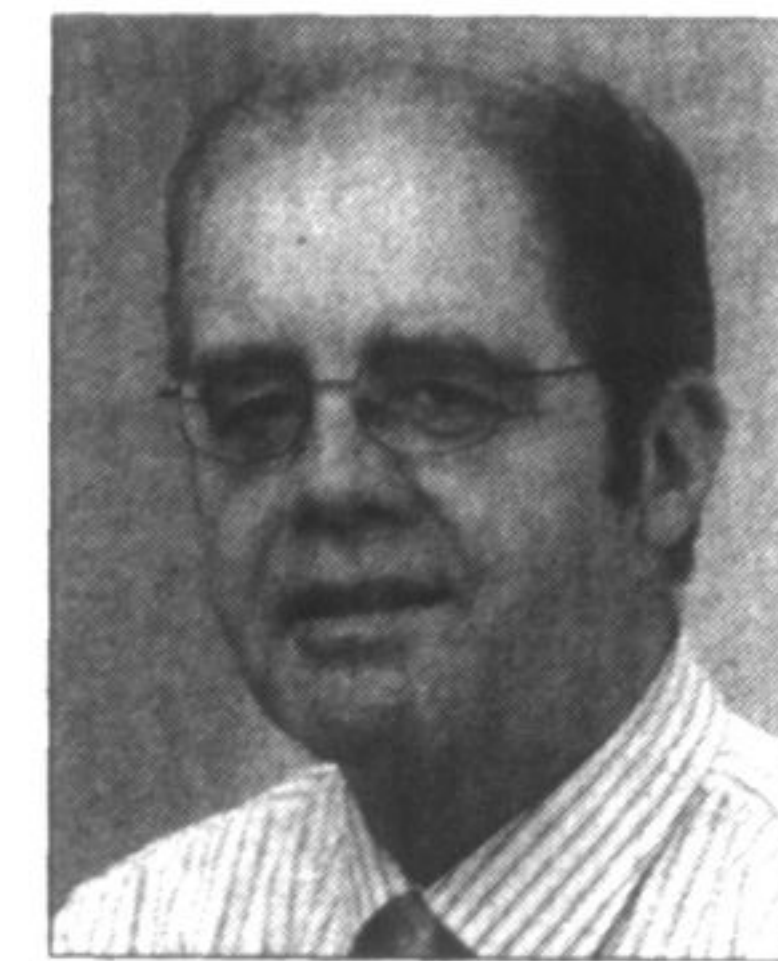
My family of four can travel all the way to Uxbridge by train and return for \$68?

Seriously? Seriously? In this economy?

I think the York-Durham Heritage Railway is due for a reality check.

BILL SEAWARD
STOUFFVILLE

Read columns, letters and editorials from The Sun-Tribune on yorkregion.com



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

In praise of fine trails, roads, lake relations

Items pondered on a day off from the grind:

- Councillor Rob Hargrave was right on. He sang the praises of the municipality's new trails system in his jurisdiction in south-east Stouffville at a council meeting last week.

It's a wonderful addition to the town's recreation stock. Grab the kids, your bike and/or the dog, and a map from townofws.com

(Note to residents: The new route for the 2009 Terry Fox Run will weave through the Stouffville trails Sept. 13.)

- Why do some residents of Musselman's Lake continue to carry on like the Hatfields and McCoy's?

Can't think of another neighbourhood or hamlet in Whitchurch-Stouffville with such incivility during my 26 years here.

- Will it take the elimination of the jog at Main Street and Tenth Line for drivers to get a grasp of who how to negotiate the intersection?

Now, vehicles roll through from the east, apparently unaware they are to yield to others approaching from the west.

- Is our town a leader in seniors/retirement housing?

Parkview, Eastern and Northern gates, Ballantrae Golf and Country Club, Buckingham Manor and others are in the inventory.

The latest addition is tower-ing Stouffville Creek, just north of Main Street in the downtown core.

- I take back those bad words and thoughts uttered last summer while sitting in Main Street traffic and watching my nails grow while the gas gauge plummeted.

The four-laning of the main drag looks better every week, with tree planting and other improvements.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.