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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

**Stouffville  
Sun-Tribune**

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## Editorial

### 350 million reasons not to have election

The loonie is in good shape, Canada is weathering the recession, we've experienced reverse inflation and the job market is experiencing an uptick.

So, many of us are in a haze as to why Her Majesty's Royal Opposition is itching for another election; the second in 12 months, the fourth in five years. Parliament closes down for five weeks; no work gets done.

Still, we must let democracy take its course. Whether you believe any of the opposition parties can do a better job leading the country than Stephen Harper's Conservatives is a matter of opinion.

But there is a disheartening fact the next election will cost taxpayers \$350 million. To make matters worse, polling shows a very close split among voters, which could result in little difference after voting day. Another minority government is a distinct possibility.

Maybe there are politicians who think there's a spare \$350 million burning a hole in the federal coffers, ready to spend on TV ads and pamphlets.

We'd like to offer an alternative: seven ways money could be better spent. We're not suggesting Ottawa should give York Region the \$350 million. But we ask voters to just imagine how, in the broader sense, the public could be better served with this money.

1. About \$350 million is needed for York Region's newest health facility in Vaughan, as well as upgrades of hospitals in Richmond Hill, Newmarket and Markham.

2. A boost to York's transit system, making our communities more interconnected, reducing traffic jams and gas guzzling. (It's less than one-tenth of the cost of the TTC subway extension expected to reach into Richmond Hill.)

3. How about dividing \$350 million into small business loans of \$35,000 handed out to 1,000 businesses that have suffered through the recession?

4. Closing the funding gap for social services in York Region of \$222 million. Then a spare \$130 million could be used to help cover next year's shortfall.

5. Some 5,694 York Region citizens are on waiting lists for affordable housing: how about \$15,000 of assistance per person for three years?

6. Imagine a \$370 rebate cheque for each resident of York Region.

7. The millions could be put to good use by the 180,000 seniors in York, many on fixed incomes. They'd be pleased to each receive a bonus of \$2,000.

We welcome your suggestions. E-mail jmason@yrmg.com



## Letters to the Editor

### Watch out for school children, Stouffville drivers, cyclists

School has started for most students and I want to remind drivers and cyclists to be mindful of children now on the streets and sidewalks of Stouffville.

Many are excited and may have forgotten to look before crossing a street.

Also, the school buses are back in full force. Please be mindful of them and their flashing lights.

All drivers and cyclist must stop when the red lights are flashing and the stop sign and arm are out.

Let's all do our part to get these boys and girls to and from school safely.

DAVE BROOKS  
STOUFFVILLE

### Stop mud-slinging at lake for sake of environment

Re: Don't exaggerate divide at Musselman's Lake, letter to the editor by Rick Wigmore, Sept. 5.

I feel I must respond. I have utmost respect for the work Mr. Wigmore and the Musselman's Lake Residents Association have done and continue to do for our community.

That does not negate the debt of gratitude I feel to Mark Carroll and The Friends of Musselman's Lake.

I do not know all the details of what has transpired over the years, but I do know that Mr. Carroll and his family have demonstrated a long-standing dedication to environmental issues and to the community of Musselman's Lake and Whitchurch-Stouffville in general.

Mr. Carroll served as municipal councillor for our area and did a fine

### HAVE YOUR SAY

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

job. He has always been willing to just get out there and get the job done and anyone who has tried to gain consensus with a group understands the frustrations that are inherent.

The MLRA was not active when Mark Carroll was getting issues attended to.

Unfortunately, anyone who stands forward risks attack, as Mr. Wigmore has also experienced.

I find the suggestion that perhaps Mr. Carroll and the Friends of Musselman's Lake are in it for the money objectionable.

It isn't hard to imagine how and why the divide was created and continues to grow.

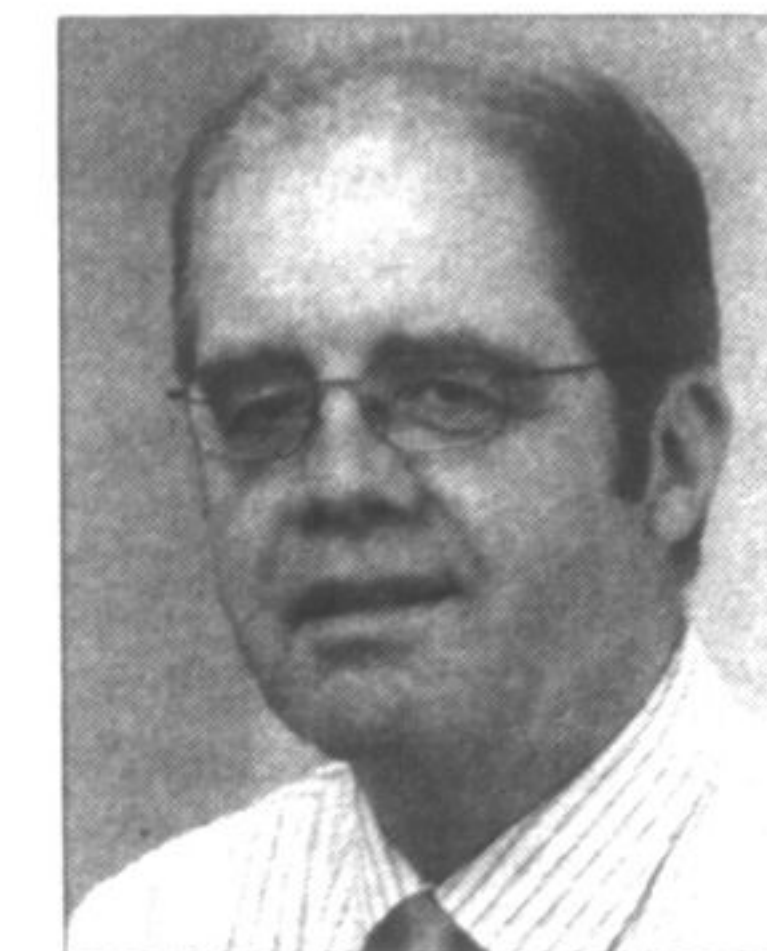
To me, it seems the issue is not the motivation of the participants, who I believe are all clearly trying to do good, but the age-old problem of personality conflicts and different leadership styles.

If people can let go of the past and the nasty mudslinging, perhaps we really can be united in purpose.

Just because the MLRA has more than 300 members and the Friends has 10 members (most of whom have been active in environmental issues long before it became fashionable) doesn't mean that it's "us against them".

Thank you to all concerned who are working to better our environment.

LESLEY O'CONNOR  
MUSSELMAN'S LAKE



### Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Town scores big with arena fix-up while we were out

Heading to the Stouffville Spirit's season opener tonight, to a minor hockey game or to take the kids skating?

Be prepared. The Stouffville Arena ain't what she used to be when you left her last spring.

Thanks to anti-recession stimulus money from the province and the feds, \$1.1 million in improvements are being done to both ice pads and the common areas at the Ninth Line complex.

It's a bit like watching While You Were Out: The Arena Make-over Edition.

The interlocking brick at the entrances was replaced and planters added to the landscape.

On Pad B, the spectator area outside the dressing rooms has been enclosed and heated.

The most striking changes are in Pad A, the big daddy of local rinks, built in the mid-1980s.

New lights hit you like a stiff hipcheck. The boards and glass system is all new, including glass surrounding the penalty box for the first time. It all adds up to a marked improvement.

Also on the main pad, larger second-floor windows and an energy-efficient ceiling are planned. The washrooms will be gutted, lobby floors replaced and parking lot repaved.

Seats may go in over the bleachers, reducing capacity but making the main pad even more fan-friendly.

We can applaud that, council.

(Although, Mayor Wayne Emerson was still waiting for those stimulus dollars from the upper levels of government last week. Apparently, those oversized cheques trotted out at photo opps last spring aren't cashable. He has been reassured the money is in the mail.)

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.