

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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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Health care situation better in Canada

Re: *Brokers make care affordable, Cross-Border Care series, Nov. 28.*

The second article in your series on health care issues in Ontario read more like an advertorial for private brokers arranging for services and procedures in the United States than an effort of serious journalism.

Talking about the luxurious rooms and gourmet food available at private clinics in the U.S. is similar to observing wealthy people do not have to stay in chain motels and eat in modest restaurants when they travel.

It is not news that wealth brings great privileges at substantial cost.

You touch on an issue that should be addressed: Could the resources currently being spent by OHIP on approved procedures in the U.S. be better

HAVE YOUR SAY

► What do you think of this issue?
E-mail jmason@yrmg.com

spent on investment in more medical equipment and staff here?

I would like to see any discussion start with the acknowledgement it is a great blessing for all of the families in our community to have access to quality health care, and then focus on how we can make our system work better in the areas that are less than ideal.

You should also make sure your readers are aware of these pertinent facts: 1) Compared to Canada, the U.S. spends substantially more of its GNP on health care, yet 40 million citizens are without health coverage. 2) Our life expectancy is longer. 3) Our infant mortality is lower.

JOANNA REESOR-MCDOWELL
STOUFFVILLE



Tough admitting old computers are 'e-waste'

I'm moving in the coming weeks and while the experts suggest packing up and then unpacking in a new place can be one of life's most stressful "should be fun but sometimes isn't" activities — right up there with giving birth or attending your own wedding — it has also been fun to go through old stuff that's collecting dust in the basement or tucked away in closets or drawers to be dealt with another day. That day has finally arrived and I admit to getting nostalgic.

I now have a son in high school and another in Grade 6 and yet a corner of the basement is home to a well-worn plastic rocking horse, various scratched up Fisher Price gems such as a xylophone that makes noise as you drag it along the sidewalk or a little battery powered keyboard that miraculously still has power. They are evidence of about five garage sales that never happened, the summer weekends seeming too precious, in the end, to spend polishing up and selling off the memories of my kids' childhood



Bernie O'Neill

at 50 cents a piece.

Now these items must be got rid of, the experts on moving will tell you.

Fortunately, there's a young mom up the street who I'm sure will be too kind to turn down our sandbox relics.

While getting rid of old toys and clothes and iffy kitchen appliances that should have found their way to the curb years ago is almost a relief, what bothers me in the move is the two computers that sit collecting dust — old PCs that hold unknown treasures. One "died" a while back and the

guy at the computer place suggested the info on it could be retrieved, in some form, for a sizeable fee but that if I knew what was good for me I would just move on with life.

He reminded me of the auto mechanic I asked to repair a pickup truck I owned when I was about 25. He suggested I sell what gas was left in the tank, then take a shovel and bury the vehicle in a nearby field.

The other computer still works, thanks to a Windows 3.0 operating system, once all the rage (if you were comparing computers to cars, think Model T).

Yet these old hard drives are the storage place for photographs, kids homework, letters and so on — things we used to print out on paper but that are now often only saved electronically, in bits and bytes — which is a problem if your computer suddenly drops dead.

I was going to take these old beasts to the electronic recycling depot (there's one in Markham with hours Wednesday and Saturday and several others in York Region). But after I got the thing up from the basement, I didn't have the heart to load it into the

trunk.

It's kind of like cryogenics — freezing your body after death in hopes someday a cure for the disease that killed you will be found, or the secret to eternal life will be discovered, so they can just thaw you out and off you go to the mall that afternoon.

In the same way a grandpa might spend an hour or two flipping through old photo albums, I see myself after I'm long retired dragging out these two old PCs. I connect some special gizmo that was advertised on webTV — "Retrieve all those lost photos, letters and loving family memories from your ancient computer with Scan Wow! Order now and we'll throw in the Digi-Might — saves your old videos, cassettes and LPs on to your handheld in seconds!" Either that or you can hammer a board between the two computers and make a nice sort of picnic bench for the grand kids.

Stouffville resident Bernie O'Neill is a York Region Media Group editor.