

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

Constructions sites don't fit in neighbourhood

I am generally not one to complain out loud; mumble perhaps to myself, though.

But this week I spied in my driveway some construction-site rubbish that had blown down the road and come to rest on my family property.

This is not the first time. Usually I pick it up, mumbling and grumbling to myself, and throw it in my own trash.

Needless to say, my family resides nearby to the construction mayhem occurring at Tenth Line north and Main Street.

Not only is the new Shoppers Drug Mart being built (with an entrance directly across from our neighbourhood street), but there is a grotesquely monstrous house also being constructed on the same street.

My concern is that common consideration for the

HAVE YOUR SAY, STOUFFVILLE

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

existing neighbourhood is not happening. We wouldn't allow our recycling or garbage to fly around to our neighbours' properties.

We put it out carefully, making sure everything is secure and doesn't have a chance to escape with the wind.

Common courtesy goes a long way.

MARY SPENCER
STOUFFVILLE

You can read letters, columns and stories from The Sun Tribune at yorkregion.com



Tough to live without electric links to world

We moved recently — just a few blocks — and while it was annoying not being able to find the can-opener, or scissors, or spaghetti strainer, or any number of the other items crucial to daily life that were all since found in that last unpacked cardboard box, the biggest shock to the system, I must admit, was not being electronically connected to the rest of the world for a while via home telephone, cable TV or high-speed Internet.

It's almost a physical sensation of being cut off that was actually kind of unnerving. I thought I'd get used to it, but I didn't.

Still, do I really need a land line from Bell? Why not just use the cell-phone I already have and save \$30 a month, was the kind of thing I was spouting around the new place in the first days after the move.

I wasn't really going to do it, but the switching of everything from old place to new was taking some time — just enough time for me to start joking about how maybe, just maybe, we could live without all these connections and — as Scrooge would advocate — save some money.



Bernie O'Neill

I said to the kids about the home phone, "That's old technology, let's get with the times."

They gave me an odd look that said, "What, were you Charles Dickens' college roommate or something? Who the heck says, 'get with the times?'"

What if there's a fire? Will I be able to find my cell phone to call 911? I'm sure they doubted it.

Better to have a home phone that stays in one place and is always plugged in and ready to go so Dad can stumble through the house in the dark and bump into it.

What if the kids are at home alone for a couple of hours and something happens?

Pretty soon I was calling Bell to have my service transferred from the old house to the new one. It would be a few days, they told me, and cost me \$55, which is what they charge for flicking a switch in a secret room somewhere (wonder if those switch flickers work on commission — must be very lucrative at \$55 a second).

And then there's the cable. "We can live without cable! As in, cut the cord! Pull the plug!" I started to tell myself, thinking of never having a cable bill again.

It was a nice feeling, although fleeting.

"As they say, it's a 500-channel universe with nothing to watch."

But people were talking about the fourth Leafs game we'd missed, and you can only play so much indoor tennis ball catch or tease the cat for so long.

We just started to feel out of touch. Radio and newspapers were good — and we were accessing a weak Internet signal from a neighbour, which helped (although that may be illegal). But we still missed cable TV.

I went to the department store and bought some rabbit ears and before I knew it I was picking up four — yes, four! — TV channels: CBC, CTV, Citytv and Global. For free.

Or at least for \$13, which is what I

paid for the antenna.

The kids did not appear impressed. Soon we were counting the days for the cable guy to arrive, as if we were waiting for Santa and should get cookies and milk ready for him and carrots for his van.

Soon we were counting the days for the cable guy to arrive, as if we were waiting for Santa and should get cookies and milk ready for him and carrots for his van.

Some day when the kids are grown, I might again try to see what it's like to live without every electronic means of connecting with the rest of the world. Maybe paddle out to an island somewhere for a couple of months and get away from it all.

But for now it feels like these communications devices are right there in our veins. It's a tough cord to cut.

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